

# Museums at the Crossroads: the Role of Corporate Partnerships

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Ensuring financial sustainability,  
encouraging public participation and  
creating meaningful experiences

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# — Contents:

Introduction .....	4
Museum: From Storage to Stories .....	9
Beyond Finances: Why Museums Should Partner with Brands .....	14
Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs .....	17
Trends in Museum Partnerships with Brands .....	32
Best Practices and Insights from Museum Leaders .....	55
Conclusion .....	80
About the Author.....	82
About Grayling Europe .....	83
About Grayling Creative Partnerships .....	84
Contact Information .....	85

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**The museum of the future utilises modern tools in achieving its original purpose: to use objects to understand the place of humanity in the world. It capitalises on digital technology to connect people, makes more content available through traditional and non-traditional channels, and creates immersive experiences that extend and elevate thinking. Finally, the museum of the future brings people from different walks of life into its space for discussion and problem-solving through creative engagement with collections. We have never needed museums more than we do now.**

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Nelson, T. (2017, December). Future Museum: Cabinet of Curiosity. Reboot for the 21st Century. *Museum ID*, (21), 23-23. Retrieved from [https://issuu.com/museumid/docs/museumid\\_issue21](https://issuu.com/museumid/docs/museumid_issue21)

# Introduction

From across the ocean I am watching with curiosity, the developments in one of the largest museum experiments of our time, which takes place in Indianapolis, the city that I once called home in the US. The Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA) is being transformed into an institution as part of a larger brand – the Newfields. This is a place where art meets nature, and aside from the impressive museum, it features botanical gardens, beer gardens, a restaurant, and a mini-golf court. As the Newfields director Charles Venable put it in his interview with Artnet: “We use art and nature as the bedrock raw material to create extraordinary experiences for people. We’re trying to put life back into art, which has become so drained of it on white museum and gallery walls.”

The initiative to create a cultural experiential offer garners international attention, but also faces criticism for downplaying the role of art and for catering to people's hunger for easy entertainment. For me, it's the contrary, a great illustration of a museum challenging the norms and evolving to stay relevant.

In 2017, I published an international white paper “[Brands and the Arts: Making Creative Partnerships Work](#),” which was based on the analysis of more than 40 corporate art initiatives and interviews with people responsible for such programs at Absolut, BMW, Cadillac, Davidoff, Dior, Hennessy, and Swatch, etc. The report identified key trends shaping the future of creative partnerships and highlighted best practices to ensure their success.

Since then, I went to many international conferences and attended seminars on cultural leadership and the future of museums. I also spoke with art industry representatives about their concerns in terms of working with businesses.

As a result, this new project dedicated to museum partnerships was born. Based on the previous “Brands and the Arts” white paper, it also includes insights from interviews with the representatives of major international museums and industry consultants. The report provides the overview of major types of partnerships resulting from the analysis of 60+ international partnership examples at 30 museums. Although the case studies included in the paper are specific to the museum sphere, general trends and recommendations on building effective partnerships can be useful for a variety of cultural institutions.

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1. Goldstein, A. (2018, February 12). Newfields Director Charles Venable on His Data-Driven (and Maybe Crazy) Quest to Save the Art Museum. Retrieved from <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/newfields-director-charles-venable-indianapolis-art-museum-1218602>

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## Introduction

My goal has been to look into the topic of corporate partnerships in the context of the current debates around the future of museums. They have evolved from the places mainly focused on the preservation and display of national treasures, to institutions that aim to educate, to bring a community together, and to create new cultural experiences through partnerships with contemporary artists.

Another important thing to consider while reading the report are changes to the way people define culture, which makes museums strive to become more vibrant, accessible, and relevant. Research shows that we live in the age of cultural omnivores. Today “culture can mean Caravaggio, Coachella, Tannhäuser or taco trucks,” says Maggie Hartnick, Managing Director of LaPlaca Cohen, the strategic and creative services firm that commissioned the CultureTrack’17 study.<sup>3</sup>

According to the report<sup>4</sup>, to effectively engage audiences, art and culture have to relieve stress and to be interactive and social. Adults attending events see “having fun” as their first priority (81%), followed by “interest in the content” (78%), and “experiencing new things,” which tied with “feeling less stress” (both 76%).

Another study - the Gensler Experience Index<sup>5</sup>, conducted by Gensler, a global architecture, design and planning firm, shows that single-use spaces are becoming obsolete and people are seeking a multifunctional environment where they can fulfill different needs - “to work, eat, socialize, exercise, have fun, take classes, and shop.” Opportunities for social connection are becoming increasingly important as 85% of study participants reported visiting public spaces to spend time with their friends and family.

The trend is affecting museums as well, and today they are carrying out many functions beyond their traditional roles of object preservation and display. They run late night events for younger audiences. They partner with local organisations to create meditation rooms, fitness and yoga classes, and health centers. They take on more roles internally and expand their external boundaries by working with hospitals and schools, going to underserved populations and implementing art projects in public spaces. But at the same time, they still need to stick to their core – inciting engagement around their collections and encourage intellectual rigor instead of creating a shopping mall type of experience.

To meet these challenges, museums need to be financially sustainable and to have reliable partners who can also share expertise, attract new audiences and encourage creative experiments. The following pages provide recommendations on building effective partnerships with companies and highlight best practices from leading museums around the world.

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3. New Study Finds Today's Audiences Are Redefining 'Culture,' and That Cultural Organisations Must Change to Stay Relevant. (2017, October 17). Retrieved from <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2017/10/prweb14807544.htm>
  4. LaPlaca Cohen. (2017, October). Culture Track 2017 Study. Retrieved from <http://2017study.culturetrack.com/home>
  5. Gensler Research Institute. (2017, November 1). The Gensler Experience Index. Retrieved from <https://www.gensler.com/uploads/document/552/file/Gensler-Experience-Index-2017.pdf>



Funding for cultural institutions is currently in decline worldwide. Intercultural endeavours are being neglected for initiatives with a more nationalist agenda. When it comes to working with global companies which rely on international and multidisciplinary exchange, museums have oftentimes erected too much red tape and bureaucracy in order to be considered a long-term partner.

Corporations on the other hand have begun to initiate projects on their own, renting spaces for a limited period, so as not to have to cover the steep entry fees associated with any museum collaboration.

Without watering down their *raison d'être*, museums have to rethink their own agenda in order to remain valid and agile in the future. To truly attract a less educated, more diverse and less affluent audience, a museum must rethink what its essence is and what sets it apart from all other possibilities of engagement.

For any institution it is an exercise of strength to examine itself as if it were a brand. How am I relevant? What sets me apart from other institutions? What is my USP? How do I position myself within the local and global attention competition?

In a cultural setting, the spectator is the contributor, the way the customer is valued as the creator within a corporate environment. Companies and museums are both in the business of creating desire. They have a lot to learn from each other as long as they do not intrude upon each other's territory. In partnerships of mutual appreciation, creative freedom and curatorial integrity remain key.

The Grayling Report is essential reading for everyone within the museum world. It minces no word about the challenges that lie ahead and shares valuable insights on how to succeed within the ever-changing landscape of partnership opportunities.



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**Winterlights festival at Newfields**  
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# Museum:

From Storage  
to Stories



We often hear or read that a theatre or other type of cultural organisation doesn't want to turn into a museum, and in this context, the word museum conjures the image of a dusty place full of objects and devoid of life. There is often a contradiction in today's society that the museum should be revered as something that is central to the community while at the same time being viewed as a conservative and static space.

"In fact, I think that the word "museum" has nothing to do with the future of the museum. We should find a different word," says TERESA IAROCCI MAVICA, Director of **V-A-C foundation**. Its cultural space at a former power station in the center of Moscow is set to open in 2019.

Museums are evolving from being a display of treasures to places that encourage participation. This evolution leads to new debates about finding the right balance between different functions - collection and research vs. public engagement. As Sam Thorne, Director at Nottingham Contemporary and contributing editor at the Frieze<sup>6</sup> magazine, wrote in "What is the Future of the Museum?", "where, for example, do the older pleasures of contemplation meet those of participation? How is popularity achieved while rethinking the canon?"

### To become truly future-proof, museums are challenged:

1. "to design a better invitation for participation";
2. "to become convivial places" that are welcoming in their spirit;<sup>7</sup>
3. "to build environment where experimenting with perception of the present may be realized";<sup>8</sup>
4. to provide opportunities for escape;<sup>9</sup>
5. to become "a plaza where people spend time together"<sup>10</sup> and even
6. the fourth place where we can feel home but also inspired "to work, learn, and teach each other".<sup>12</sup>

6. Thorne, S. (2015, November 25). What is the Future of the Museum? Retrieved from <https://frieze.com/article/what-is-the-future-of-the-museum>
7. Simon, N., & Atkins, J. R. (2011). *The participatory museum*. Santa Cruz: Museum 2.0.
8. McLean, K., & Pollock, W. (2011). *The Convivial Museum*. Washington: Association of Science-Technology Centers.
9. Bishop, C., & Perjovschi, D. (2014). *Radical museology: Or, Whats contemporary in museums of contemporary art?* London: Koenig.
10. Thorne, S. (2015, November 25). What is the Future of the Museum? Retrieved from <https://frieze.com/article/what-is-the-future-of-the-museum>
11. Thorne, S. (2015, November 25). What is the Future of the Museum? Retrieved from <https://frieze.com/article/what-is-the-future-of-the-museum>
12. Rozan, A. (2017, November/December). Adapted from a keynote address given at the 2040 AAM Annual Meeting in Quito, Ecuador. *Museum 2040*. The American Alliance of Museums. Retrieved from <https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/museum2040.pdf>



For Andrew McClellan, Professor and Museum Studies Advisor at Tufts University and the author of “The Art Museum from Boullée to Bilbao”<sup>13</sup>, the fact that we still argue about the museum’s “purpose, what it should exhibit, and whom it should serve” is a testament that the museum really matters in our society.

“Museums are the temples of the 20th century,” says the art scholar and curator **DOROTHEA VON HANTELMANN**. “And due to their power to give legitimacy and credibility to things, they remain so important in the 21st century.”

“The main thing that a museum has is authenticity,” says **PAUL ALEZRAA**, Director of the cultural planning firm **Avesta Group**, which has worked on more than 155 museums since 1993. “In the age of fake news and ambiguity, the question of trust brings the museum back into the discussion.”

The fact that museums still matter can also be confirmed by the fact that many companies turn to the concept when creating their own spaces where they can celebrate their values and history. “Many brands are crossing that bridge, and they are trying to create the museum-like experience showing what they do as a work of art. One of the examples is Maison Hermes, on which we worked in Paris, New York, Shanghai, where you learn about the brand, but you can also buy the product,” Paul Alezraa adds.

**So, what is changing about today's museum, given the perception of culture and expectations about public places are evolving?**

## Focus on participation, flow of events and social responsibility

According to the renowned art critic and philosopher Boris Groys, the function of contemporary art museums is changing from being a storage place for artworks to a place where things happen - a stage for the flow of art events (curatorial projects, lectures, conferences, readings, screenings, concerts, guided tours, etc.).

Discussing a new locus for the art and the future of cultural institutions in “What is the new ritual space for the 21st century?”<sup>14</sup>, scholar and professor Dorothea von Hantelmann also says that it is a place where a sequence of events unfolds and various forms of art - visual art, literature, poetry, dance, theatre - can meet on equal terms. In contrast to the previous focus on material objects, the new space ritual is centered around people and their interactions. “What used to be an exhibition of “works” (in the sense of separated, distinct entities) would now become an interplay of gatherings responding to a given, often fleeting set of circumstances, such as the time of the day, the number of visitors, and the social fabric of participants.”

13. McClellan, A. (2008). *Art museum from Boulee to Bilbao*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

14. Von Hantelmann, D. (2018). What is the new ritual space for the 21st century?.”



This new type of institution realises the utopian plan, the Fun Palace, developed by the architect Cedric Price in 1961. It was “a modular, movable and transformable multi-arts structure that can be endlessly reorganised to display different forms of artistic production,” says Dorothea von Hantelman. The SHED project in New York, a multi-arts center designed to commission, produce, and to present all types of performing arts, visual arts, and popular culture, is positioned as a modern version of the Fun Palace. Set to open in April 2019, it manifests the concept of the cultural institution of the future, which is built around an artistic idea, rather than a format.

GES-2 in Moscow is another new organisation set to redefine the notion of the cultural space. “The museum of the future is no longer just an archive, it is a public space with social responsibility functions,” says TERESA IAROCCI MAVICA, Director of **V-A-C foundation**. “GES-2 is not a museum, it's rather a factory because the aim of our activities will be the production and we want our audiences to work together with us in producing new ideas.”

According to Iarocci Mavica, museums (in a modern sense) will become the main actors of the future public space, or the architects of the cities of the future because they will be in charge of the architecture of social relationships.

## Storytelling

Today's museum is also a place where stories are told. One of the proponents of this idea is Phillip Tefft, Director of The London Studio at Ralph Appelbaum Associates, a firm that specialises in museum design. In his interview with Russia's Strelka Magazine<sup>15</sup>, he explained that storytelling is central to museum planning because stories help people learn and create stronger experiences.

To tell engaging stories, museums are experimenting with the way they put on exhibitions. Developing a narrative comes center stage rather than a focus on the display of unique objects. Some museums launch a series of exhibitions that are interlinked so that a visitor would have a richer experience if he/she sees them one after another. For example, in the summer of 2018, the Moscow Museum of Modern Art partnered with V-A-C foundation and KADIST around the General Rehearsal exhibition shown in three acts. All of them included the same artworks, but the scenario is written by different partners (a theatrical group, a philosopher, and a poet), so the stories told are different. Each act takes place for a month giving audiences an opportunity to experience three unique exhibitions.

15. Velichko, N. (2018, January 31). Philipp Tefft: How Museums Changed Over the Last 40 years. Retrieved from <https://strelkamag.com/ru/article/raa>



## Experiences

Charles Venable, the Newfields (Indianapolis Museum of Art) director, became determined to overturn the museum when he faced a budgetary deficit and realised that local residents did not visit the museum that often. According to his interviews, Venable is on a mission to make the Newfields “a savvy, fun place that applies curation to everything from Rembrandt to food—and all of the things in between.”<sup>16</sup> “It is about experiences - that is true. Art was always an experience. A Rembrandt painting was a personal experience. But the bottom line is, I can’t make someone a lover of Rembrandt if I can’t get them to ever come here,” Venable explained to The New York Times.<sup>17</sup>

In the age of the experience economy, museums need to become experiential places where the overall atmosphere matters no less than the richness of the collection.



**“General Rehearsal” exhibition at the Moscow Museum of Modern Art,**  
organised by V-A-C foundation and KADIST,  
Moscow

16. Goldstein, A. (2018, February 21). Newfields Director Charles Venable on Why Art Museums as We Know Them Cannot Survive. Retrieved from <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/newfields-director-charles-venable-interview-part-two-1220558>
17. Tugend, A. (2018, March 12). To Reach New Audiences, Museums Are Redefining What They Offer. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/12/arts/to-reach-new-audiences-museums-are-redefining-what-they-offer.html>



# Beyond Finances:

**Why Museums Should Partner  
with Brands**

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## Beyond Finances: Why Museums Should Partner with Brands



For museums, partnerships with brands, first and foremost, provide an opportunity to ensure **financial sustainability**, which is particularly important as many countries' governmental funding for arts institutions is declining. However, it is not just about the money. In joint projects, brands can **share relevant and rich expertise** in technology, retail, business management and creating experiences.

By supporting certain initiatives, companies also **enable museums to experiment** with new programs and to introduce technology into their practice.

Through their extensive networks, brands can also **bring in new audiences** to museums, **encourage participation**, and **expand the reach of cultural institutions** beyond their walls. Some businesses collaborate with museums on product creation and launch special zones dedicated to their cultural partners in their retail spaces.

For brands, museum partnerships can provide several benefits including **social responsibility** in action, **image transfer**, **technology test-drive and product display** as well as the opportunity to **engage employees and clients**.

As museums play an important role in communities, supporting these institutions also allows companies to demonstrate their **commitment and respect** towards the city or the country where they operate.

Second, studies show that museums tend to have a **better reputation** than corporations. According to the research conducted by Professor Cees van Riel of Erasmus University's Rotterdam School of Management and senior research analyst Patricia Heijndijk in 2017, the public regards museums as more trustworthy than corporations.

The average reputation score for museums reached 79 while corporations were rated lower, at 64.2.<sup>18</sup> So, by cooperating with the cultural institutions, brands bet on the **image transfer effect** from the partnership.

Third, many tech companies collaborate with museums by providing their products or service. For them, it is an opportunity to **test-drive** their offering in a cultural setting.

Fourth, working with museums opens new opportunities to **engage employees, clients and other stakeholder groups (i.e. government officials)** through **special events and educational programs**.

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18. What businesses can learn from the high reputations of museums. (2017, August 29). Retrieved from <https://discovery.rsm.nl/articles/detail/297-what-businesses-can-learn-from-the-high-reputations-of-museums/>

**Beyond Finances:  
Why Museums Should  
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For museums, partnerships with brands, first and foremost, provide an opportunity to ensure **financial sustainability**, which is particularly important as many countries' governmental funding for arts institutions is declining. However, it is not just about the money. In joint projects, brands can **share relevant and rich expertise** in technology, retail, business management and creating experiences.

## Museum-Brand Partnerships: Benefits on Both Sides

Museums	Corporate Brands
Financial stability	Social responsibility - contribution to the community
New audiences and participation	Positive image transfer effect
Taking the museum into the community	Technology test drives and product display
Helping the museum to realise its mission of championing culture	External stakeholder engagement – clients, partners, and authorities
Sharing of expertise - technological, retail, business, experiential	Internal communications



# **Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships:**

**From Product Collaborations  
to Experiential Programs**

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## Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs



## Museum-Brand Partnerships: Benefits on Both Sides

### Brand-mentor

Joint awards with brands (or museums as venues for art award exhibitions)/Art residencies/Scholarships/Exhibitions

- Joint awards are one of the most common formats of museum-brand partnerships pioneered back in 1996 by **the Guggenheim Museum** in New York when it introduced the **Hugo Boss Prize** with a namesake brand. The biennial award recognizes artists for their outstanding achievements in contemporary art. The winner receives a grant of 100,000 USD and an opportunity to hold an exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum. Hugo Boss also partners with **Rockbund Art Museum (RAM)** in Shanghai to present the **Hugo Boss Asia Art Award for Emerging Asian Artists**, and the winner is selected amongst four nominees whose works are featured in a special group exhibition.
- In 2017, **MAXXI** (the National Museum of 21st Century Arts) and **Bulgari** joined forces to honor international young artistic talent. According to the Prize rules, three finalists of the **MAXXI Bulgari Prize** are announced during the Frieze art fair in London and their works are later exhibited at the MAXXI.
- To showcase and celebrate modern craftsmanship the **LOEWE FOUNDATION** by the Spanish luxury brand launched an international annual award - **LOEWE Craft Prize**. Finalists are selected by the jury, and their works are presented in a special exhibition at **the Design Museum London**.
- Since 2016, **mumok** - Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien - in Vienna has awarded an art prize in partnership with **the Kapsch Group**, a traditional Austrian family business in the field of technology. **The Kapsch Contemporary Art Prize** is dedicated to the international promotion of young visual artists mainly living and working in Austria. The winner receives a financial grant and a solo exhibition at mumok with an accompanying publication. A work of art or a group of works by the prize winner is also purchased for the museum's collection.
- **Musée de l'Elysée** in Lausanne partners with the watch brand **Parmigiani Fleurier** around **the Prix Elysée**, an award for promising photographers or artists using photography. Eight nominees receive a contribution of CHF5'000 towards the initial presentation of an original and new project in the nominees' book, published for the occasion. The winner receives CHF80'000 to be divided between the completion of the proposed project and the publication of the accompanying book within one year.
- In Russia, **BMW** established a joint Art & Technology program with **the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art**. Launched in 2017, the initiative provides support to emerging artists and art groups working with information and engineering technologies, and in the field of art & science.

**“Untitled, 2017” by Ute Müller,**  
the winner of the Kapsch Contemporary Art Prize 2018,  
© Ute Müller



Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships:  
From Product Collaborations  
to Experiential Programs



## Key Types of Museum- Brand Partnerships

### **Brand-mentor**

Joint awards with brands (or museums as venues for art award exhibitions)/Art residencies/Scholarships/Exhibitions

### **Brand-collaborator**

- Co-branded product
- Product presentation / use
- Exhibitions on brand history and philosophy
- Joint programs
- Programs/exhibitions/installations/commissions support (that resonate with brand values)

### **Brand-art educator**

- Free museum access partnerships
- Educational programs
- Acquisition programs

### **Brand-experience creator**

Experiential programs

### **Brand-content creator**

Content programs

### **Brand-business partner**

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## Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs



### Brand-collaborator

Museums and brands collaborate around a joint product launch, the use of the brand's product at the museum's premises, or the creation of exhibitions on the brand's history and philosophy.

### Co-branded product

- In 2015, **Max Mara** presented a bag inspired by the pure geometry of the newly opened building of the **Whitney Museum of American Art** in New York, designed by the renowned architect Renzo Piano.
- As part of its partnership with **MOMA**, the global apparel retailer **UNIQLO** sells a special edition collection of clothes and accessories inspired by artists whose works are part of the museum collection. The clothes are available at MOMA and select UNIQLO stores including the brand's SPRZ New York store, which is located not far from the museum.
- In July 2018, Swiss brand **Swatch**, a long-time art supporter, presented three watch designs featuring artworks from the **Rijksmuseum** collection.
- In August 2018, the **Van Gogh Museum** in Amsterdam and the athletic clothing brand **Vans** launched a special shoes and apparel collection featuring the famous painter's works.

According to ADRIAAN **DÖNSZELMANN**, the managing director of the Van Gogh Museum, "the partnership brought Vincent's art 'Off The Wall' and into the world to a new audience outside the museum." The collaboration focused on four specific artworks - Skull, Sunflowers, Almond Blossom, Self-Portrait as a Painter, Old Vineyard with Peasant Woman - as well as letters the painter wrote to his brother, Theo. All the profits from the sales were sent towards the preservation of the museum collection.<sup>19</sup>

- The global paints and coating company **AkzoNobel** was involved in the 10-year restoration of **Rijksmuseum**, recreating a color palette (known as the Sikkens RIJKS Colors), which matched the paint originally used when the museum opened in 1885. It is also available for purchase by the general public.

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19. Baines, J. (2018, July 27). Vincent Van Gogh and check out the artist's collaboration with Vans. Retrieved from <https://www.itsnicethat.com/news/vans-vincent-van-gogh-product-design-270718>



THE SWATCH MUSEUM



The Van Gogh Museum collaborated with Vans and Rijksmuseum worked with Swatch on special collections

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**Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships:  
From Product Collaborations  
to Experiential Programs**



## Product presentation / use

- The founding sponsor of **Rijksmuseum**, **Philips** was closely involved in rebuilding of the museum's building. The company designed a special LED lighting system aimed to enhance visitor experience, which is also highlighted in the museum's communications.
- **HTC Vive** partners with cultural institutions around the world to bring VR experiences into exhibitions or educational programs. In 2017, it collaborated with the **Royal Academy of Arts** in London - several artists created digital works for the exhibition devoted to the past, present, and the future of life drawing. The company also partnered with **Tate Modern** to create a virtual reality room of Amadeo Modigliani as part of a comprehensive exhibition of the artist's works.
- The **V&A Samsung** Digital Classroom hosts workshops for 16 – 19-year-olds helping them prepare for careers in creative industries. Participants work with digital artists, designers and studios to practice making wearable technology and 3D printed jewellery, designing video games and virtual reality.
- Thanks to the support from **LG Electronics**, **Stedelijk** in Amsterdam has a high-tech video wall in the lobby, which features video works from the museum collection.

**Royal Academy of Arts partnered with HTC Vive** around the collaborative pop-up project *Virtually Real*  
Photo: *Reclining nude with television*, 2017, by Adham Faramawy, © Adham Faramawy



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**Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships:  
From Product Collaborations  
to Experiential Programs**



## Exhibitions on brand history and philosophy

- During the London Design Festival in 2017, **Land Rover**, a partner of the **Design Museum London**, unveiled the Reductionism sculpture aimed to represent the design philosophy behind the Range Rover Velar model.
- **The Design Museum** London often collaborates with brands around exhibitions on their history and impact on the design world. For example, the Cartier in Motion exhibition (2017) at the museum told the story of the invention of the modern watch and watchmaking at **Cartier** while also exploring changes in society at the turn of the 20th century.
- In 2017, in St. Petersburg, Russia, **Lamborghini** presented an exhibition on the brand's design approach at the **Erarta Museum of Contemporary Art**.
- In 2018, the **Moscow Kremlin Museums** held a retrospective show on high jewellery art by world-known Italian Maison **BVLGARI** and the **Museum of Moscow** presented a 3-day experiential exhibition dedicated to craftsmanship at the French luxury brand **Hermes**.



**The project for the Sala Beckett theatre and international drama centre in Barcelona by Flores & Prats**

was shortlisted for the Beazley Designs of the Year Award 2017 conducted by the specialist insurer Beazley Group in partnership with Design Museum London. Photo by Adrià Goula

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## Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs



### Joint programs

- **The New Museum** in New York and **Nokia Bell Labs** partnered to enable collaboration between technologists and artists and designers at the cultural institution's incubator NEW INC. Engineers consult the creatives on projects that engage technologies such as robotics, machine learning, drones, and biometry.
- With the support from **BMW**, **Tate** develops its BMW Tate Live program presenting live performance commissions at the museum.
- In 2011 - 2014, **BMW** and the **Guggenheim** museum collaborated on a joint city lab initiative, which took place in New York, Berlin, and Mumbai. The BMW Guggenheim Lab was a mobile laboratory exploring the topics of urban life. The program in each city featured tours, workshops, debates, roundtable discussions, screenings, and performances. The initiative concluded with a museum exhibition spotlighting major themes and ideas that emerged from the Lab.

### Programs/exhibitions/installations/commissions support (that resonate with brand values)

- Through **The New Women's Project**, **DKNY** provided support for commissions and exhibitions from an all-female group of five artists at **the New Museum in New York**.
- In 2016, the Italian coffee brand **Lavazza** signed a three-year partnership with **the Russian State Hermitage Museum** in St. Petersburg. Through the engagement the company supports exhibitions of Italian artists or shows created in partnership with Italian cultural institutions. The coffee maker also partners with **the Guggenheim museum** in New York.
- **Hyundai's** decade-long partnership with **LACMA** (2014 - 2024) focuses on projects that bring together art and emerging technologies. Through the support of **LACMA's Art + Technology Lab**, Hyundai enables new acquisitions, exhibitions, and publications.
- **The Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative** focuses on showcasing art from South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa.
- The Swiss bank **Credit Suisse** has been the partner of **the National Gallery** in London since 2008 providing support to the museum's major exhibitions (Monet & Architecture, Michelangelo and Sebastiano, Beyond Caravaggio, Goya: The Portraits, etc).
- Many technology-focused companies support innovation-themed exhibitions. For example, in 2018, **the Volkswagen Group** became the partner of the Future Starts Here exhibition at **V&A**, which brought together more than 100 objects shaping the future.



**The Future Starts Here exhibition at Victoria and Albert Museum, London** was supported by the Volkswagen Group © Victoria and Albert Museum, London



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## Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs



## Brand-art educator

### Free museum access partnerships

- To highlight its philosophy of accessible quality, **UNIQLO** provides free entrance to a number of museums around the world. It sponsors UNIQLO Free Friday Nights at **MOMA** in New York and the **Garage Museum of Contemporary Art** in Moscow. In London, the company collaborates with **Tate Modern** on UNIQLO Tate Late events with music, talks, workshops, tours and performances.
- At **LACMA**, all visitors receive free general admission on select federal holidays, sponsored by **Target**. The retailer also supports **Target** First Saturdays at **Brooklyn Museum**, along with **Adidas**. The program features free art and entertainment every month (except September), 5–11 pm.
- The energy company **PECO** supports Free First Sundays at **Philadelphia's Barnes Foundation** while **First Fridays** with live music, performances, and access to the collection and exhibitions are sponsored by the beer company **Blue Moon**.
- Through the Art for All program, the financial information services company **IHS Markit** matches Gift Aid donations from **Tate** visitors, to fund 4,000 new tickets for underserved youth to the museum's exhibitions throughout the year.
- **The National Gallery** in London organizes special workshops and development opportunities for **Credit Suisse**'s partner charities.

### Educational programs

- The US retailer **Target** supports **MOMA**'s School Visit Programs, School Partnership Programs, Art Studios, and K-12 Teacher Workshops and Online Resources.
- The healthcare company **GSK** and the **Barnes Foundation** established the smART Fund for Education, an endowment that provides annual support for K–8 education outreach programs in the School District of Philadelphia. Developed in partnership with administrators and teachers, the programs are designed to use the Foundation's art collection to enrich core curriculum subject areas, including literacy, science and math, history, and geography.
- **Subaru of America** supports the **Barnes Foundation**'s school outreach programs by providing a vehicle for the museums educators to travel to city schools.
- **Fondation d'entreprise Hermès** supports **V&A** creative workshops for young people to help them develop new skills in design (free sessions for young people and community groups, aged 16 – 24, who are not in education, employment or training as well as hands-on sessions for young people aged 13 – 19).

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## Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs



- **Rabobank Amsterdam**, the **Stedelijk** museum's main partner, focuses on activities for families and programmes designed for primary and secondary education. The partnership includes a variety of educational programs, free passes for teachers, and the Rabo Lab, a permanent education zone for children.

## Acquisition programs

- **Qantas Group**, Australia's national carrier, partners with **Tate** and **The Museum of Contemporary Art Australia** (MCA) around an International Joint Acquisition Programme for contemporary Australian art. Thanks to a \$2.75 million corporate gift from the Qantas Foundation, major artworks by contemporary Australian artists are acquired for the Tate and MCA, owned and displayed by both institutions.

At LACMA, all visitors receive free general admission  
on select federal holidays,  
sponsored by Target



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## Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs



## Brand-experience creator

### Experiential programs

- As part of In the Age of Giorgione exhibition at the **Royal Academy of Arts** in 2016, **Maserati** held the Maserati Esperienza: an evening reception of Italian excellence with cocktails, jazz, soul and funk music that could be heard in the most notable Italian jazz clubs and art historian's talks masterpieces by Giorgione.
- The Italian fashion brand **Gucci** has been supporting **LACMA**'s annual Art+Film Gala as its presenting sponsor since its inception in 2011. It honors an artist and a filmmaker and brings together art, film, fashion and entertainment celebrities. Gucci plays an active role in the creative development and overall vision for the event. Proceeds from the Art+Film Gala benefit LACMA's initiative to make film more central to the museum's curatorial programming, while also funding exhibitions, acquisitions, and educational programming, in addition to screenings that explore the intersection of art and film.
- Due to the support by **ING**, a Dutch-origin financial corporation, **Rijksmuseum** has a special 24-hour free zone exhibiting 17-century Dutch paintings at the Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.
- In 2015, to highlight the purchase of The Breach of the St. Anthony's Dike in Amsterdam by the 17th-century painter Jan Asselijn, with the support of **ING**, Rijksmuseum organized Daan Roosegaarde's Waterlicht immersive installation reflecting on the water in the Dutch history. Using LED technology, software and lenses, the virtual flood showed what the level of the sea would be in Amsterdam without human intervention.
- Courtesy of **Adidas**, **Brooklyn Museum** hosts Art & Yoga sessions on Saturdays.

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## Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships: From Product Collaborations to Experiential Programs



## Brand-content creator

### Content programs

- The French telecom company **Orange** partnered with **RMN-Grand Palais** to develop an art history MOOC.
- **MoMA**'s audio tour program is supported by **Bloomberg Philanthropies**.
- During the Cai Guo-Qiang exhibition in 2018, with the support of **Samsung**, the **Museo del Prado** presented a documentary showing viewers the artist's creative process.
- Thanks to the sponsorship of **Telefónica**, the **Museo del Prado** managed to make its historical archive (nearly 12,000 documents) available online. The company also supported the "Goya in the Prado" website and the online course on Velázquez.
- The Dutch telecom company **KPN** supports **Rijksmuseum** with IT expertise - data traffic and storage, website and app development.

### The energy company PECO supports Free First Sundays at Philadelphia's Barnes Foundation

Photo by Michael Perez



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**Key Types of Museum-Brand Partnerships:  
From Product Collaborations  
to Experiential Programs**



## **Brand-business partner**

This is an emerging trend in brands and the arts partnerships, which puts more emphasis on the involvement of the cultural partner in the sponsor's business practices - advertising, products and services.

- In April 2018, **Philips**, the founding sponsor of **Rijksmuseum**, included the museum into its campaign aimed to highlight the importance of fruit and vegetables and to promote juicers. Visitors entering the museum saw versions of three Dutch paintings with fruit removed. A museum attendant was also taking an apple out of a painting and putting it into a juicer. Audiences reactions were presented in a campaign film.
- **Philips** also collaborated with curators from **Rijksmuseum** and the **Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra** on enhancing the MRI procedure by creating a special theme devoted to Dutch Masters.
- The **Barnes Foundation** partnered with the telecommunications giant **Comcast's** volunteer mentoring group for middle and high school students. Meetings at the museum were followed by the private tours of galleries.

**Gucci has been supporting LACMA's annual Art+Film Gala as its presenting sponsor since its inception in 2011**





# **Trends in Museum Partnerships with Brands**



When partnering with companies, museums are looking to create customised projects, turning to a larger range of industries, and are becoming more willing to integrate brands on site, which used to be sort of a taboo several years ago. In 2016, the **Moscow Museum of Modern Art (MMOMA)** took on an experiment, which had not been implemented on such a large scale anywhere in the world. The institution presented the exhibition “The Art Up. Art In” created around a variety of different brands - from sneakers to hotels or private banks.

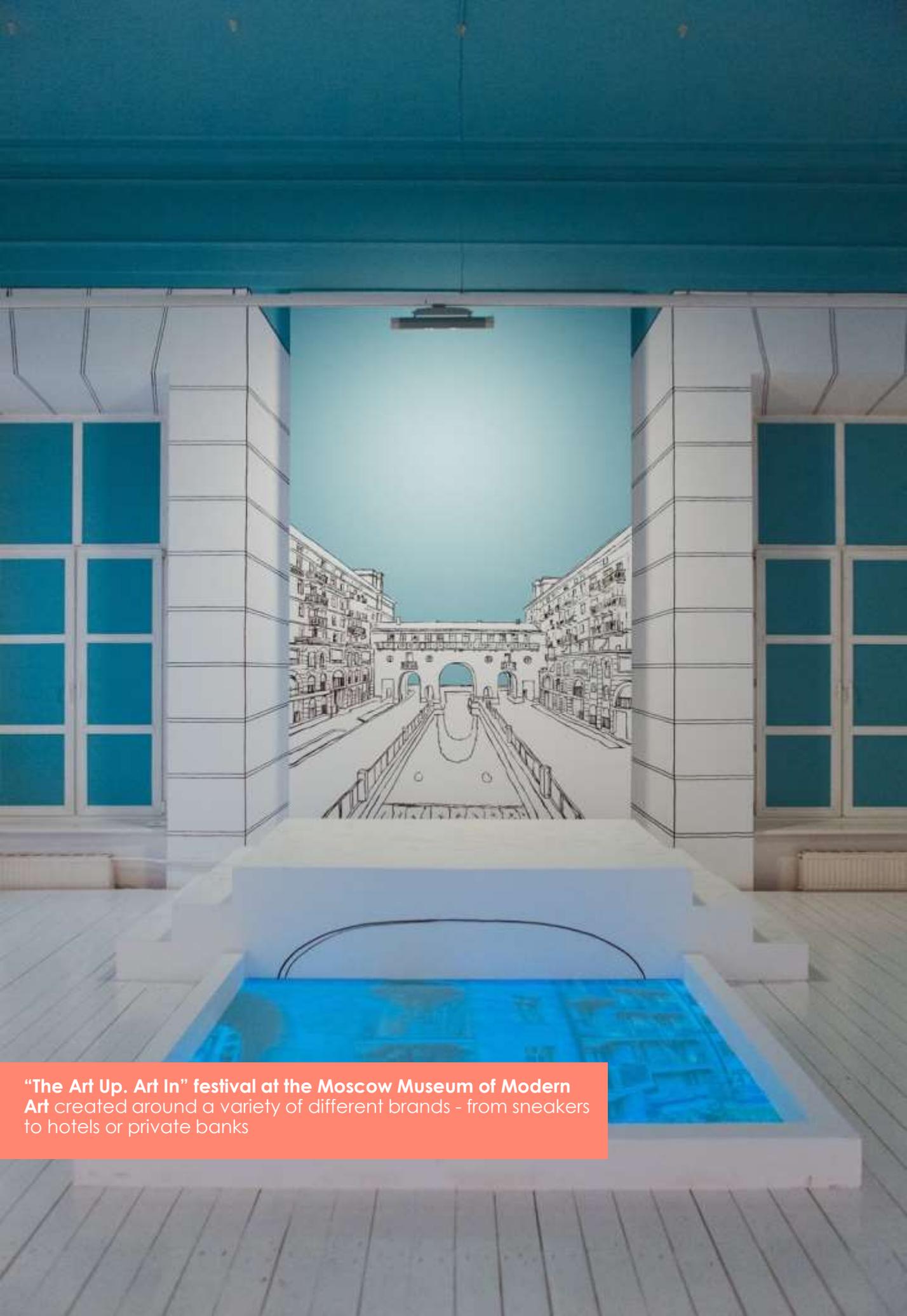
The festival was conceived as an attempt to show that each brand can be presented in a new way in the museum space,” says **MMOMA**’s PR Director **VERONIKA KANDAUROVA**.

“Our idea was to show connections and similarities between brands and museums as we are all part of real life. We aimed to highlight that museums are public spaces and that products can be artworks as well.”

With the exhibition, the organisers aimed to turn audiences’ attention to the fact that collaborations extend beyond just financial support and logo badging. “The architect **ALEXEY TREGUBOV**, who also works for theatrical projects, successfully managed to showcase brands’ essence in such a challenging environment as the classic museum space. For example, we had a collector’s room created in partnership with Gazprombank Private Banking”, **VERONIKA KANDAUROVA** adds. The exhibition was supplemented by a robust educational program, which included lectures from all brand participants.

According to **VERONIKA KANDAUROVA**, reception was mixed - for some, the project came off as too commercial and not worthy of museum display, for others - it seemed to be an innovative approach to partnerships and a challenge to stereotypically what is art.

Since 2016, museums have continued to experiment with and innovate the way they engage with brands, and the below 10 trends describe how their approach has changed over time.



**“The Art Up. Art In” festival at the Moscow Museum of Modern Art** created around a variety of different brands - from sneakers to hotels or private banks



## 10 Things Redefining Museum Partnerships with Brands

- 1 Creativity** — Museums are becoming more creative in approaching partnerships with brands
- 2 Involvement** — Brands are expecting visible impact, more feedback and better ROI at a lower investment
- 3 Variety** — Partnerships are built around a variety of museum programs, not just exhibitions
- 4 Opportunity** — Museums are considering a broader spectrum of industries for partnership opportunities
- 5 Laboratory** — As the role of museums is changing towards more of a participatory and laboratory-type of institution, they are looking into partnerships with tech companies to implement complex projects
- 6 Cooperation** — Corporate partnerships are the job of the whole institution, not just the Sponsorship/Corporate Partnerships department. Need for stronger cooperation between different departments
- 7 Reach** — Corporate partnerships provide opportunities to take the museum brand beyond the institutions' walls and to reach new audiences
- 8 Integration** — Museums are finding ways for on-site product integration, something they historically tried to avoid - better audience engagement is key
- 9 Competition** — Competition from peers and other sectors (sports, leisure) is getting stronger.
- 10 Value** — Museums provide value beyond brand alignment supporting corporate partners in business processes, employee engagement and CSR activities.



1.

## Creativity.

Museums are becoming more creative in approaching partnerships with brands.



### Beyond logo

As brands are striving to create experiential relationships with their consumers and to engage with them in a more authentic way, cultural partnerships are evolving as well. “They are becoming more custom-made and unique for a particular brand, moving away from standard sponsorship packages,” says CAROLINE **COLOMBE**, Fundraising Officer at the **RMN-Grand Palais**.

“We live in an increasingly brand aware and brand conscious but also a brand saturated world,” says Matthias **RAUCH**, a cultural innovation officer and head of the cultural urban development department of **the city of Mannheim**. “It is rare when a corporate sponsor is primarily interested in creating visibility, usually in competition with numerous other brands. Companies are looking to engage with the audiences in a more direct, emotional and ultimately also more effective way.”

“We are noticing that brands are looking beyond logo recognition and focusing on experiential elements where there are multiple, year-round opportunities to engage with audiences, including on-site at the museum and via digital/social engagement,” KATIE **KENNEDY**, AVP, Corporate and Foundation Partnerships at **LACMA**, agrees.

“New models are arising whereby corporate partners want to be innovative and mutually beneficial in how they work with Tate and with cultural institutions more widely,” says POLLY **BIDGOOD**, Director of Development at **Tate**.



“The opportunity to create something experiential and unique is increasingly leading the conversation with corporate partners, along with discussions around demonstrating ROI. The traditional one size fits all ‘logo and hospitality’ option no longer works, and a lot of effort goes in to creating unique one-off partnerships,” says STACEY **BOWLES**, Head of Corporate Partnerships at the **Victoria and Albert Museum**.

“In Vienna, there are many great cultural institutions in a very concentrated area. It is becoming increasingly difficult for museums to find sponsors, whether long-term partners or supporters for special exhibitions,” says KAROLA **KRAUS**, the General Director at **mumok**. “This is why mumok is continually developing new concepts for approaching potential partners, new ways of attracting them to mumok and our projects.”

According to MARIA **SERGEEVA**, formerly Deputy Director for communications and development at the **Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow**, “the trend is moving towards a brand’s integration to the museum experience, which embodies special events or even large-scale campaigns created in close collaboration with brands using not only their funding or not as much funding as intellectual capital (in project conceptualisation and production).”

As a response to the new demands from brands, cultural institutions are rethinking their programs and experimenting with their offers.

“The move reveals vast opportunities for creative thinking while expanding the limits of traditional sponsorships,” **SERGEEVA** adds.

## Custom-made partnerships

“We are now focusing our attention on creating custom partnership packages, including bundled opportunities that focus on key areas within the museum (i.e. Exhibitions @ LACMA; Fashion @ LACMA; Film @ LACMA; Kids & Family @ LACMA), which provide multiple opportunities or touchpoints throughout the year for brand integration,” KATIE **KENNEDY** from **LACMA**, explains. “This change requires museum staff to spend more time on gauging the viability of the activation ideas and getting several layers of approvals across multiple departments at the museum. While this shift often results in a larger workload, it also motivates the partnerships team to think creatively and encourages collaboration across the museum.”

“This shift in sponsorship trends means we have become more ambitious and creative in the type of partnerships we establish with brands. We are looking for different opportunities to present to brands and exploring new ways in which we can collaborate together,” says POLLY **BIDGOOD** from **Tate**. “For example, through our partnership with Uniqlo (who support our monthly late-night events at Tate Modern, Uniqlo Tate Lates) we have worked together to develop a Uniqlo Tate Lates beer that is available in our catering outlets at the monthly events. This creates an interesting story for visitors as well as an alternative onsite branding opportunity for Uniqlo beyond traditional posters and banners.”

## Trends in Museum Partnerships with Brands



“We constantly adapt and try to come up with new ideas,” says **YANN LE TOUHER**, Deputy Director of Development, Commercial Partnerships and Brand, at the **Louvre**. “For example, we are starting to think about brand associations and creating licensed products with corporate partners.”

According to **PAUL ALEZRAA**, Director of the cultural planning firm **Avesta**, which worked on more than 155 museums since 1993, museums’ approach to partnerships has improved to a large extent because of the efforts made by private institutions. “They were already on the business side of things, so it was easier for them to collaborate in a more effective way.” They often set the precedent, which moves the culture of collaborating with brands forward.

## Business professionals at cultural institutions

A different approach to partnerships requires museums to change their hiring processes, and they are becoming more open to bringing professionals from outside of the museum industry.

“Museums are now hiring professionals from the business who can talk to potential sponsors in the same language as well as can adapt to different working styles inside and outside the museum,” says **DMITRI YUSOV**, a consultant at Moscow-based **Cultural Diplomacy**.

**DMITRI BARSENKOV**, Deputy Director of The Museum of Russian Impressionism in Moscow, agrees that this is becoming more of a trend: “Cultural institutions are realizing the importance of promotion activities and the organization of high-quality services for their visitors and partners. This is reflected in attracting specialists with background in the commercial sectors who become part of the fundraising, digital, and membership teams.”

**UNIQLO collaborates with Tate Modern in London on UNIQLO Tate Late events** with music, talks, workshops, tours and performances





## 2.

### Involvement.

Brands are expecting visible impact, more feedback and better ROI at lower investment.



Brands are paying more attention to getting return on their sponsorship investments. They are also becoming more interested in seeing the impact their cooperation has on the cultural institution's strategy and performance.

"Brands strive to have an impact on the institutions they support, they want to see what has changed and what influence the partnership has brought," says **CAROLINE COLOMBE** from **RMN-Grand Palais**. "They also expect more feedback from their cultural partners on the engagement and how it can be tweaked and enhanced to take it further," she adds.

According to **YANN LE TOUHER** from the **Louvre**, "patrons want to be more involved and the museum has to find new ways to collaborate with them. "They are also increasingly emphasizing the importance of communication, full transparency, and evaluation," he says.

Bringing the corporate partner's representatives to serve on the museum's board can help engage the organization on a deeper level. "One aspect that has made our partnership with Morgan Stanley more successful is having the company's representatives on our three corporate leadership committees. With contacts across the organization, we can engage the partner in a number of ways which increases how beneficial the company views the collaboration when it is the time to renew," Will Cary from the Barnes Foundation explains.

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## Trends in Museum Partnerships with Brands



According to **KATIE KENNEDY** from **LACMA**, some of the museum's partners and prospects are seeking higher ROI at a lower investment, which puts more pressure on the sponsorship team.

**PHILIP TINARI**, Director of the **Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA)** in Beijing, compares international partnership practices with what is happening in China: "Overall, we are seeing a move away from straightforward money-for-logo sponsorship and toward the creation of brand-specific collaborations and activations. In the US, this trend is particularly mature, and it is based on the brands' understanding of the value that a museum can impart to their public profile." In contrast, "in China, the situation is somewhat reversed — many brands are looking for very direct and measurable results, and sometimes even treating the museums like for-hire venues or creative agencies rather than cultural institutions."

**Installation view of William Kentridge's "Notes Towards a Model Opera" exhibition at UCCA, supported by Rolex**  
Image courtesy the artist and UCCA





# 3.

## Variety.

Partnerships are built around a variety of museum programmes, not just exhibitions.



POLLY **BIDGOOD**, Director of Development at **Tate**, acknowledges that partners are also more willing to support different and varied programmes, from learning initiatives to late night openings, performance art, young people's schemes, digital innovation etc. "It is no longer just about how corporates engage with our exhibition programme."

"Rijksmuseum has partners on different levels - those who invest in research, those who support free access to the museum. It depends on the core values of the organisation, and it's important to figure out what they are and how you can make the partnership unique when starting a relationship," FRANCINE **HIJMANS**, formerly Head of Sponsorship at **Rijksmuseum**, says.

"We always include educational elements in our sponsorship packages," says VERONIKA **KANDAUROVA**, PR Director at the **Moscow Museum of Modern Art**. Its exhibition on the Italian pop-art artist GIOSETTA **FIORONI** in 2017 was supported by the Italian cashmere brand Falconeri, which sponsored free guided tours. The museum also develops tailor-made educational programs for its corporate members, including Gazprombank and Novatek. "Their employees and clients can attend lectures and exhibition tours, which engages them on a different level and gives them a better understanding of the institution the company supports," **KANDAUROVA** explains.



“There are a lot of examples of standard solutions, and it is important to apply creativity while making sure that the collaboration does not become overly commercial,” says DMITRI **BARSENKOV** from the **Museum of Russian Impressionism**.

“The challenge for the cultural institution is to keep the right balance between its mission and the tactical objectives of the partnership. For the brand, the challenge is to be integrated in the museum space in a native and authentic way.”

## 4.

### Opportunity.

Museums are looking at a broader spectrum of industries for partnership opportunities.



Museum development professionals are also getting more requests from sponsors in new sectors that did not used to be traditional cultural supporters in the past.

“We are seeing an increasing interest from new sectors, such as retail and technology, in addition to sectors with a longer tradition of sponsorship,” says POLLY **BIDGOOD** from **Tate**.

“The broad and varied range of exhibitions and events at the museum means we have attracted support from a wide range of brands for many years, from retailers (Harrods, Gucci, G Star Raw, Made.com) technology companies (Samsung, Toshiba, Sennheiser) through to the more traditional arts supporters in the financial services (American Express),” STACEY **BOWLES**, Head of Corporate Partnerships at the **Victoria and Albert Museum**, explains.

EMMANUEL **DELBOUIS**, strategic branding consultant at the **Ministry of Culture and Communication, France**, acknowledges a difference between the way luxury brands and general interest brands are approaching museum partnerships. “General brands are more inclined to create co-branded products with cultural institutions while luxury brands tend to focus more on image association (i.e. advertising films, fashion shows) and arts patronage without launching any co-branded product,” he says.

## Trends in Museum Partnerships with Brands



“We live in the interesting times when brand partnerships have entered the cultural world becoming its integral part,” says DMITRI **BARSENKOV** from The **Museum of Russian Impressionism**. “This is the reality we need to accept, embrace and stand up to the challenge. To do this, museums need to see opportunities from a wider perspective - companies, institutions that can become your partners often come from a variety of industries. However, it is also important to be patient - to achieve the goal, you often need time and effort.”

YANN **LE TOUHER**, Deputy Director of Development, Commercial Partnerships and Brand, at the **Louvre**, says: “Our fundraising strategy is based on the multifaceted approach towards museum donors.” “We focus on the diversification of sponsors (SMBs, French and international corporations, individual donors, and great patrons), diversification of target industries (banking, real estate, law firms, consulting companies, commercial brands, luxury goods), and the development of international networks of donors and partners,” he adds.



The **Museum of Russian Impressionism** partners with **LG Signature**, which multimedia panels are integrated in the exhibition space enriching visitor experience



# 5.

## Laboratory.

As the role of museums changes towards more of a participatory and laboratory-type institution, they are looking into partnerships with tech companies to implement complex projects.



The role of museums is evolving and they are turning more into culture production and participatory facilities rather than just preservation spaces where objects are gathered and displayed.

The “museum as a laboratory” concept is focused on collaboration, co-creation, and social experiences,” says BRENDAN **CIECKO**, Founder and CEO of **Cuseum**, a tech company that helps museums and public attractions engage their visitors. “This new or recalibrated museum “platform” becomes a playground for communities and businesses. Such approach leads to more dynamic exhibitions, supporting the creation of new works, and opportunities for participation.”<sup>20</sup>

As an example, **CIECKO** recalls the words of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art Director who said “If most museums are boxes for static display, the MASS MoCA has always aspired to be more like a turntable.”

20. Gay, M. (2017, February 09). Mass MoCA talks expansion - The Boston Globe. Retrieved from <https://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/art/2017/02/08/mass-moca-talks-expansion/FbFQFrKK4V2il9VM5lw8WP/story.html>



“Becoming production-oriented may strain resources and increase an organisation's reliance on outside partners. The cultural institutions that will triumph in the 21st-century will be those who build an army of partners and collaborators, not those who operate in silos and impermeable vaults,” **CIECKO** adds.

For technology brands, working with cultural institutions provides an opportunity to receive “built-in” distribution alongside recognisable brands. “Studies have shown museums are trusted more than some of the world's biggest brands, and this type of association is positive for any type of business,” **CIECKO** says. According to him, for startups, museums could serve as “experience factories” or sandboxes for new technologies, or vessels of massive datasets for machine learning and machine vision.”

In her interview for “The Museum of the Future: Insights and reflections from 10 international museums” paper by Mu.SA: Museum Sector Alliance, **KATI PRICE**, Head of Digital Media and Publishing at the **Victoria and Albert Museum**, also said that museums can be very attractive organizations for suppliers and start-ups to test their propositions. “Collaborations are excellent ways of testing new ideas and technologies to develop new content and experiences. But they must be led from within, and be tied to your organizational mission,” she adds.

## 6.

### Cooperation.

Corporate partnerships are the job of the whole institution, not just the Sponsorship/Corporate Partnerships department which increases the need for stronger cooperation between different departments.



## Trends in Museum Partnerships with Brands



To manage corporate partnerships more effectively, museum development managers are trying to work more closely with other departments within the institution, which helps them identify additional opportunities and develop robust communications and event strategies around sponsorship projects.

“We draw upon expertise from across the museum, and it takes a significant amount of time to prepare and deliver joint programmes, but the results are more often than not equally rewarding for museum and the sponsor,” says STACEY **BOWLES**, Head of Corporate Partnerships at the **Victoria and Albert Museum**. “Having the flexibility and the creativity to do this are essential to ensure we can work with the best partners and ensure we maintain our top standard as a museum that can deliver award winning partnerships.”

“In successful partnerships, all teams talk to each other and together they are able to create a comprehensive experience for the brand,” says CAROLINE **COLOMBE** from the **RMN-Grand Palais**.

“Involving all relevant departments at the institution at the start of a new project ensures that the project is aligned with and complements the organisation’s independent creative programming, that no opportunities are missed, that there is sufficient organisational resource to implement it and to drive the best value and efficiencies,” EDDIE **WALKER**, formerly Head of New Business at the **Royal Academy of Arts** agrees.

“You have to inform everyone at the museum about the partnership, so when it becomes relevant, it can be highlighted in many different ways,” FRANCINE **HIJMANS**, formerly Head of Sponsorship at **Rijksmuseum**, says. “As a development professional, I’m now much more involved in the work with communications. It’s more about how you position the partner inside your organisation to get the best out of the collaboration.”

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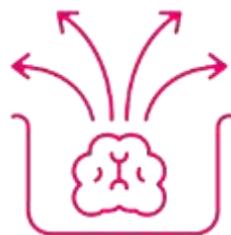
RMN-Grand Palais partnered with the telecom company Orange on art history MOOC development



# 7.

## Reach.

Corporate partnerships provide opportunities to take the museum brand beyond the institutions' walls and to reach new audiences.



Benefits of working with corporate partners can go beyond just financial and in-kind (product or service) support. It is also an opportunity to take the museum brand outside its walls and engage new audiences. There are multiple examples of corporate sponsors setting up dedicated zones in their retail spaces, referencing their cultural partners in their messaging, and introducing them in different business settings (trade shows, conferences, etc.).

“Sponsorship clearly supports the museum financially, and long term partnerships provide much needed stability and guaranteed income. However, benefits really do go beyond just financial support,” says **STACEY BOWLES**, Head of Corporate Partnerships at the **Victoria and Albert Museum**. “We have many examples of collaborative activity that has provided fantastic content for the museum, free promotion across extensive sponsor channels, technology to support the public programme as well as exposure to new audiences.”

“Brands can help museums tell a different, engaging story and vice versa. Both can capitalise on new experiences which they couldn't create on their own,” says **PASCAL HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l'Élysée**.



## Beyond the walls

“Our partnership with HS1 Ltd (owners of St Pancras International station) has enabled us to take the Royal Academy (RA) brand off-site elsewhere in London and to present new work from international artists, our Royal Academicians, to the public for free,” **EDDIE WALKER**, the museum’s former Head of New Business, provides an example. “It is a close and successful collaboration between HS1 and the RA sponsorship, curatorial, press and marketing teams.”

“One of Rijksmuseum’s partners is the bank ING, which has a large network of card holders. So, when they reach out to their audiences to tell the story of the partnership, of course, the museum benefits from this extensively. It wouldn’t be able to set up a communications campaign on such a scale itself,” **FRANCINE HIJMANS**, formerly Head of Sponsorship at **Rijksmuseum**, explains. “AkzoNobel created a special paint for the museum, and now in paint stores you can buy exactly the same color. The museum’s strategy is to be open and enable its realisation.”

“Cooperation with general brands allow cultural institutions to target new (and often younger) audiences that might be unfamiliar with them,” **EMMANUEL DELBOUIS** from the **Ministry of Culture and Communication, France**. He shares two examples of successful partnerships that allowed to introduce museums to new audiences.

“When Max Mara presented a bag in honor of Renzo Piano, the architect of the new building for the Whitney Museum of American Art, it was a way for the cultural institution to take its brand beyond its walls. At the same time, for Max Mara, it was an opportunity to enhance its image and to position itself as a cutting edge brand,” he says.

Another example of a partnership that allows the cultural institution to expand its brand is the collaboration between UNIQLO and MOMA in New York. “UNIQLO’s SPRZ NY (Surprise New York) store presents content about artists on fashion items, and the museum’s curators certify it all. iPads at the store’s MOMA corner are connected to the museum’s website. Special MOMA editions are also sold in other countries, increasing the awareness of the museum on the international level. At the same time, for UNIQLO, it is a way to become more local, closer to New York and the US, in general,” **DELBOUIS** explains.

“It is nice to see how brands can suggest something extra when you reach the necessary level of trust. They can find other opportunities to talk about the partnership in a new context,” says **PASCAL HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l’Elysée**. “Brands can help cultural institutions get exposure and visibility within new business networks. For example, our partner, a watch company Parmigiani Fleurier, highlights the results of our partnership at a leading trade fair and invites its sponsored jazz festival guests to our museum as well.”

In 2015, the MMOMA worked with Swatch to create a pop-up art gallery at the Swiss watch brand’s boutique in the center of Moscow. “The partnership showed that museums can go beyond their walls and organize exhibitions, lectures and the kids’ program at the brand’s space.”



Royal Academician Conrad Shawcross unveils his new installation *The Interpretation of Movement* at St.Pancras international station

## Sharing expertise

According to LAURA **SEARS**, formerly Head of Corporate Partnerships at the **Victoria & Albert Museum**, a partnership with Levi's around the exhibition "You say you want a revolution? Records and labels 1966-1970" (10 September 2016 - 26 February 2017) helped to bring young audiences to the museum as the brand created a special project to support emerging musicians, which was launched at the cultural institution.

"Levi's worked with the V&A to spread the message, and the exhibition was advertised in their stores. The value of the Levi's in-store promotions, measured in footfall, was over 1 million people," LAURA **SEARS** said at the Culture Business 2017 Melbourne conference. "Due to Levi's experience in retail, it was easy to work in close collaboration with their team to represent the brand in the museum's store."

"Together with the museum's sponsors Tele2 and Mastercard we tried different digital marketing tools and organised successful online streams, which significantly boosted our online audience and increased museum attendance. This gave the museum and the brand the opportunity to interact with new audiences," says MARIA **SERGEEVA**, formerly at the **Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow**.



During the Gaudi exhibition in 2017 the Moscow Museum of Modern Art partnered with the CheapTrip travel service creating a scavenger hunt around Moscow. To win, participants needed to find Modernist buildings, and the route eventually led them to the company's office where they could take part in a draw with a trip to Barcelona, Gaudi's hometown, being the main prize.

“Such collaboration gave us access to CheapTrip's young audiences and allowed us to complement our programming around the exhibition,” says VERONIKA **KANDAUROVA** from the **Moscow Museum of Modern Art**.

Besides expanding audiences, business partners can help museums enhance their overall approach to audience engagement - understanding what attracts the new generation of museum goers and trying multidisciplinary programs. “Museum is a platform of offerings, and private brands can help them go further in this direction,” says PAUL **ALEZRAA** from **Avesta Group**. “Of course, money is important, but corporate partnerships bring about the questions of values, multidisciplinary focus in programming, and the importance of authenticity, which is the key asset that museums offer.”

Partnerships with brands can often encourage museums to look into going multidisciplinary. “Museums shouldn't concentrate only on their own discipline. Science museums should be presenting art, art museums should be putting together fashion or history exhibitions,” adds PAUL **ALEZRAA**.



“Moments” exhibition by Barbara Davidson  
supported by Volvo Cars, Multimedia Art Museum's  
strategic partner



# 8.

## Integration.

Finding ways for on-site product integration, something that museums historically tried to avoid - better audience engagement is key.



Museum development professionals notice an increasing demand for on-site product integrations. This was a big no-no years ago, but now cultural institutions are trying to accommodate such requests if doing so could bring additional benefits to their audiences.

“Partners are expressing more and more interest in on-campus integration where our audience can experience their products - historically this is something that the museum has avoided,” says **KATIE KENNEDY** from **LACMA**. “As the ask to do this type of activation continues to increase, we have been trying to come up with more creative ways to do this as long as it is additive to our visitors experience and isn't disruptive or off brand for LACMA.”

“Currently, the sector is experimenting with authentic ways of product display, trial and demonstration,” **EDDIE WALKER**, formerly Head of New Business at the **Royal Academy of Arts**, explains. “For example, the RA has recently been working with automotive (Maserati) and virtual reality technology (HTC Vive) brands.”

“The success of such collaborations is in the level of how much certain offers are used by audiences,” says **VERONIKA KANDAUROVA** from the **Moscow Museum of Modern Art**. She recalls the museum's collaboration with the alcohol brand Simple, which presented wine glasses with clouds of sugar cotton on top of them during the opening of Russian artist **TAUS MAKHACHEVA**'s exhibition. “This was very much appreciated by guests who actively shared photos on social media. Simple idea, but creative and not going overboard, it matched the exhibition theme and conveyed the brand's essence at the same time.”



The **Museum of Russian Impressionism** partners with LG Signature, which multimedia panels are integrated in the exhibition space. "They enrich visitor experience and showcase the product in a new context," says **DMITRI BARSENKOV**, the museum's Deputy Director. "The key trend in partnerships is a deeper level of integration and creating contents together, which is relevant both for the brand and the institution's audiences."

## 9.

### Competition.

Stronger competition from peers and other sectors (sports, leisure).



As public funding is going down and brands are seeking more ROI from their engagements, cultural institutions should be mindful of increasing competition from both their peers and other sponsorship opportunities, i.e. sports and leisure.

"With the cuts in central funding to cultural institutions, it is more and more essential for us to obtain external support for our programme, but this is also true for our colleagues across the cultural sector, so we are sometimes competing against our peers to secure that support from brands," says **POLLY BIDGOOD**, Director of Development at **Tate**.

The stronger competition from other sectors in terms of securing corporate support can be also explained with the change in visitor preferences. "People's expectations are to go to a place, not a museum, in particular. And museums are competing with all the other places where visitors can spend time," says **PAUL ALEZRAA** from **Avesta Group**.



# 10.

## Value.

Museums provide value beyond brand alignment supporting corporate partners in business processes, employee engagement and CSR activities.



Besides image transfer and experiential marketing opportunities, the arts sector can also provide the business world with creative thinking expertise, employee engagement and professional development programs.

“Culture can often address and, what is more important, engage audiences in a more meaningful and thus sustainable way. This can often times be best achieved if the corporation enters into a true collaboration as an equal partner and through that becomes more of a facilitator and enabler rather than the entity simply exchanging money for brand visibility,” says Matthias **RAUCH**, a cultural innovation officer and head of the cultural urban development department of **the city of Mannheim**. “In times of digitalisation and the huge range of transformations inevitably coming along with it, companies are increasingly realising the immense innovation potential of culture and the arts for their core business. This can certainly not be fully utilised through marketing, but through collaboration and cooperation,” he adds.

“With the rise in the corporate world of design thinking, Creative Placemaking, empathy training, and volunteerism, cultural organisations are uniquely positioned as highly visible partners for companies looking to achieve other goals beyond brand alignment,” says WILLIAM **CARY**, the Senior Director for Annual and Corporate Giving at the **Barnes Foundation** in Philadelphia.

According to **CARY**, cultural organizations are places where companies can offer their employees personal and professional development as well as community impact. “We know workers, especially millennials, are more likely to stay with companies who they feel have made an investment in their professional and personal wellbeing.”



YANN LE TOUHER, Deputy Director of Development, Commercial Partnerships and Brand, at the **Louvre**, agrees with the observation: “Partners are also increasingly interested in programs that help in mobilizing their employees.”

The Barnes Foundation partnered with the telecommunications giant Comcast's volunteer mentoring group for middle and high school students. They held their meetings at the museum and presentations were followed by private tours of galleries. “This brought first-time visitors and students to the Barnes for free and Comcast was thrilled, even sending a senior executive to give welcoming remarks,” says WILL **CARY**.

For Philips, the founding partner of Rijksmuseum, the cultural partner is also a place for creative inspiration. “One of the biggest disruptors at the museum is actually Rembrandt who in his times completely changed the way artworks were created at that time,” FRANCINE **HIJMANS** formerly Head of Sponsorship at **Rijksmuseum**, says. “An employee from Philips' Design department was thinking about the future of the remote control unit. So, he took a tour of the museum challenging himself to come up with the ways the objects he saw could be used for his device in development. And eventually, he made some changes to the remote control. This is an example of how art can stimulate creativity - even for a remote control unit, a hair dryer or a tooth brush,” she adds.

A cultural institution can also become a business collaborator for the business. For example, Philips cooperated with Rijksmuseum and the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. Together, they created a new MRI scan theme, which transformed the 45-min process into art viewing and music experience.

A painting of a landscape with a large, leafy tree on the left and a small figure in the foreground. The background shows a hazy, light-colored sky and distant structures.

Philips teamed up with **Rijksmuseum** and the **Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra** on the 45 minute Dutch Masters Ambient Experience theme for MRI scan, where paintings slowly build from sketches to the final artworks bringing feelings of calmness



# **Best Practices and Insights for Museum Leaders**



1

Know your personality as an institution and develop custom-made experiential offers

2

Multi-channel strategies result in multiple opportunities

3

Develop a trend spotting mindset

4

Storytelling is key

5

Focus on ensuring sustainability and building trust

6

Experiment with different offers based on close collaboration with other departments

7

Think outside the box and know your stakeholders

8

Try to find alignment between your institution and the brand

9

Know how you are going to measure success

10

Stay in touch to establish long-term collaboration



1.



Know your personality as an institution and develop custom-made experiential offers

Start with understanding of the museum brand and what it could offer to potential partners

Prior to starting a potential partner search, it is important for the cultural institution to develop its own brand and to understand its key assets.

“Before you partner with a brand, you need to become a brand yourself. It should be the collaboration of the equals,” says PAUL **ALEZRAA** from **Avesta Group**.

Alezraa thinks that one of the biggest issues that museums face is that they don't know how to evaluate what they offer. “Many museums still think that people visit them because of their collection or because they provide knowledge. But the new generation is not interested in such approach,” says PAUL **ALEZRAA**. “They want to research and find something themselves. They want to make their own choice.”

According to **ALEZRAA**, the museum's advantage is the sense of authenticity and realness. “In a museum, you are in front of something that is true. And most of the brands are looking for that authenticity, a sense of something real,” he adds.

Develop custom-made experiential offers

Higher expectations from brands on the effectiveness of their sponsorships and the rising interest from a larger range of industries challenge museum development professionals to approach corporate partnerships in a more creative way.

“There is a huge interest from brands, especially from general interest brands, to work with arts and culture, so museums need to think how to take advantage of this trend. However, they don't always do that,” says EMMANUEL **DELBOUIS**, strategic branding consultant at the **Ministry of Culture and Communication, France**.



"Flexibility, transparency and openness to experiment and explore new ideas are all incredibly important elements of successful collaborations," says **KATIE KENNEDY**, AVP, Corporate and Foundation Partnerships at **LACMA**.

"You need to have flexibility," **PASCAL HUFSCHMID**, Head of External Affairs at **Musée de l'Elysée**, agrees. "Standard sponsorship grids could serve for setting a framework and navigating, but the most impactful partnership is often 'made to measure'. It should fit the brand and the museum like a glove."

"More and more often brands are asking cultural institutions to cooperate on special terms, and fundraisers will have to deal with this increasing demand," says **CAROLINE COLOMBE**, Fundraising Officer at **RMN-Grand Palais**. "If brands are ready to commit for the long-term, they want to have what others do not."

According to **KAROLA KRAUS**, the General Director at **mumok**, the museum team works on an individual basis with every corporate partner. "Given different structural and budgetary situations at different companies, it is very important to work on tailor-made cooperation packages. These should not only fit in with the CSR of the business, but also present mumok as an attractive "hospitality platform," which offers the optimum framework for customer relations and creative dialog in an exclusive setting.

## 2.



### Multi-channel strategies result in multiple opportunities

#### Create partnership opportunities around different programs and initiatives

As there are more companies from different sectors looking into opportunities to engage with arts and culture and create memorable experiences for their target audiences, it is important for a cultural institution to consider a diversification of its programs to offer to potential partners. Some brands might be interested in supporting existing education programs or in developing custom initiatives that would serve their goals while fulfilling the museum's mission.

Cultural institutions should consider offering different levels of engagement depending on the brand's goals and the duration of time it is ready to commit.



Another important factor is the priorities of cultural institutions themselves. According to PHILIP **TINARI** from **UCCA**, museums should develop different modes of collaborations that can be tailored to their distinct needs and situations. However, there is little to be gained from collaborations that are not strategic and lasting, he adds.

“Museums need to prioritize what they want to do in terms of different levels of corporate collaborations - patronage, partnerships, and sponsorships,” says PAUL **ALEZRAA** from **Avesta Group**.

“A cultural institution approaching brand collaborations in a smart way, first, needs to find a long-term partner and to make it very much involved in the museum’s activities,” says EMMANUEL **DELBOUIS** from the **Ministry of Culture and Communication**, France. “Second, it needs to have more short-term partnerships linked to particular exhibitions. Third, they need to develop many initiatives focused on co-branded products around certain events (capsule collections), which would help in highlighting upcoming activities. Fourth, they can also have partnerships around free access to the museum.”

“In our strategy, we have different levels of engagement - we offer an opportunity to become the sponsor of our overall content production activity, to be affiliated with a specific sector of activity (exhibition, education, etc.), or with a special project which is renewed from year to year,” PASCAL **HUFSCHMID**, Head of External Affairs at the **Musée de l’Elysée**, explains.

According to TERESA **IAROCCHI MAVICA**, Director V-A-C foundation, museums of the future as the new agents of social engineering, will require a different level of relationships between cultural institutions and brands. “They don’t imply just one-off collaborations. All processes taking place inside public spaces have to be in line with long-term planning because nothing solid could be built in one go. This is first and foremost the question of social responsibility.” She also adds that for GES-2, V-A-C is “looking for soulmates, partners, colleagues, co-authors, rather than sponsors, and we’re not acting this way either.” “It is important to delve deeper into the complexity of the situation rather than organize separate events.”

## Create multiple activation touch points and new ways to recognize partners

According to FRANCINE **HIJMANS**, formerly Head of Sponsorship at Rijksmuseum, “partnerships with brands are now much more about brand activation and building business cases.” “They are about trying to create a journey together.”



“As our museum evolves it’s important that we create opportunities for multiple touch points throughout the year offering visibility and integration that satisfy both the brand and the organisation,” says **KATIE KENNEDY** from **LACMA**.

“With the increasing prominence of the digital, both in marketing and advertising, as well as in how we speak to and interact with our audiences, we are developing new ways we can recognise and credit our supporters, be that through intelligent digital advertising or the creation of rich content, says **POLLY BIDGOOD** from **Tate**. “We want to find ways to celebrate how we work with brands in a language that is engaging to our audiences.”

### 3.



## Develop a trend spotting mindset

### Embrace an agency mindset

**EDDIE WALKER**, formerly Head of New Business at the **Royal Academy of Arts**, sees the need for an agency culture at museums, which is fast moving, based on responding to briefs, tailoring proposals, and idea generation.

According to **WALKER**, it is important for a cultural institution to have a deeper understanding of corporate branding, marketing, advertising and sponsorship strategy. “The language of donations, philanthropy and CSR will not get the necessary traction required in the current climate.” He also finds experience of working in other industries outside of the arts to be crucial to success.



## Look to other industries for trends and ideas

According to VERONIKA **KANDAUROVA**, PR Director at the **Moscow Museum of Modern Art**, the success of collaboration depends on the level of creativity behind it rather than the intention just to place the brand in the museum space.

According to EDDIE **WALKER**, formerly at the **Royal Academy of Arts**, the creativity of activations in corporate partnerships is determined by the ability to look outside the arts and culture industries for marketing and sponsorship ideas, innovation, trends and insights. “Follow sponsorship innovation trends in other passion areas such as sports, music and wider cultural segments and implement them in the arts,” he says.

### 4.

### Storytelling is key



## Provide storytelling and thought leadership opportunities

As partnerships are moving beyond the logo showcase, there are more opportunities to build robust storytelling campaigns around them.

“Aim to be one step ahead of your competitors with content, digital communications and thought leadership opportunities,” EDDIE **WALKER** recommends. “And translate that into tangible benefits and commercial value for the client.”

“We find that our audiences have a real appetite to hear more about Tate and our programme, so when a partnership makes it possible for us to do something really exciting, we can be comfortable sharing that excitement with our audiences,” says POLLY **BIGWOOD**, Director of Development at **Tate**. “As partnerships become more innovative and varied, and as they help facilitate increasingly pioneering projects, there are also a greater number of opportunities to tell the story of the engagement.”



“We have found here at the V&A that a genuine authentic connection between the sponsored subject matter (usually an exhibition) and the brand makes a successful partnership. Where there is an authentic link, with strong storytelling opportunities, the partnership can more readily be integrated and embraced across a variety of museum departments,” STACEY **BOWLES**, Head of Corporate Partnerships at the **Victoria and Albert Museum**, explains. “It helps to generate sponsor stories in press coverage, mentions across social media, bring sponsor representatives and experts into the public programme and collaborations with the retail and licensing teams. Ultimately benefitting both parties.”

A recent example of this is the V&A's partnership with **Swarovski**, sponsor of the Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams exhibition. Swarovski has a 70-year history with the Christian Dior brand, having started collaboration with its founder in 1956. “This means objects throughout the exhibition naturally feature Swarovski crystals, it's been an authentic story to share with journalists, Nadia Swarovski will speak as part of our public programme, a great draw for V&A audiences,” says STACEY **BOWLES**, Head of Corporate Partnerships at the **Victoria and Albert Museum**.

“Swarovski has kindly provided crystals for our family activity workshops run during the exhibition as well as collaborating with the V&A Learning Team on a project with students at a fashion college.”

“Our partnership team is in close communication with our press, marketing and digital teams to ensure that we are able to deliver on all elements before they are promised,” KATIE **KENNEDY** from **LACMA**, explains. “It's important to make sure that the partnership deliverables are consistent with the institutional ethos and brand especially when we are promoting it via a native museum channel/platform.”

“**Royal Academy** collaborates very closely with its partners and their agencies to co-create a marketing and communication plan as soon as possible, at the genesis of each project, with a focus on creating meaningful content that will suit both our audiences,” says EDDIE **WALKER**, the museum's former Head of New Business.

However, there are limitations, of course. “There might be an expectation that the museum is going to do extensive promotion around the partnership, but the brand must not see the museum as an extra communications department. Overall, we always aim at long-term partnerships where we can create a story we tell together,” PASCAL **HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l'Elysée** says.



“It is important to clearly show that both the business and the cultural institution have a common goal in their work together, a goal that meets the philosophy of each of them,” says **KAROLA KRAUS** from **mumok**.

“Of course, everything depends on particular goals of the partnership, and some projects aren’t targeted at wide audiences,” **DMITRI BARSENKOV**, Deputy Director at the **Museum of Russian Impressionism** explains. “But for others, we rely on the full range of communications tools - besides traditional ones, we use streams and integrations in the museum’s social networks, newsletters, and promo campaigns. We also actively engage our media partners.”

“We try to produce some tailored content that weaves the brand’s message into the communications around whatever exhibition they happen to be supporting,” says **PHILIP TINARI** from **UCCA**. “It can also be interesting to take a more hands-off approach and see what can be gained from allowing the brand to communicate to their own constituency.”

## Share content and explain the context

**PASCAL HUFSCHMID** stresses the need to share more content with a cultural partner. “Brands are interested to get content to fuel their communications. We create high-quality materials that enable them to tell their stories through ours.”

He compares it with the example of walking into a museum accompanied by a curator, which gives the visitor a completely different experience and makes him/her perceive the content in a new light. “It works the same way in partnerships - we strive to bring that excitement and amazement when you get to know the behind-the-scenes story.”



## Art installations created for **BMW** 7 Individual presentation at the Museum of Russian Impressionism, Moscow

Taking time to educate your partner is also important. It can be about sharing information on certain art limitations or providing context around the creative process.

“For example, in photography, you can’t make amendments because it is an artwork, and sometimes for marketing purposes, brands might be tempted to change colors or cut something out. My job is to explain that it is impossible. So, it is about nurturing comprehension to set boundaries,” says **HUFSCHMID**.

“When we receive nominees’ projects for the Prix Elysée, we also explain to our prize partner, PARMIGIANI **FLEURIER**, what kind of story the artist is trying to tell,” he adds.

According to KATIE **KENNEDY** from **LACMA** the cultural institution plays a critical role in helping brands understand the institution’s audiences - what will resonate and what won’t. “This insight can be helpful when speaking to a brand and can help ensure a successful activation,” she says.



# 5.



## Focus on ensuring sustainability and building trust

### Think of sustainability of projects based on in-kind partnerships

In in-kind sponsorships for strategic activities, especially when it relates to technological support, potential challenge lies in making the project sustainable in the long-term perspective.

“For example, when a tech company helps the museum with the ticketing system or creating audio guides, you need to make sure that there is a transition process, and the institution’s team is able to maintain the service after the sponsorship ends,” says **CAROLINE COLOMBE**, Fundraising Officer at the RMN-Grand Palais.

In her comments for the New York Times, **HILARY KNIGHT**, head of digital content at **Tate**, said that although she would like to use VR more in future exhibitions, there was still uncertainty about sustainability of such projects. “It’s hard to create a strategy at the moment because we don’t yet know where funding for these kinds of projects will come from.”

### Ensure your relationship is based on trust

Trust is the foundation of any successful partnership. “This is the prerequisite to any successful partnership - in any industry,” **DMITRI YUSOV** from **Cultural Diplomacy** says.

“Tate is a valued and trusted arts brand, and our partners have faith in our proven ability to deliver world class programming,” says **POLLY BIGWOOD** from **Tate**. One of the examples of how the trust is key to a successful corporate partnership is Tate’s engagement with BMW.



“BMW has supported the live programme at Tate since 2012, a time when performance art was still seen as relatively experimental and not part of mainstream gallery programming across the public sector,” **BIGWOOD** explains. “The BMW Tate Live programme originally existed online but over the last five years it has evolved to the point where we now have dedicated spaces for performance art at Tate Modern, and an annual BMW Tate Live Exhibition every March which displays live and performance art as part of our core exhibition programme.” Alignment with an innovative art form helps BMW highlight how the innovative the brand is.

“Fear of the unknown is a huge constraint in sponsorships,” says **PASCAL HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l’Elysée**. “However, sponsor credibility will only increase when the brand is able and confident enough to step back and guarantee full artistic freedom. For example, one of the previous winners of the Prix Elysée supported by the Swiss watch brand Parmigiani Fleurier proposed the most challenging of projects related to Syria. It clearly shows that it is possible to do edgy things with the support of sponsors.”

A person in a dark, smoky environment, possibly performing. The person is silhouetted against a bright, hazy background, with their arms raised. The scene is atmospheric and dramatic, with dark smoke or mist filling the space.

**Tate Live performance**  
supported by BMW, London



# 6.



Experiment with different offers based on close collaboration with other departments

Be ready to be surprised and rethink collaboration opportunities. Don't forget to have fun in the meantime

Flexibility required for successful partnerships is not only about creating tailor-made offers, it also implies the ability to listen and the readiness to accept unexpected turns in negotiations with a brand.

“Successful partnerships don't always start with clear ideas. Allow yourself to be surprised in a meeting,” says **CAROLINE COLOMBE**, Fundraising Officer at the **RMN-Grand Palais**. “Do your homework, develop matching points between your institution and the brand, come up with ideas on a variety of options, but be open and ready to start anew. It is very important for a fundraiser to know what is going on at their institutions, so you could always come up with an alternative option.”

“Have fun,” **KATIE KENNEDY** from **LACMA**, adds. “We are so lucky to work in such a creative environment and having the opportunity to bring partners along for the journey is a true gift.”

“The ways in which professionals in the world of art approach art are certainly not the same as the ways an art lover looks at art, or a decision-maker in a company who is interested in art and wants to form partnerships in the field,” says **KAROLA KRAUS** from **mumok**. “This of course leads to detailed discussions, which I find a very exciting and enriching part of my work.”



## Communicate with other departments and senior management to identify new opportunities

Corporate partnerships are no longer just the work of a sponsorship department, it is key that everyone is on board and all programs and activation opportunities are taken into account.

“People in charge of partnerships should be thinking on a much more horizontal level and work in collaboration with other departments within the institution – communications, education, curators, etc. This helps establish a content-based partnership, which speaks to the needs of the cultural institution and supports brands in achieving their goals,” PASCAL HUFSCHMID from the **Musée de l’Elysée**, explains.

According to CAROLINE COLOMBE from the **RMN-Grand Palais**, development teams need to be close to the institution’s top management to be able to offer unique experiences for brands and to provide them with exceptions in offers. “You should share your fundraising strategy with your colleagues in other departments – communications, marketing and education - and update them on your activities.”

One of the examples of successful partnerships in **COLOMBE**’s professional career is the initiative implemented by the Louvre with the Foundation PSA, which focused on the issues of mobility.

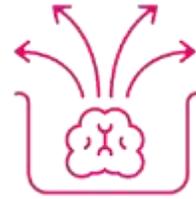
As part of the la Petite Galerie du Louvre project, her team developed a tailored exhibition at one of PSA Group’s car manufacturing facilities in the outskirts of Paris in June 2016. There were several replicas of artworks placed at the entrance the factory, and once a week a cultural mediator from the Louvre introduced them to the workers. “It was a well-balanced collaboration, through which each side was able to meet its goals. The car company and its foundation managed to bring new cultural experiences to its workers while the museum targeted the underserved community in the unprivileged area of Paris,” says she. The fundraising and education team worked very closely to make sure that the institution would receive sponsorship support while reaching out to the museum’s target audiences.

**Musée de l’Elysée in Lausanne partners with the watch brand Parmigiani Fleurier around the Prix Elysée, an award for promising photographers or artists using photography**





# 7.



## Think outside the box and know your stakeholders

### Target brands from a broader range of industries as potential partners

As more and more tech, retail, automotive brands are looking into cultural engagement, museums should have a broader view when targeting potential partners. Leading cultural institutions are already successfully cooperating with new corporate players implementing technically advanced projects and providing access to wider audiences.

“Be open to a variety of sectors and companies – this broadens the opportunities for support, opens up new opportunities for wider and different audiences, and allows for varied partnerships,” says **POLLY BIDGOOD** from **Tate**. “It also creates interesting networking opportunities across your different partners.”

For the opening of Tate Modern's major Modigliani exhibition in 2017, the museum unveiled a new virtual reality experience reimagining the painter's final studio in Paris with the help of HTC Vive. “This is the first time we have been able to use VR as part of Tate's programme, integrating the experience within the exhibition, and we have been delighted with the press and public response so far,” **POLLY BIDGOOD** adds.

**EDDIE WALKER**, formerly Head of New Business at the **Royal Academy of Arts** says that the museum's collaborations with technology companies, such as HTC Vive and Google Arts & Culture demonstrate “the RA's appetite to experiment and support its partners with the validation they require in the arts and creative industries.”

Target has been the lead underwriter of LACMA's Free Holiday Mondays, which provides access to the museum for free on key Holidays throughout the year. “The brand's investment has allowed for 10k+ attendees per Target Free Holiday Monday to experience all that LACMA has to offer free of charge. It is an important initiative at LACMA and allow for a critical piece of our mission statement to be realized,” says **KATIE KENNEDY** from **LACMA**.



8.



Try to find alignment between  
your institution and the brand

## View your institution as a connecting platform among artists, brands, and audiences

To be successful with their partnerships, cultural institutions should view themselves as a meeting place for artists, brands, and audiences.

“By making the Prix Elysée possible, the Swiss brand of luxury watchmakers Parmigiani Fleurier enables the Musée de l'Elysée to actively carry out its task of supporting artists. This is a genuine example of a public-private partnership that is of benefit to all parties involved (artist, museum, sponsor, and publisher),” PASCAL **HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l'Elysée**, explains.

“More than just a place to exhibit and preserve heritage, the museum becomes a point of view, inspiring and unifying, creating solid links between partners from different horizons to the benefit of the artists and, in fine, the public.”

He also adds there might be a concern that a cultural institution sells itself to a brand, which makes it important to prove the shared value in a partnership. “We view ourselves as a launchpad for new artistic production, and we need to explain to artists that brands are here to help, not to interfere.”

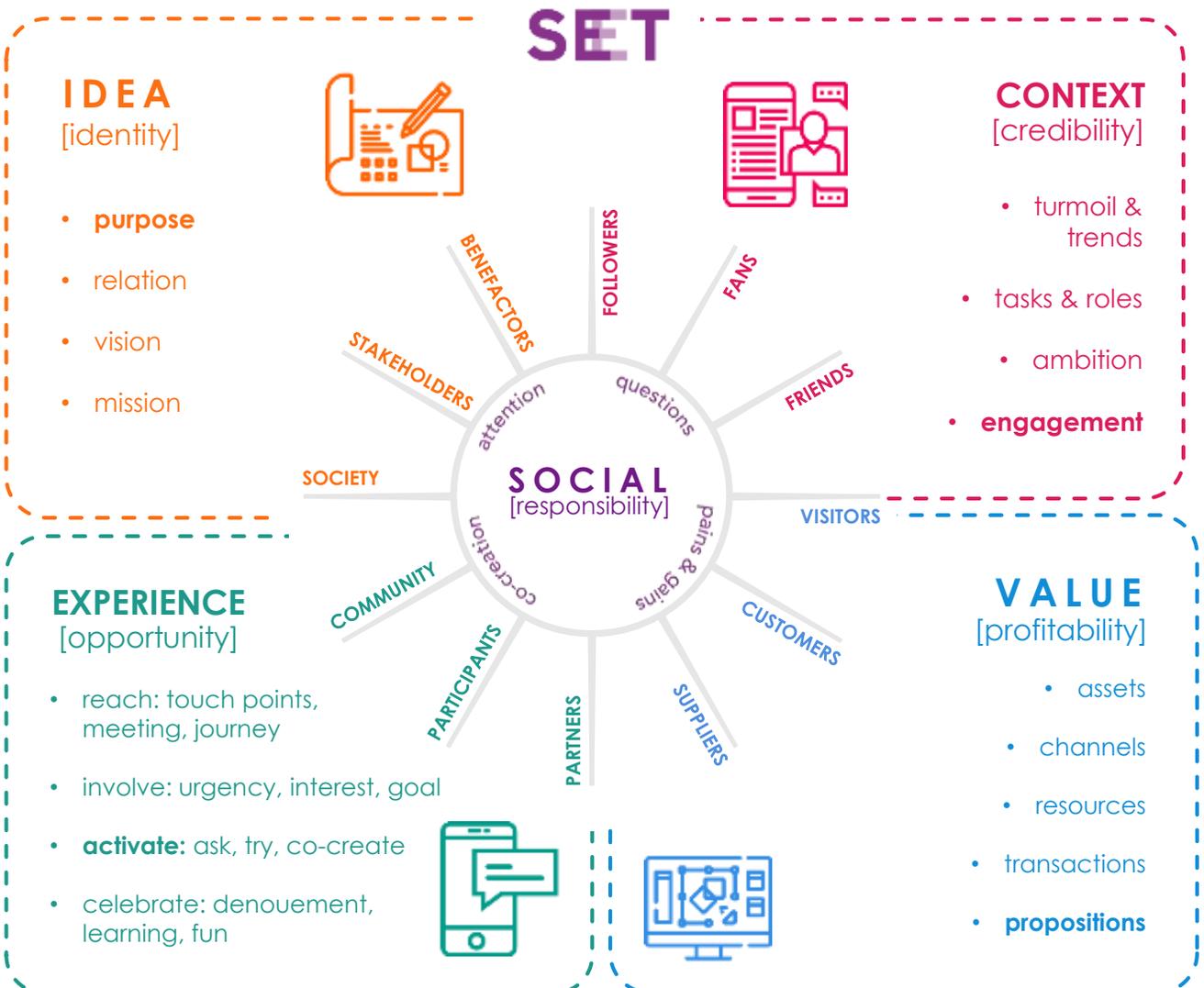
## Get a better understanding of the brand and its goals

Development of custom-made offers for a brand requires a clear idea of what it stands for and what its goals are. However, it all starts with understanding who you are as a cultural organization, what your mission is, and what your needs are.



According to THEO **MEEREBOER**, founder of the consultancy **Museale Zaak**, museums should be clear about their identity first - their core values, ambitions, and context. He says that cultural institutions and their corporate partners may have the same values, in a sense that they both embrace societal and/or sustainable goals. "In that case, they should not only approach their partners for sponsoring, based on the cultural or social responsibility of their partners, but mainly for a mutual goal."

To find common values, THEO **MEEREBOER** developed the so-called GIVE model (see below), which can help to make an inventory and discuss organizational values: "It contains four quarters: the upper two are about the museum as a personality, based on identity and context. The two parts on the right are about values, both life values and value creation by transactions, and focus on the outside world. The lower two parts are about the action, both transaction and interaction. The two parts on the left side are about what is inside the museum. In the middle there is the overarching goal."





## Identify all stakeholders involved in decision-making around the partnership

It is important to understand all stakeholders around the partnership.

“Finding the right person in the company, especially large companies, who can make things happen continues to be a tough part of putting partnerships together,” says **WILL CARY** from the **Barnes Foundation**. “From the cultural organisation's perspective, it's worth doing the research or asking directly who makes decisions around partnerships.”

“Your primary contacts might be communications and marketing people, but you also need to consider the CEO, sales people and other staff members,” says **PASCAL HUFSCHMID**, Head of External Affairs at the **Musée de l'Elysée**.

“High level relationship with CEOs, Presidents and executive boards across both organisations can also help foster a long term, strong and more meaningful partnership,” **EDDIE WALKER**, formerly at the **Royal Academy of Arts**, recommends.

“Think top-down decision-making and bottom-up comprehension in terms of engaging all staff members. What can be in this partnership for them, so they feel part of it?” says **PASCAL HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l'Elysée**.

According to **FRANCINE HIJMANS**, formerly at Rijksmuseum, challenges in partnerships may arise when the relationship started with one part of the organisation but was later moved to a different one - for example, when the partnership came from the board and then ended up in a marketing department, so you have to convince them as well.



**HTC Vive** partnered with **Tate Modern** to create a virtual reality room of **Amadeo Modigliani** as part of a comprehensive exhibition of the artist's works



“Successful partnerships are based on mutual comprehension of each other's expertise, values, and goals. When I work with the business, I ask myself what's in it for the brand and how I can help it realise its goals while fulfilling my institution's mission at the same time,” says PASCAL **HUFSCHMID**, from the **Musée de l'Elysée**. “Partnerships can become powerful interactions, especially when brands and museums understand how they can help each other.”

“Understanding budgets, budget cycle and brand priorities help to quickly determine how and if the partnership is something that is going to be viable and successful for both parties,” say KATIE **KENNEDY** from **LACMA**.

“There needs to be a strong alignment and understanding of brand ethos, objectives and values in order for it to be successful,” says EDDIE **WALKER**, formerly at the **Royal Academy of Arts**. “Begin sponsorship negotiations with a crystal clear understanding of client requirements - ROI, KPIs and brand/business objectives. Listen and respond with the relevant ‘business services’.”

“The key factor is a clear understanding of the objectives of both parties and how we can work together mutually to achieve these through a dynamic brand partnership. There is no value in entering into a partnership if it is not able to achieve the objectives of either party,” says POLLY **BIDGOOD** from **Tate**. “For Tate, that may be about getting support for particular programmes and championing art and its value to society, and for our partners it may be about realising brand objectives, reaching new audiences, creating global brand recognition, and gaining access to world class experiences, entertaining spaces and spokespeople.”

“It is important to listen to what the brand really wants to help it meet its goals within the institution's strategy and mission. Sometimes you arrive to a meeting with all the ideas in your head, but then you realise that what you have thought about is actually not exactly what the brand expects,” says CAROLINE **COLOMBE** from the **RMN-Grand Palais**.

“Some brands fail to realise that museum partnerships usually do not directly convert into sales,” says MARIA **SERGEEVA**, formerly Deputy Director at the **Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow**. “For this reason, it is important to line up clear and reachable goals while also setting up a straight methodology to measure results. Secondly, brands need to have a clear understanding of who they are and what they are standing for. When brand fails to determine their brand essence and core values, there will be no story to tell in the process of collaboration with museum. This applies to cultural institutions as well.”

According to DMITRI **YUSOV** from **Cultural Diplomacy**, challenges arise from vagueness, and the cultural institution and its employees in particular should have a clear view of what internal tasks a particular brand solves by entering into the cooperation.

“A museum should not treat a brand simply as a source of cash. Likewise, a brand should not perceive a museum as an empty vessel, nor ignore the museum's stakeholders,” says PHILIP **TINARI** from **UCCA**.



Installation view of **BENTU, Chinese Artists in A Time of Turbulence And Transformation** exhibition at UCCA, in partnership with Fondation Louis Vuitton  
Photo by Marc Domage. Photo courtesy of Fondation Louis Vuitton

## Find alignment between the institution's mission and the brand's goals. Keeping the integrity of the institution and the ability to say 'no' are important

The challenge often lies not so much in the ability to find a corporate partner, but rather the right corporate partner, whose vision and goals match the institution's mission and could help in taking it further.

"The partnership must provide value to the museum through aligning with the institution's core activities and resource capacity, which can sometimes deviate," says **EDDIE WALKER**, formerly Head of New Business at the **Royal Academy of Arts**. "If a brand and organisation are properly aligned, this can result in a productive partnership with integrity."

"Really good partnerships that I saw - they are between organisations sharing the same values. You need to understand your potential partner's values. Once you understand why they would choose you, you could develop a better offer," **PAUL ALEZRAA** from **Avesta Group** explains.

"When brand visions/activation ideas don't align with the institution's core mission we often struggle to make the partnership viable and have to make the decision to leave revenue on the table in order to preserve the integrity of the institution," **KATIE KENNEDY** from **LACMA** agrees.



“Establish whether a brand and an organisation complement each other before proceeding to a partnership, that you have mutual ambitions, that the aims of any project are aligned from the start and ensure that the organisation has sufficient resource to manage a project,” EDDIE **WALKER**, formerly at the **Royal Academy of Arts**, adds.

**WALKER** recommends examining each partnership opportunity against key attributes – reach, revenue, reputation and resource – to ensure the cultural institution is maximizing the value of the partnership and is not damaging the reputation or integrity of the museum and its programs. “However, there is a delicate balance here and it’s difficult to develop a ‘perfect’ partnership, particularly the issue of potential conflict with the curation and artistic programming of the institution. When does it cross the line?”

ALF **NETEK**, Chief Marketing Officer and Press Officer at **Kapsch Group**, mumok’s long-time partner, says that it is essential that both partners complement each other. Among other success factors he also names a high affinity among partners, an authentic project- and brand-strategy as well as the sustainability of the cooperation model.

“It is important to be flexible and to adapt to the brand’s needs but only if you feel that you can still keep the integrity of your institution’s brand and not to jeopardise its image and strategy. The ability to say ‘no’ is key,” says CAROLINE **COLOMBE** from the **RMN-Grand Palais**.

“Potential challenges in partnerships with brands are censorship and a breach of creative freedom, but it is possible to overcome this if you have clear boundaries from the start,” says PASCAL **HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l’Elysée**.

According to PHILIP **TINARI** from **UCCA**, in China, where the mission of a non-profit public-focused museum may not be understood, “development professionals have to spend a lot of time communicating with potential partners about the nature and structure of the museum.” “When brands require services from museums that are outside the museums’ core mission, it can distract from that mission.” Tinari adds that a shared sense of purpose rather than a fee-for-service type of model is key to success. “The foundation of real partnerships should be a common belief in the same basic idea that museums are good for society and are working to bring art to wide publics.

Another potential issue in partnership management is resource allocation. “We love the opportunity to collaborate, especially with new brands, but from a fundraising perspective the size of the gift matters. If we promise the company they will receive a long list of benefits for a small contribution, we’ll spend all of our staff time and energy working on something that does not deliver a great return,” WILL **CARY** from the **Barnes Foundation** explains.



**The Barnes Foundation** collaborated with GSK and Subaru of America on education outreach programs. Photo by Michael Perez

# 9.

## Know how you are going to measure success



Before embarking on a partnership project, it is important to agree on how you will measure its results. There is no universal evaluation method, but it is recommended to look into such areas as the impact on staff, clients, and the external reputation of the brand.

“Like most partnerships, setting and managing expectations is key. We’ve found that being honest around what is possible and what is not from the beginning usually leads to the best outcome for all parties,” says WILL **CARY** from the **Barnes Foundation**.



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“It is wrong to think about partnerships in terms of a direct impact on sales. They may have an impact, of course, but they are mostly about gaining credibility and telling a different story,” says PASCAL **HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l’Elysée**. “You can measure the impact on the brand’s staff members, since art collaborations have the potential to give a sense of purpose and meaning. Partners can also hold events at a museum and meet with their clients. It is also a networking opportunity as our sponsors meet at the museum’s events.”

“Demonstrate and capture the impact and success of partnerships through in-depth features, reports, case studies, videos, audience feedback and social engagement,” EDDIE **WALKER**, former Head of New Business at the **Royal Academy of Arts**, advises.

“We always set KPIs and work from there, but it differs case by case,” FRANCINE **HIJMANS**, formerly Head of Sponsorship at **Rijksmuseum**, says.

The results of the partnership can be measured by the ability to find ways of collaborating beyond the usual framework and the impact on the brand’s culture. “Partnerships provide an opportunity to learn from each other. For example, one of our sponsors, a private bank, started to collect photography. They used to be focused on old masters, and now they are looking at something more contemporary,” says PASCAL **HUFSCHMID** from the **Musée de l’Elysée**.

10.



Stay in touch to establish long-term collaboration.



## Regular and transparent communication with the corporate partner is key

It might seem obvious, but this is an essential prerequisite for successful partnership and not an easy thing to achieve, especially when multiple stakeholders from both sides are involved.

“Establish clear lines of communication,” EDDIE **WALKER**, former Head of New Business at the **Royal Academy of Arts**, advises.

“Communication is also key,” KATIE **KENNEDY** from **LACMA** agrees. “It’s important to send recaps of calls stating “this is what we heard in our meeting” and asking if the team misunderstood or misrepresented any element of the conversation. This practice allows for complete transparency at the outset of new ideas and conversations.”

“The most important communication and storytelling, from my perspective, continues to be the work we do to with the stakeholders at the company when we are making the case for support each year,” says WILL **CARY** from the **Barnes Foundation**.

ALF **NETEK**, Chief Marketing Officer and Press Officer at the **Kapsch Group**, mumok’s long-term supporter, sees potential challenges in partnerships as vagueness between patronage and sponsorship and inconsistencies within the triangle museum-artist-enterprise leading to a conflict of interests. “If ignored, each one of these may ruin every project irretrievably,” says **NETEK**.

## Have long-term vision for collaboration

According to DMITRI **YUSOV** from **Cultural Diplomacy**, partnerships are turning more into mid-term to long-term engagements. He recommends both parties have a vision on how the collaboration should develop. “Of course, they might change their views after the first try but a longer vision should be from the very beginning.”

“The highest priority at mumok is long-term partnerships based on mutual appreciation and trust.” Says KAROLA **KRAUS** from **mumok**. “They make it possible to hold exhibitions and undertake publicity and education projects that the museum would otherwise not be able to do. This includes the expansion of the mumok collection, the production of gallery information folders for children, various educational projects, and days with free entrance for visitors. Long-term agreements give us much more scope to shape the partnership.”



“Loyalty building is an important aspect of our work to ensure long-term partnerships,” says **YANN LE TOUHER** from the **Louvre**. “The establishment of personalised contacts is key.”

“Investing in a relationship on a long-term level is very important, which means it's about really getting to know your partner and getting everyone from your organisation involved - so, everyone is aware who they are,” **FRANCINE HIJMANS**, formerly Head of Sponsorship at **Rijksmuseum**, says. “It's also about seeing opportunities when they arise. It's a very dynamic process where you have to be actively involved and to be ready to make the best out of the relationship.”



**Elliot Dodd, Royal Academy Schools graduate and artist at the Virtually Real exhibition** at the Royal Academy or Arts held in partnership with HTC Vive  
Whippy Snaggle Stack, 2017, by Elliot Dodd © Elliot Dodd



# Conclusion

## Conclusion



Museums are increasingly competing not among themselves, but with other venues where people can spend their leisure time. To stay relevant, forward-looking cultural institutions are experimenting with their offering and view themselves not so much as a place for storage, but rather a place for stories and a laboratory, which reflects on the issues of today and engages the community. This is also important for attracting corporate partners.

On the other hand, brands can also support museums in their journey to reinvent themselves assisting cultural institutions with putting together technologically advanced shows, launching new programs, and finding new ways to expand audiences. In his interview with Russia's Kommersant newspaper, Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan commented on the exhibition "The Artist is Present" he curated at the Yuz museum in Shanghai in the fall of 2018 with the support from Gucci: "It seems to me that brands, similar to private collectors in the past, now provide the right environment that allows artists' ideas to grow."<sup>21</sup>



**To be successful, museum and brand partnerships require a lot of effort - both sides should be aligned around values and goals at the very beginning, communications and decision-making processes should be discussed and set up, and the structure of the engagement should be customised, so a company would become an integral part of the institution. To find the link between the museum and the brand which feels truly authentic is not always easy, and this often requires multiple meetings and a creative approach. However, the benefit of having a long-term strategic brand partner goes beyond just the financial reward.**

21. Minakova, A. (2018, October 29). The first act of copying is the creation of the man. Kommersant Style, p. 18. Retrieved from <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3770838>

# About the Author

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Prior to joining to the Grayling team, Anastasia worked at the Indianapolis office of strategic communications agency VOX Global (headquartered in Washington, D.C.). Her working experience in the US also includes the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Advanced Crisis Communications Training program funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency at the Department of Homeland Security, and a number of communications consulting projects.

Anastasia started her career in journalism covering international relations and business topics for such Russian media as RIA Novosti, Kommersant, Izvestia, and Finam.ru.

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Anastasia graduated from the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow where she majored in business and political journalism.

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# About Grayling Europe



Grayling operates a flexible, international communications network that has no respect for borders, whether between nations or disciplines.

With on-call senior counsel, powerful content, and unrivalled connections, we help our clients to engage, adapt and evolve in fast- changing landscapes – building brand resilience and creating measurable advantage.



**Grayling has the most comprehensive footprint of any communications agency in Europe, with 31 offices in 22 European countries, employing more than 500 consultants.**



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# About Grayling Creative Partnerships



As more brands are turning to the arts and culture as part of their positioning and communications strategy, managers responsible for such programs should take a systematic approach, consider potential risks, think long term, and develop engagement strategies for both internal and external stakeholders. Grayling's communications experts can help brands build and implement the right strategy and make creative partnerships work.



We advise our clients with cultural insights and trends, help them find a niche for their initiatives, identify relevant partners and art experts, and effectively communicate the collaboration to different stakeholder groups. We also support cultural organisations with identifying their key assets and developing an approach to corporate partnerships.



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