


*A Collection of Background Papers for Smithsonian Council Meeting
November 1-3, 2001*

Prepared for the
International Art Museums Division
Smithsonian Institution

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Foreword

The following papers have a single purpose: to stimulate open discussions. They are diverse in subject matter, length, style, methodology, tone, outlook, and quality. They have four features: they do not attempt to serve any particular interests; they pose intellectual and practical challenges; they implicitly point out the wide range of knowledge and skills that art museums require; and they often touch upon conflicting and controversial viewpoints. The nine papers deal with a range of topics from the impact of technology in art museums to fundraising at art museums to barriers of engagement at art museums. Together they sketch the kind of issues that are expected to be discussed. Hopefully, the complex interplays between the issues will energize the participants who may be interested in building upon ideas that emerge from the discussion.

The entire staff of the Office of Policy and Analysis contributed to the preparation of these papers. I want to acknowledge their efforts. Their flexibility, persistence, energy and ability to successfully blend the preparation of this set of papers with their full and demanding agendas demonstrate their commitment to the Smithsonian. The complete list of staff members is included in this set of background papers.

I wish to thank staff from all of the Smithsonian art museums and staff from museums outside of the Smithsonian who provided valuable insights.

Carole Neves, PhD
Director, Policy and Analysis

Table of Contents

1. Art Museums and the Public
2. Barriers to Engagement at Smithsonian International Art Museums
3. Partnerships among Smithsonian Art Museums
4. Audience Building: Marketing Art Museums
5. A Study of Visitors to Smithsonian Institution International Art Museums.
6. Social Pressures on Art Museums: An Overview of Issues
7. The Impact of Technology on Art Museums
8. Fundraising at Art Museums
9. Increasing Museum Visitation by Under Represented Audiences: An Exploratory Study of Art Museum Practices