

Public perceptions of – and attitudes to – the purposes of museums in society

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BritainThinks was commissioned by the Museums Association to conduct a programme of deliberative research into public attitudes to museums and, in particular, their potential purposes and role in society.

The research took the form of six day-long workshops with members of the public, each hosted by a different institution. (Among the hosts were the Museum of London, The Beaneys in Canterbury, the Riverside in Glasgow and the Museum of East Anglian Life.) The workshops used some inventive methods, including an 'obituary exercise' – participants were asked to imagine a world without museums – and a budget allocation exercise.

The research is intended to inform and enrich the sector's thinking about the future of museums and contribute to the development of the Museum Association's Museums 2020 Strategy

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