

Regional prosperity

Recovery from the recession requires the development of prosperity and growth across the country, business investment in communities and the raising of skills and aspiration. Businesses invest in attractive and creative environments with a strong civic infrastructure, and museums make a significant contribution to this. They have a direct economic impact of £1.45 billion on the national economy, which is supplemented by a number of indirect economic benefits.¹

PLACE MAKING

Museums are a major contribution to making a place attractive to live in. Major investors, such as Rolls Royce in Derby and Tata Steel in Sheffield, have been very supportive of their city museums because of their civic value. Museums foster creativity and curiosity, which is crucial in inspiring the designers and technicians of the future in industry. Excellent museums help to encourage local business investment by creating an environment which helps attract and retain workers.

Manchester's cultural sector, including Manchester City Galleries, Manchester Museum, the Museum of Science and Industry and The Whitworth, are central to the national and international reputation of the city as a vibrant, creative and exciting place. Culture has been central to the development of the Northern Powerhouse, and the collaborative way in which museums already work across Greater Manchester ensures that the benefits of inward investment are felt beyond the central Manchester postcodes.

DIRECT ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Museums have a much greater direct economic impact than they had twenty years ago. Increases in visitor numbers result in consequently higher visitor spending both at the museum and in its surrounding area. Investment in buildings and infrastructure has enabled museums to create commercial opportunities through venue hire, filming, catering and retail. Larger museums are significant employers and purchasers. Beamish is the largest tourist attraction in the North East and employs 300 staff and 350 volunteers. The economic value delivered by the British Library for society is £5 for every £1 invested. The Library generates a net economic value of £419m². Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums has a net economic impact on the region of £8.5m per year, whilst Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust lets property to enterprises which have a resonance with the collection. Many museums develop commercial

partnerships with retail, designers and production partners, and utilise their collections as the inspiration to create products which are sold in the museum, online and in retail outlets worldwide.

Cultural, and particularly museum or gallery-led, regeneration has revitalised local and regional economies across the UK by attracting visitors, residents and supplementary businesses. The transformation of Salford Quays began with the opening of Imperial War Museum North and The Lowry, attracting additional business, retail, leisure and property investment before culminating in the development of MediaCityUK and consequent improvements in local infrastructure.

SKILLS, APPRENTICESHIPS AND ASPIRATION

Many museums have developed apprenticeship or paid internship schemes, leading to employment both in museums and elsewhere; others have developed programmes such as National Museums Northern Ireland's *Horizons* which improved the skills, confidence and employability of young people and the longer-term unemployed.

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¹ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/The_Economic_Impact_of_Museums_in_England-FINAL_REPORT.pdf

² http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/increasingvalue/economicvaluation_summary.pdf