



MAC COVID-19 FOLLOW-UP SURVEY REPORT

JULY 2022

The MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey is an initiative of the Museums Association of the Caribbean.

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Executive Summary

The MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey was launched on July 19, 2022 and closed on August 29 in the English, Spanish and Dutch Speaking Caribbean, and on September 30 in the French Speaking Caribbean. The survey was sent by email to over 700 museums and cultural organizations in four different languages (English, Spanish, French and Dutch); the response rate was 6%. A total of 46 respondents from 20 different countries and territories in all four linguistic regions completed the follow-up survey to share their current realities and the strategies they have implemented for moving forward.

Most museums that completed the survey were History oriented institutions, and there were also natural history museums, and art history museums among the respondents in the sample. Altogether, they are mainly small museums with less than 5 paid staff or volunteers, with an annual budget of less than €100,000, and they currently rely mostly on public funding. Approximately 50% or more of museums surveyed reported to be open part of the week. 49% of museums surveyed reported that they received less than 500 visitors or between 1000 and 5000 visitors in 2020; 54% reported that they received this number of visitors in 2021.

It is important to keep in mind that half of the museums surveyed have been exposed to other external threats such as social unrest, natural disasters and political instability, in addition to the pandemic. Thankfully, most museums surveyed reported that between July 2021 and July 2022 they were able to open 50% of the time or more, and were also able to retain most of their staff and programs. Two thirds of respondents have also developed strategies to deal with the pandemic, and most reported that they are not at risk of permanent closure, although at the time most reported that major regional events and festivals had been canceled. When dealing with these cancellations museums reported that they had to implement strategies that helped increase visibility of the museum, knowledge base, financial strategies, community engagement, programing and ethical behavior.

The results of the survey indicate that Facebook and Instagram are the most commonly used social media platforms and that they are considered to be more effective than Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and others. Respondents reported that more museums provide digital technology for their staff (89%) than for visitors (61%), where email and free wifi are most common for both visitors and staff. However, digital platforms like Teams and Zoom have currently become more available for staff, while social media resources are more available for visitors. Museums that did not have this kind of digital technology required additional financial resources in order to acquire them. Respondents reported that digital resources have always been used as a marketing tool to increase visibility and promote the museum, however currently these resources, which are now also used to a larger extent to create interactive experiences and to generate and create access to digital collections. More than half of respondents reported that they developed new digital resources, mostly digital collections and online exhibitions, to respond to the current context. When considering what digital resources are most beneficial for local vs global audiences, most respondents reported that Wifi was most beneficial for local audiences and Online exhibitions, for global audiences.

Most respondents to the 2022 survey do not have access to COVID-19 relief funds and are not being included in national conversations about such relief funds, which is similar to the findings of the 2020 MAC COVID-19 Survey. Sadly, most of the respondents from museums that closed reported that they are not in a position to reopen. However, many of those that remained open created protocols to ensure the safety of their patrons, and shared strategies they have implemented to move forward, including strategies to increase visibility, increase knowledge base, improve financial plans, increase community engagement and programs, and improve ethical behavior.

Introduction

Established in 1987, the Museums Association of the Caribbean (MAC, caribbeanmuseums.com/) works to strengthen links among Caribbean museums, their staff and associates, to foster and promote an appreciation and understanding of their common heritage through education and the development of professional standards of practice. The association serves as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas through meetings, publications and museum exchanges.

MAC's main objectives are to develop common policies relative to the role of museums, to act as an advisory board for governments and institutions regarding museum development, and to facilitate relationships with international and other regional museums-related organizations. Member organizations include a variety of regional cultural groups, including national museums, art museums, community museums, culture and heritage facilities, and university museums. Individual members are Caribbean and Caribbean diaspora-based professionals and students of the wider global museum community in its many forms.

This survey launch date was July 19, 2022 in four linguistic regions, and ended on August 29, 2022 in the English and Spanish-speaking Caribbean, and on September 30, 2022 in the French-speaking Caribbean. Its purpose is to understand the current needs of museums in the Caribbean region, and to identify creative solutions that have enabled their sustainability.

Through this systematic data collection effort, MAC aims to fill a void that will ultimately help museums in the Caribbean be better equipped, to effectively advocate for their needs, and to strategically plan for short-term, mid-term and long-term goals. All of the data generated through the current survey will be shared with the respondents so that it can be shared with funders and supporters, and used for planning purposes. MAC's 2020 COVID-19 Survey was used by UNESCO and ICOM as a source of information about the museum sector in the Caribbean. The current survey results will also be shared with global museum networks as they continue to gather data on the status of museums around the World.

Methods

The MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey consisted of an email survey with closed and open questions, including some retrospective questions to assess respondents' self-reported changes. A convenience sample was used for the survey. This sample included contacts from MAC's database, as well as museums researched online throughout the Caribbean Basin. A total of 700 emails were sent to museums in 4 different languages: English, Spanish, French and Dutch. The response rate for this email survey was 6%. A total of 46 museums completed the survey, 2 museums declined to share their data, and 1 museum was answered by two respondents. In this case, the response submitted by the respondent with the higher rank at that museum was included. The data presented in this report represents responses from a maximum of 43 respondents that granted MAC permission to use their data for this report and future publications. The survey explored impact on operations including staff retention and finances as well as visitorship.

Survey Results

Quantitative Data

Demographic Data

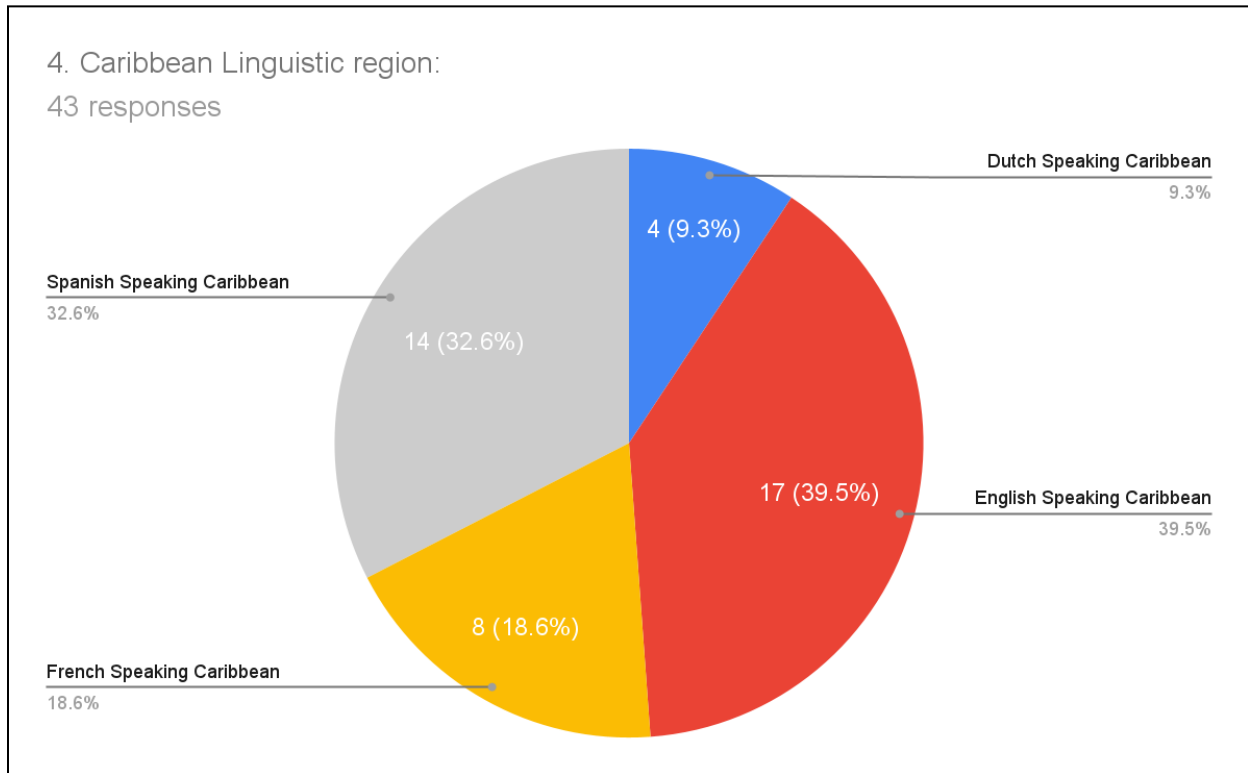
This section of the MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey Report summarizes statistical data about the museums and cultural organizations in the Caribbean Region that completed the survey and agreed to share their responses.

TABLE 1

Countries and Territories Represented in the Sample

| Countries and Territories Represented in the Sample |
|---|
| 1. Antigua and Barbuda |
| 2. Aruba |
| 3. Bermuda |
| 4. British Virgin Islands |
| 5. Cayman Islands |
| 6. Colombia |
| 7. Curaçao |
| 8. Dominican Republic |
| 9. Guadeloupe |
| 10. Jamaica |
| 11. Martinique |
| 12. Montserrat |
| 13. Panama |
| 14. Puerto Rico |
| 15. Saba |
| 16. Saint Lucia |
| 17. St Eustatius |
| 18. St. Croix |
| 19. Trinidad and Tobago |
| 20. Venezuela |

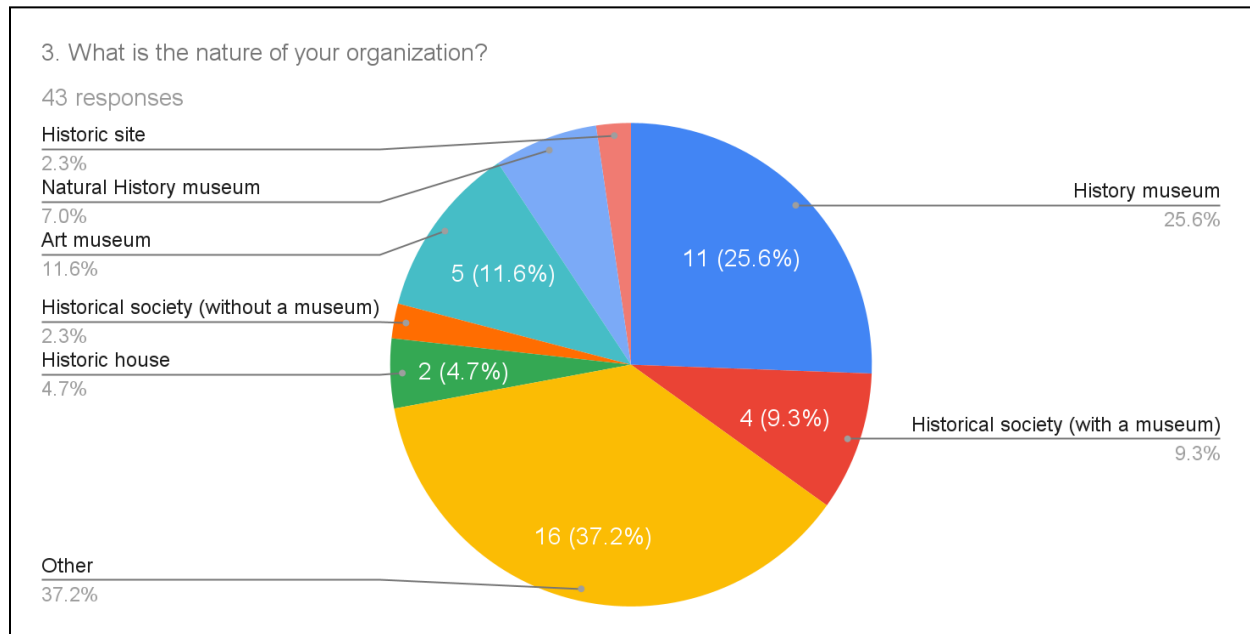
FIGURE 1
Caribbean Linguistic Regions



Forty three (43) museums from 20 different countries and territories representing four different linguistic regions participated in the survey. Approximately 40% of respondents were from the English speaking Caribbean, followed by 33% of respondents from the Spanish Speaking Caribbean, 19% from the French Speaking Caribbean and 9% from the Dutch Speaking Caribbean.

FIGURE 2

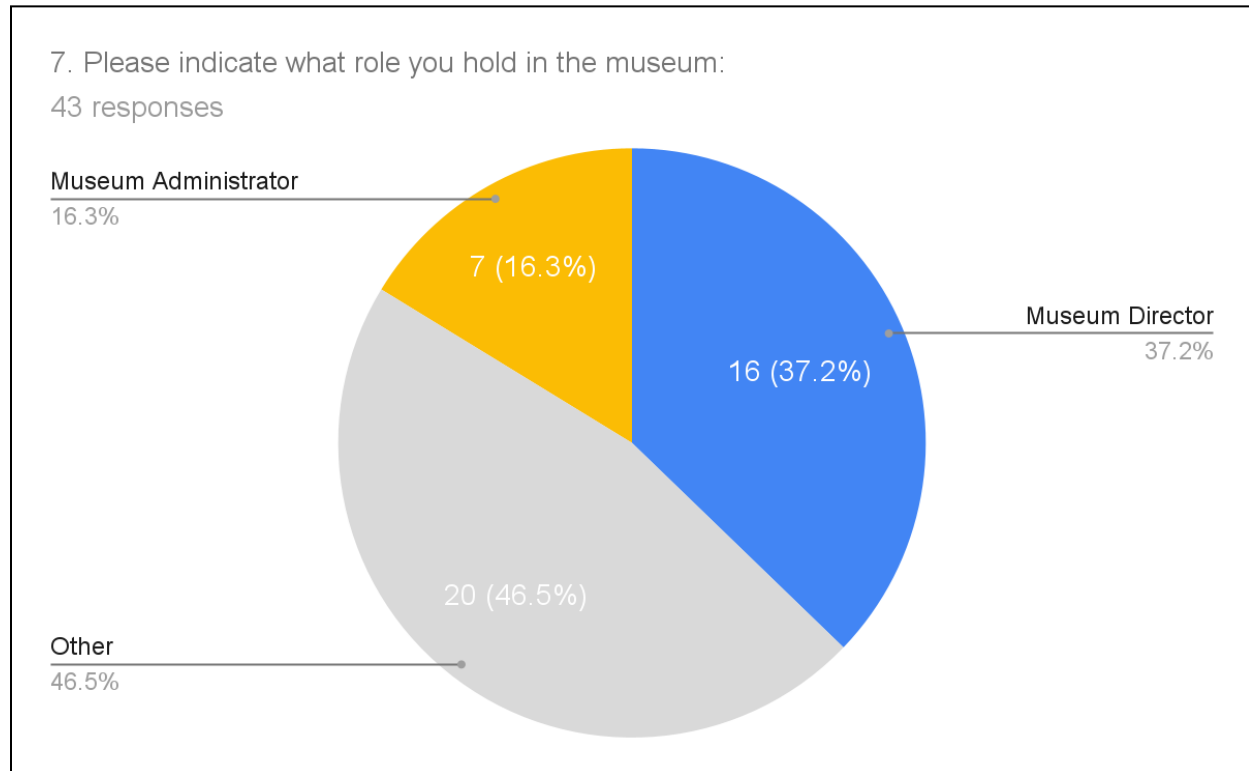
What is the Nature of your Organization?



Most (47%) of the respondents reported that they worked at a History Museum (25.6%), or at Art Museums (11.6%), or at Historical Societies (with a museum) (9.3%). The remaining respondents represent archaeology museums, anthropology museums, institutions that are made up of a combination of museums, historic houses and sites, as well as institutions which are made up of more than one kind of museum (art, heritage, culture, cinema, nature and science).

FIGURE 3

What role do you hold in the museum?



More than half of the respondents of the survey were either museum directors or administrators; the remaining respondents were board members, education coordinators, supervisors, assistants, foundation chairpersons, collections staff, managers, treasurers and other administrative museum staff.

FIGURE 4

Number of Paid Staff in your Organization before the Pandemic and Currently

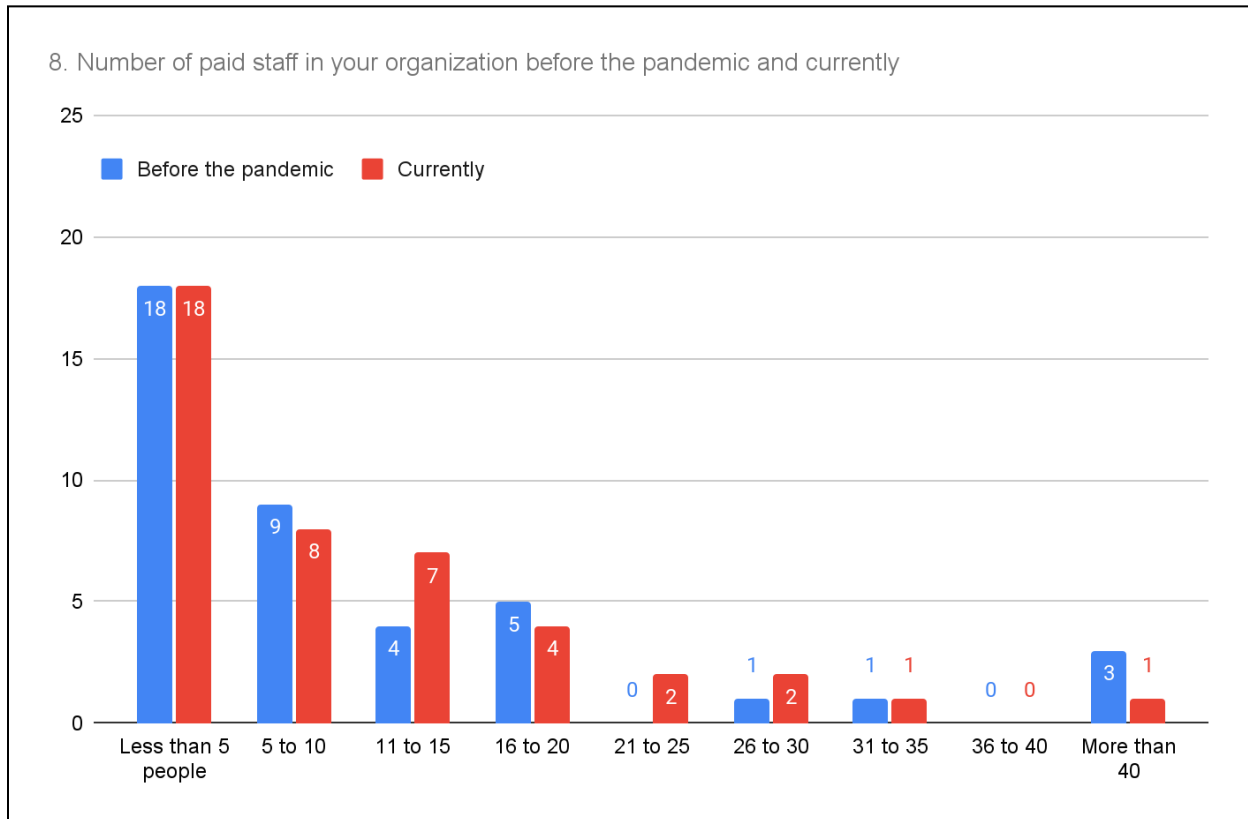
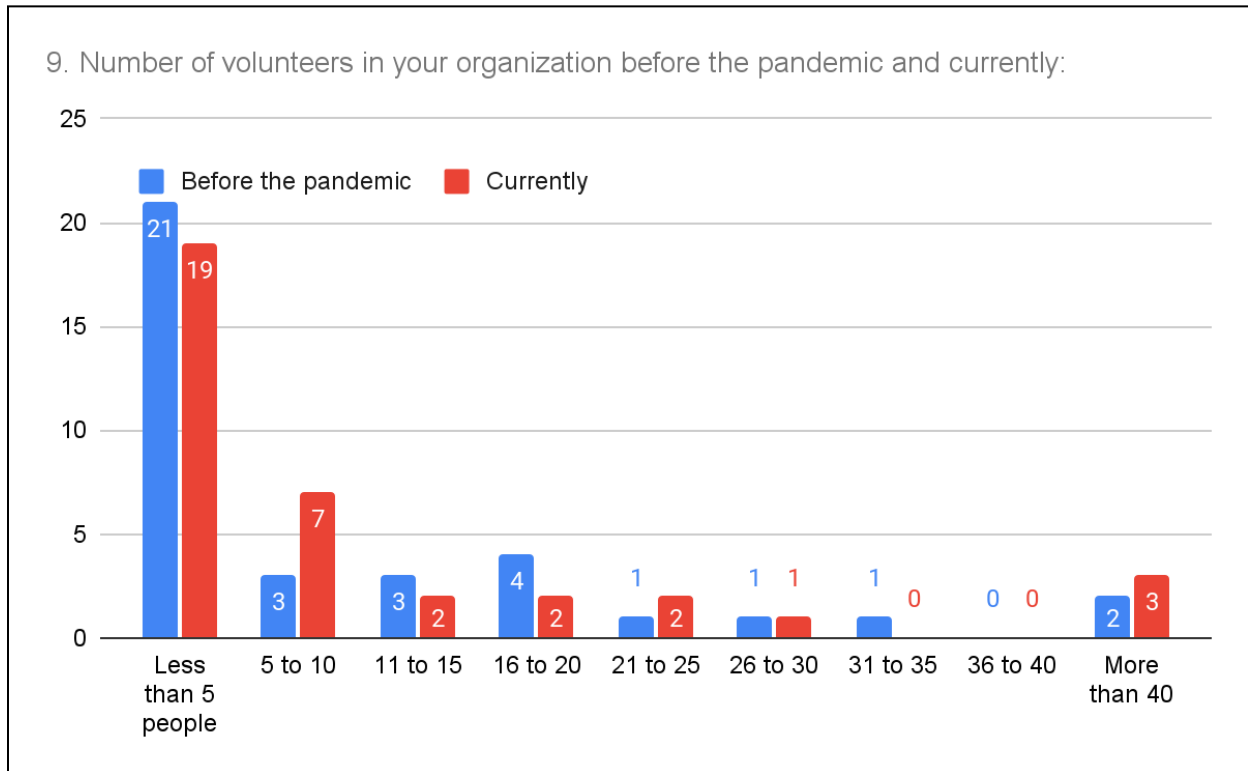


FIGURE 5

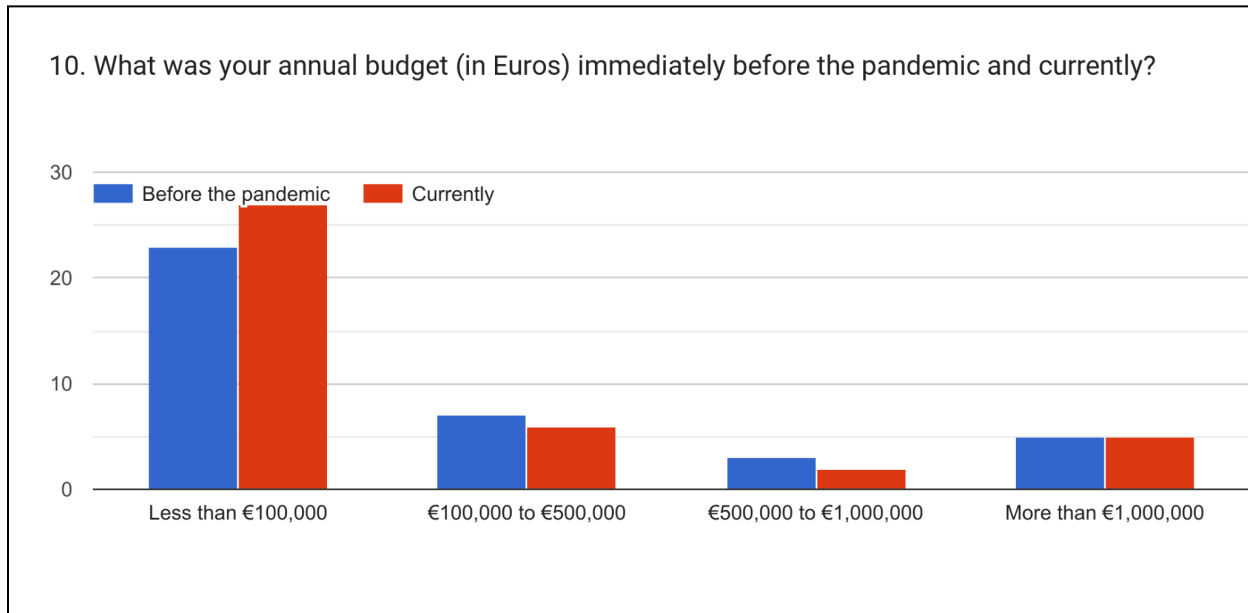
Number of Volunteers in Your Organization before the Pandemic and Currently



In Figures 4 and 5, over 40% of respondents reported that they have less than 5 paid staff in their museums before the pandemic and currently, while, over 50% of respondents reported that they have less than 5 volunteers before the pandemic and currently.

FIGURE 6

What was Your Annual Budget (in Euros) Immediately before the Pandemic and Currently?



Most museums responded that their annual budget before the pandemic (n=38) and currently is less than €100,000 (n=38).

FIGURE 7

Rank your Funding Source before the Pandemic from Least Amount of Funding (1) to Most Amount of Funding (5)

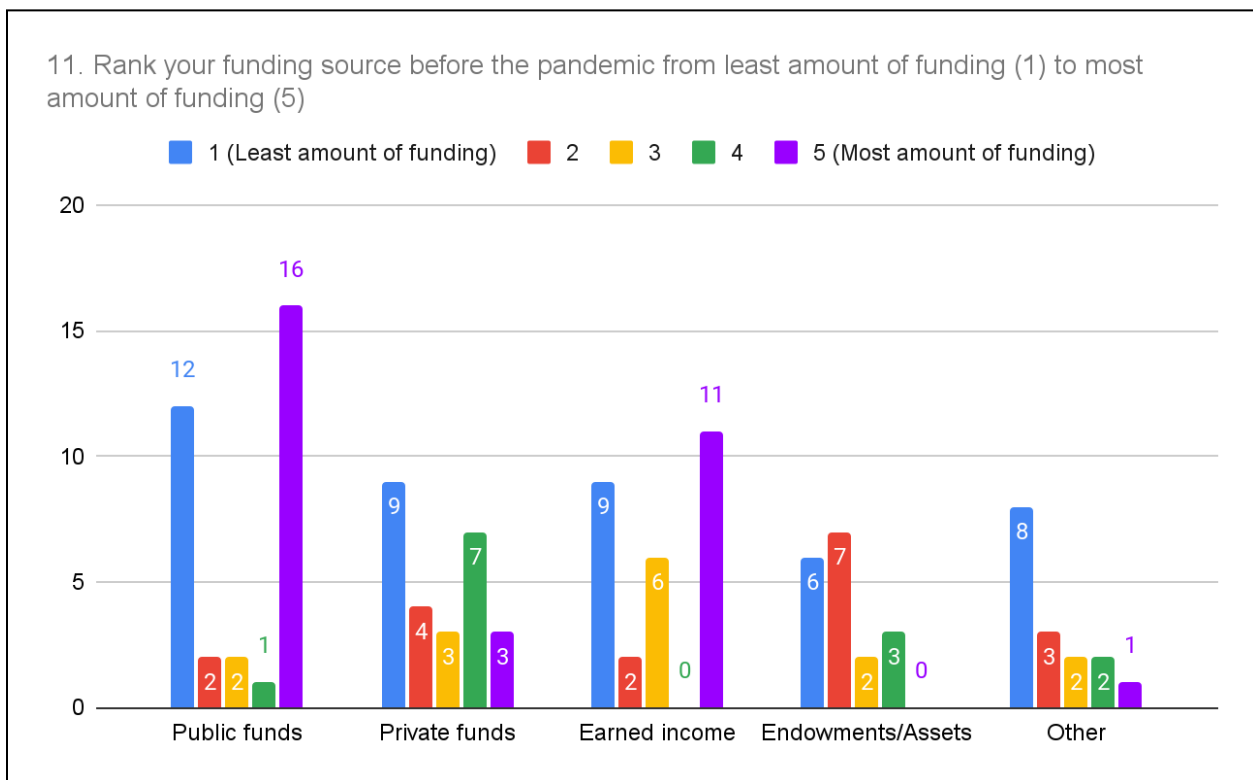
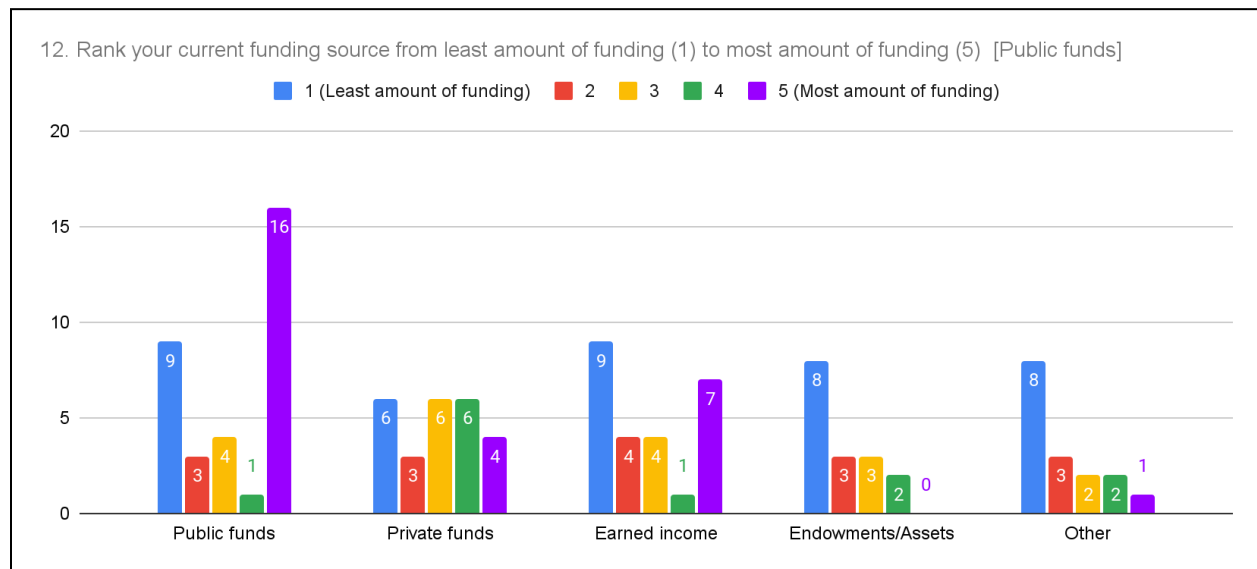


FIGURE 8

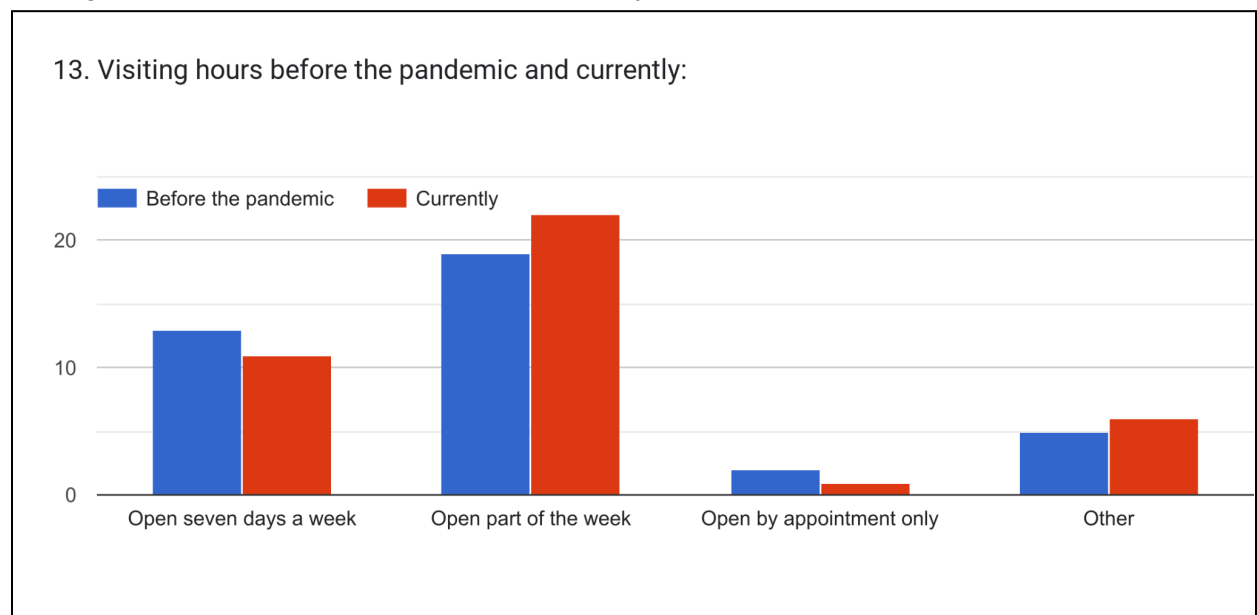
Rank your Current Funding Source from Least Amount of Funding (1) to Most Amount of Funding (5)



In Figure 7 and Figure 8, 48% (n=33) of museums reported that they got most funding from public funds before the pandemic and currently. Earned income was the second most common funding source for 39% of museums before the pandemic, but has since waned to 23%.

FIGURE 9

Visiting Hours before the Pandemic and Currently



Most museums reported that they were open part of the week 49% of the time before the pandemic (n=39) and 55% of the time currently. (n=40)

FIGURE 10

Total Estimated Number of Visitors in 2020

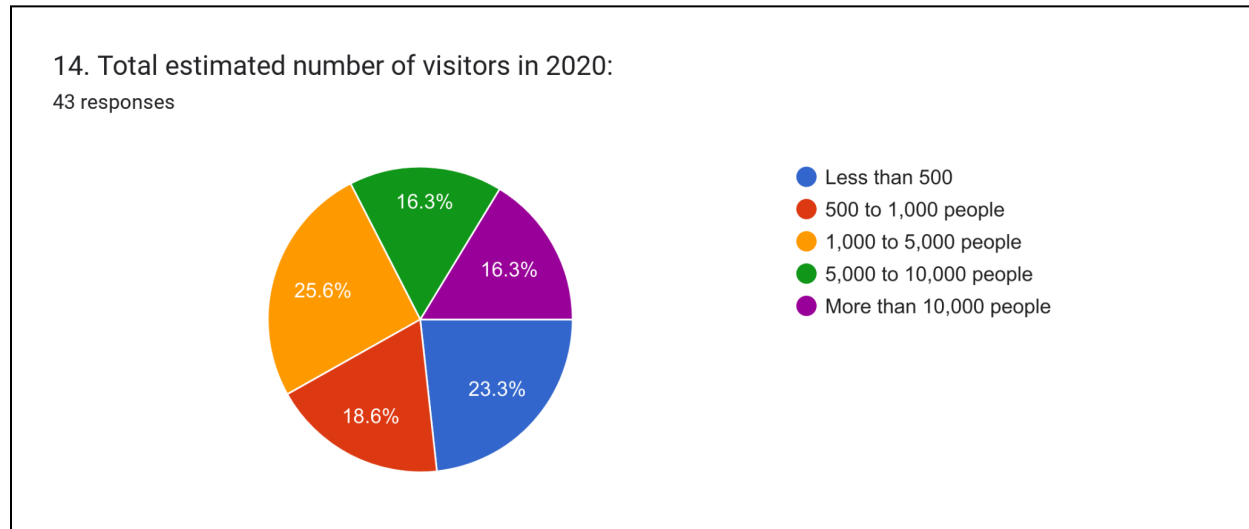
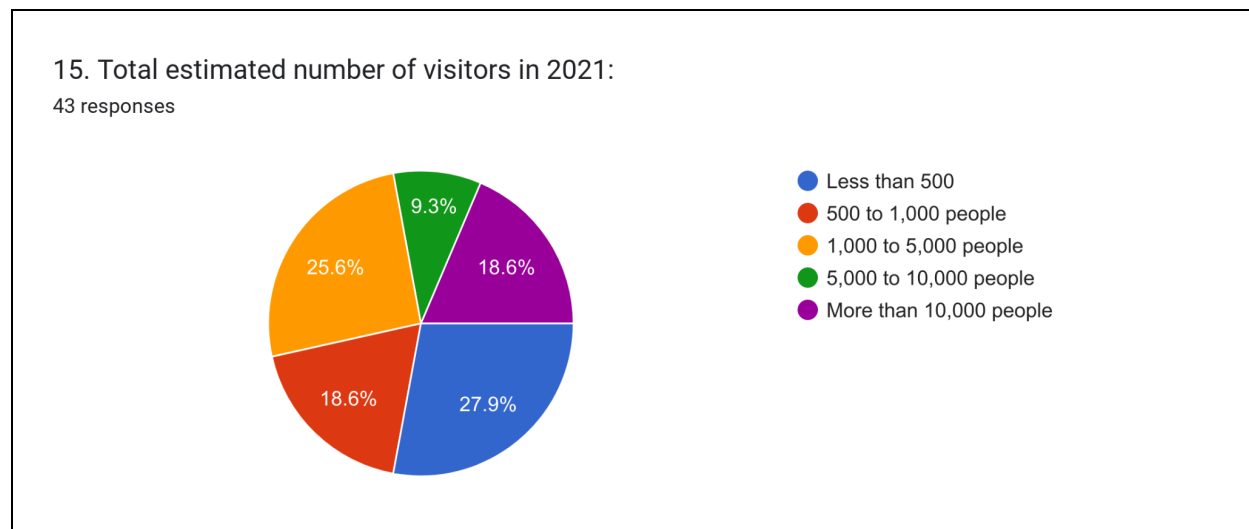


FIGURE 11

Total Estimated Number of Visitors in 2021



In Figures 10 and 11, most museums surveyed received less than 500 visitors or between 1000 and 5000 visitors both in 2020 (49%) and in 2021 (54%).

FIGURE 12

Between July 2021 and July 2022, has Your Museum Been Affected by Other External Threats in Addition to the Pandemic

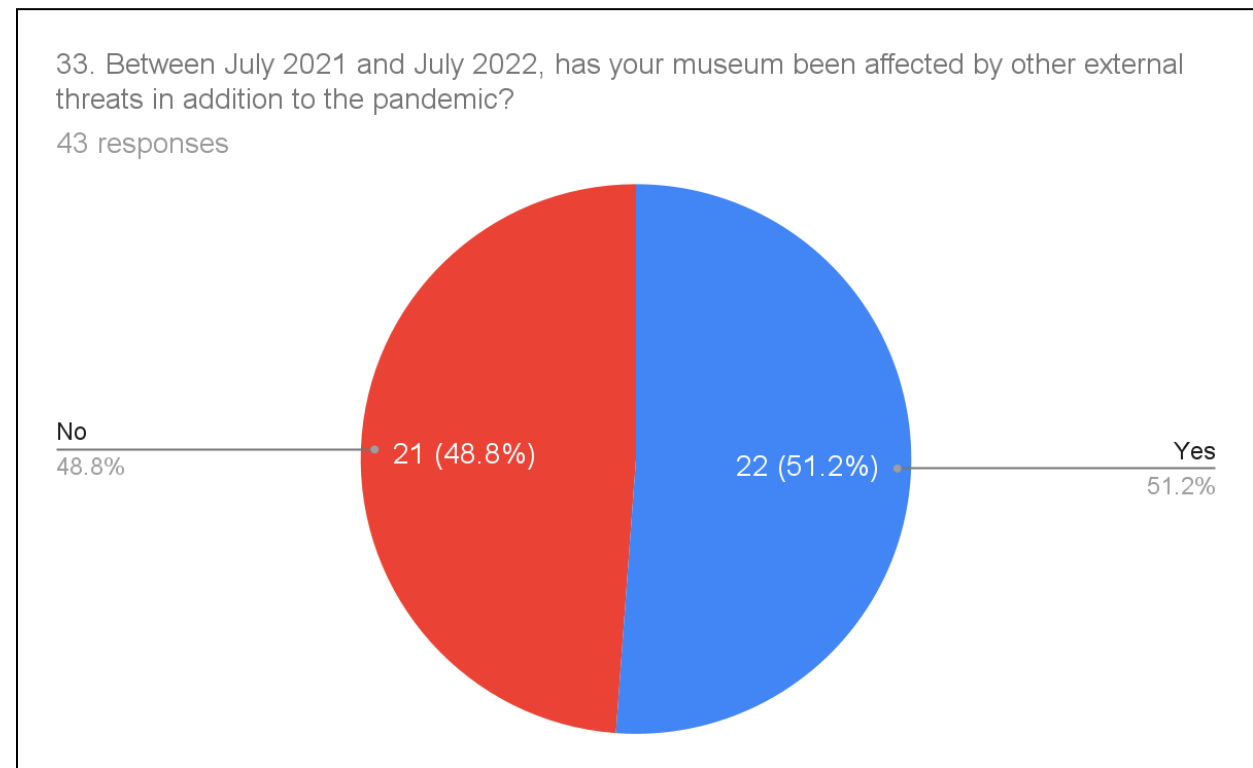
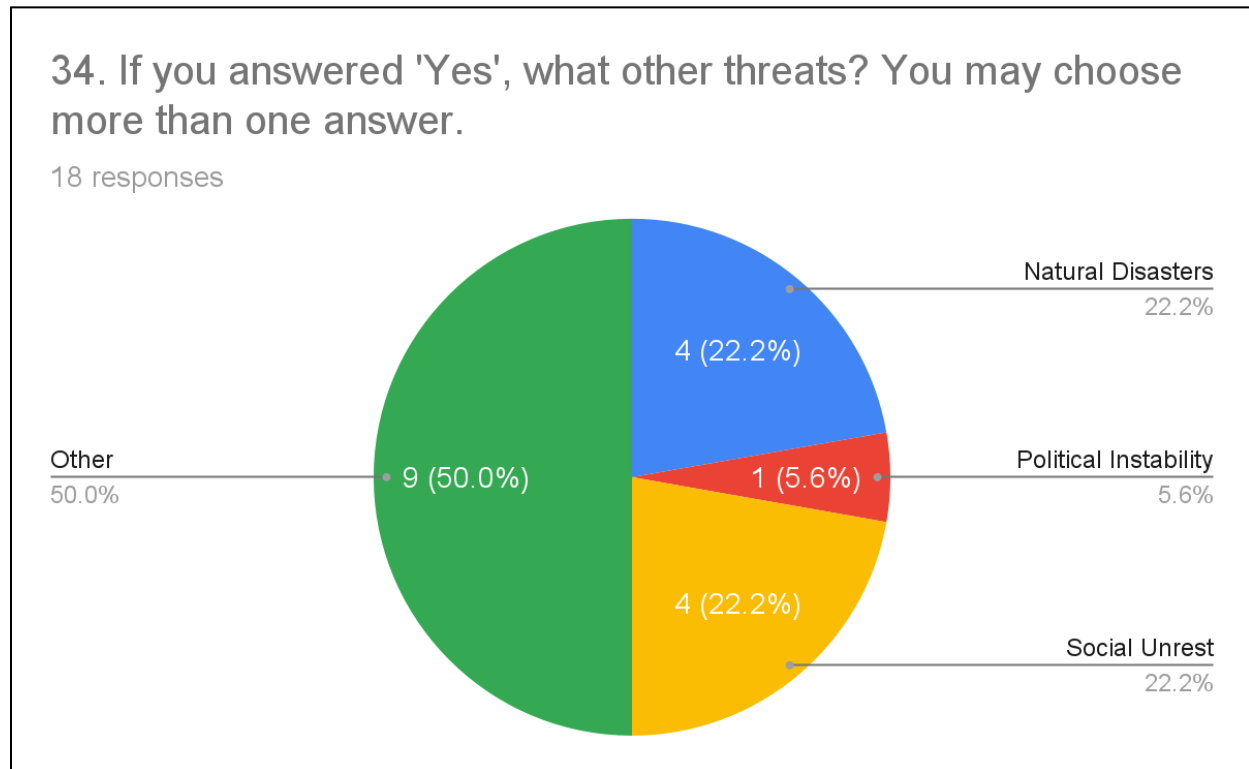


FIGURE 13

If You Answered 'Yes', What Are the Other Threats? You May Choose More Than One Answer



In Figures 12 and 13, between July 2021 and July 2022 more than half of the museums surveyed reported that they had been affected by other external threats in addition to the pandemic. 18 of them indicated that the external threats were mostly social unrest (50%), natural disasters (33%) and political instability (16%).

How Have Caribbean Museums And Their Staff Been Affected?

This section of the MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey Report summarizes statistical data about the effect of the pandemic on programming and the strategies implemented by Caribbean museums and cultural organizations that completed the survey.

FIGURE 14

From July 2021 to July 2022 to What Degree Has Your Museum Been Able To Open?

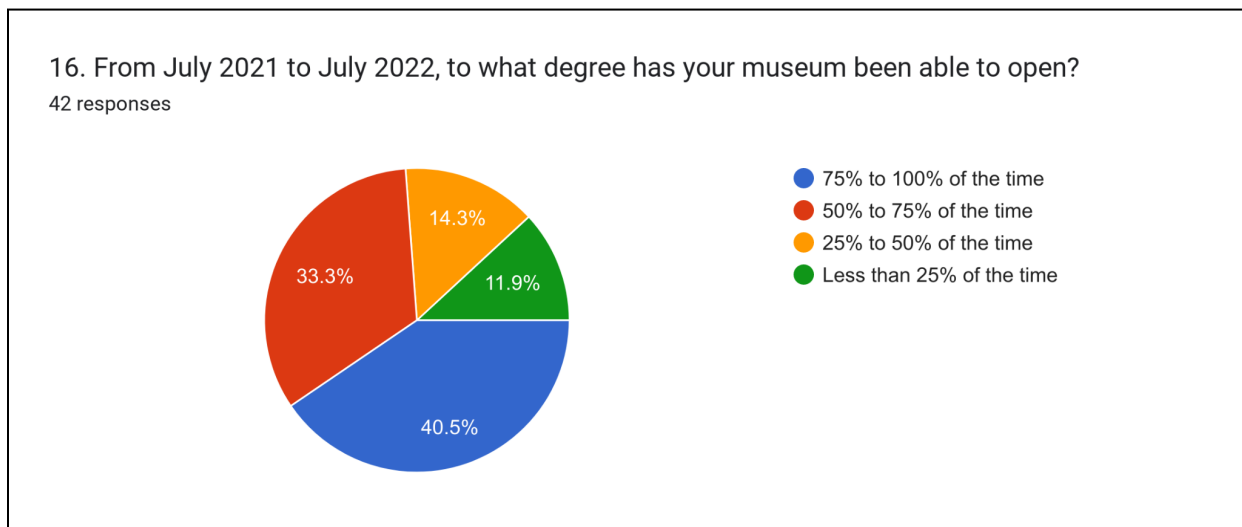


FIGURE 15

From July 2021 to 2022, to What Degree Have You Been Able to Retain Your Staff?

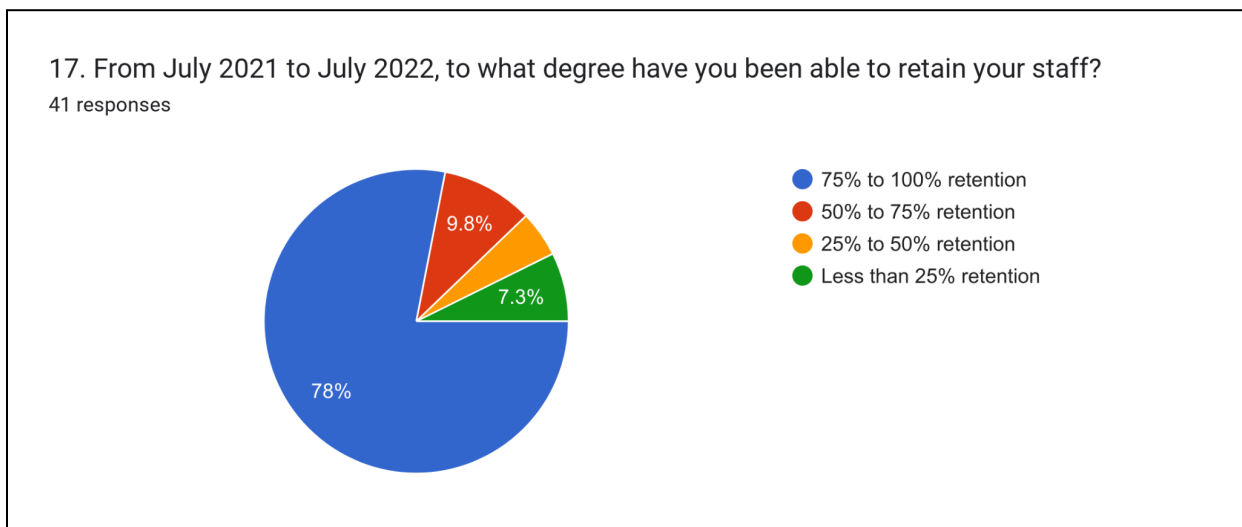
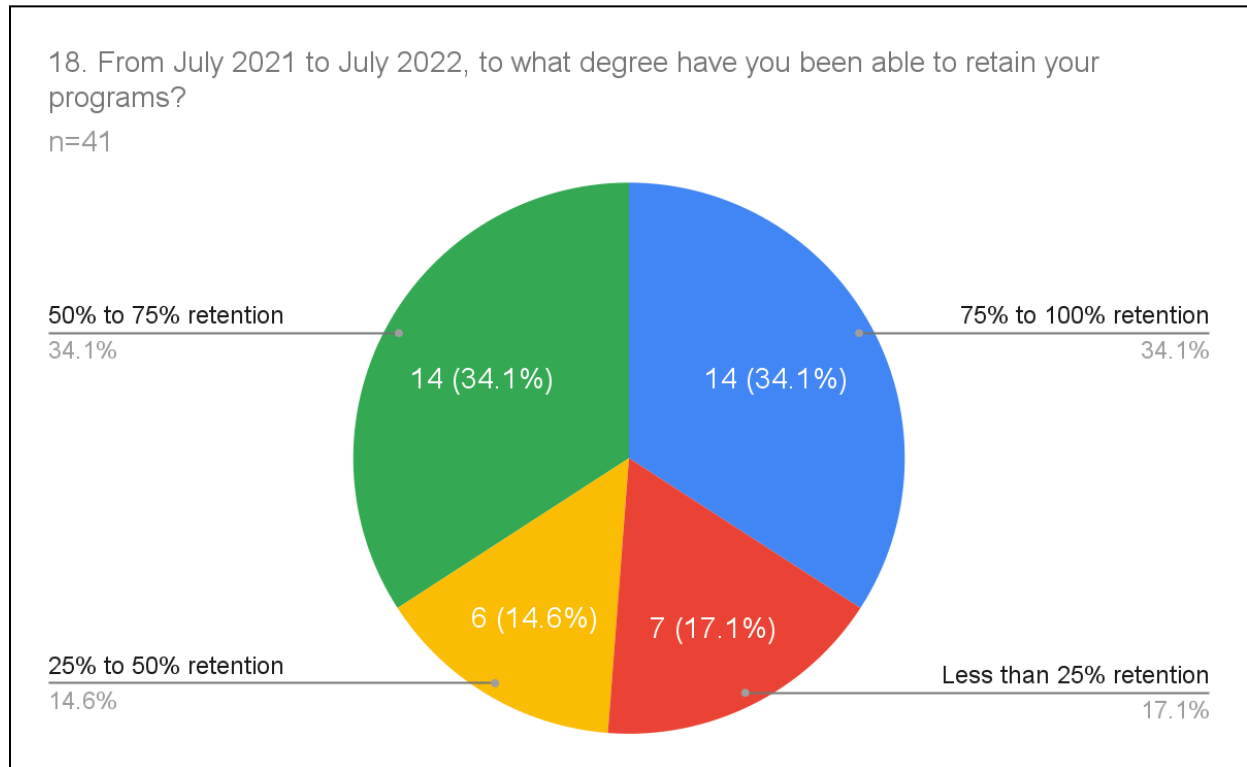


FIGURE 16

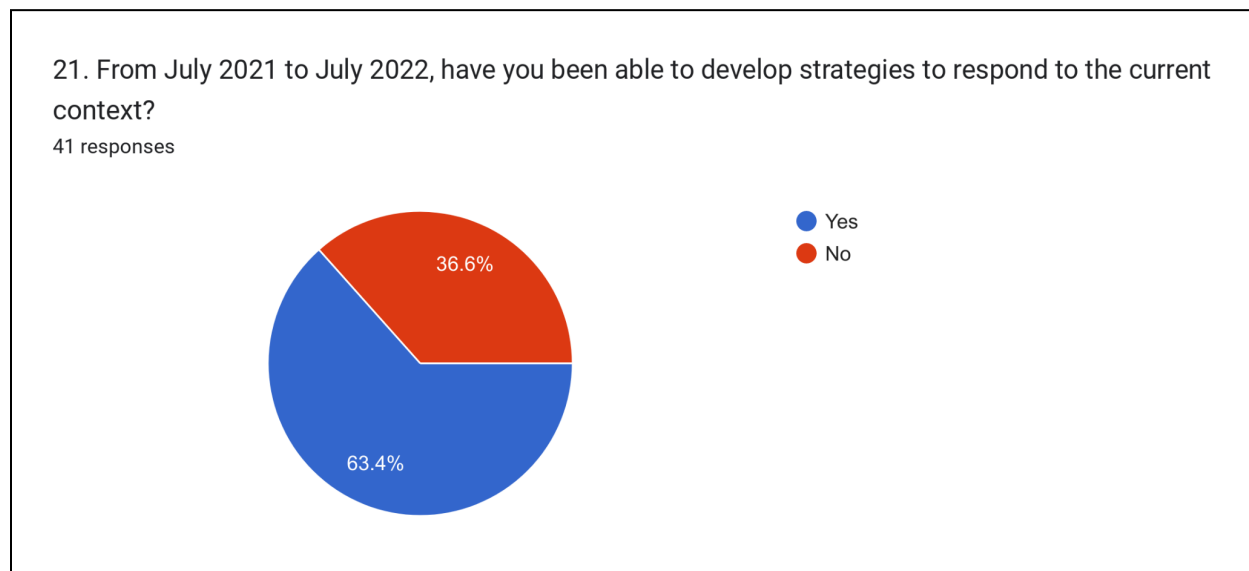
From July 2021 to July 2022, To What Degree Have You Been Able to Retain Your Programs?



In Figures 14, 15, and 16, at least 70% of museums surveyed reported that, between July 2021 and July 2022, they were able to open 50% of the time or more, that they had been able to retain 75% or more of their staff and that they had experienced 50% to 100% retention of programs.

FIGURE 17

From July 2021 to July 2022, Have You Been Able to Develop Strategies to Respond to the Current Context?



From July 2021 to July 2022 more than 60% of museums surveyed responded that they developed strategies to respond to their current context. They used mostly social media (86%) and technology (53%). Those that did not get a chance to develop strategies responded that they felt they would benefit from these two resources (social media and technology) in order to develop strategies.

FIGURE 18

Are You at Risk of Permanent Closure

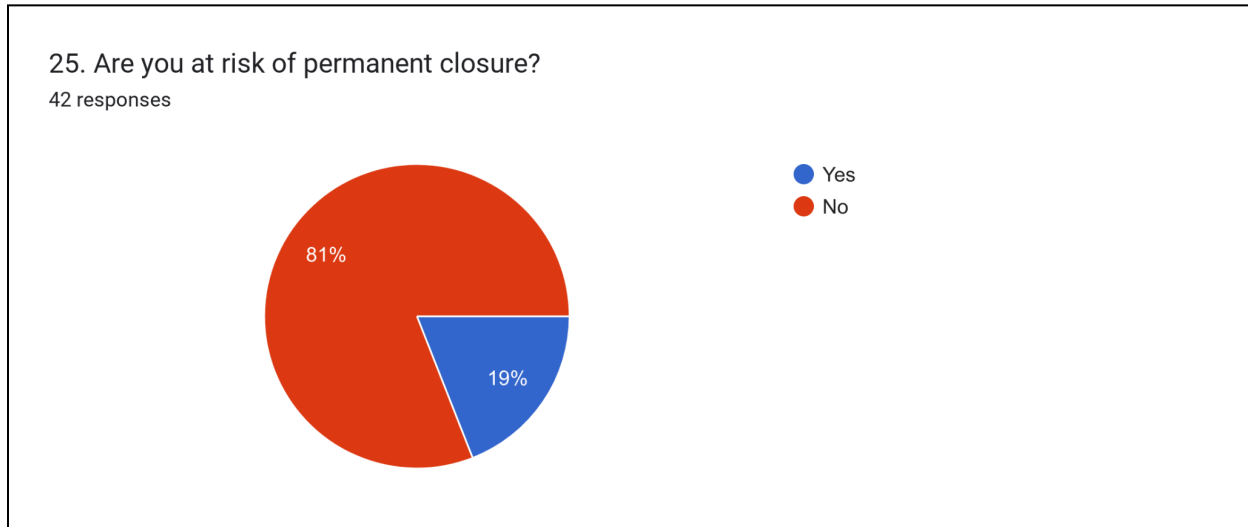
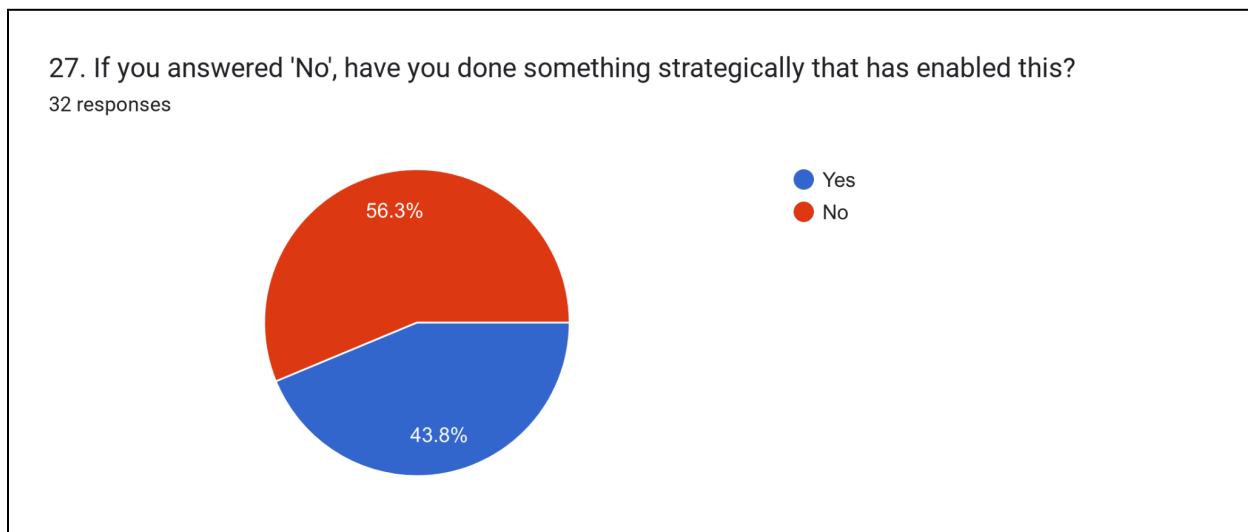


FIGURE 19

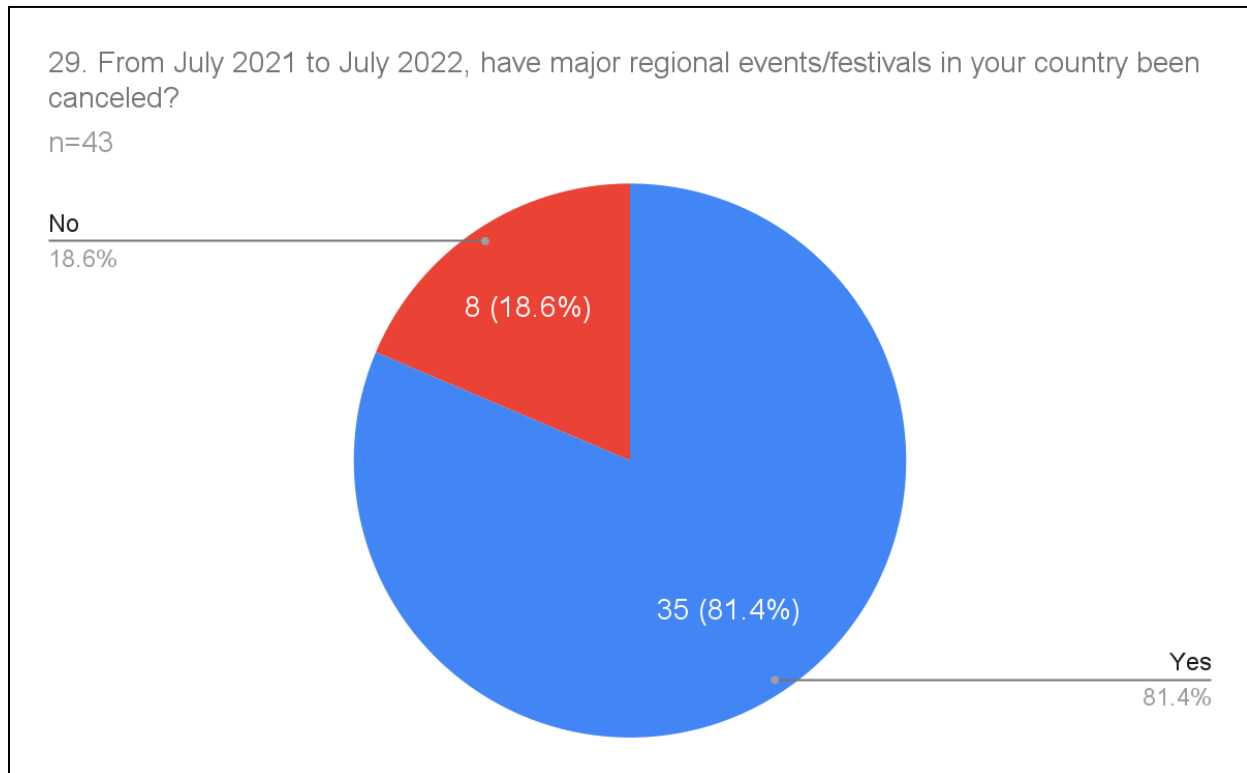
If You Answered 'No' Have You done Something Strategically That Has Enabled This?



In Figures 18 and 19, over two years after the onset of the pandemic, over 70% of museums reported that they are not in risk of closure, and over 40% stated that they implemented a strategy to enable this survival. All museums that were at risk of closure stated that, more than anything else, they needed funding in order to stay open.

FIGURE 20

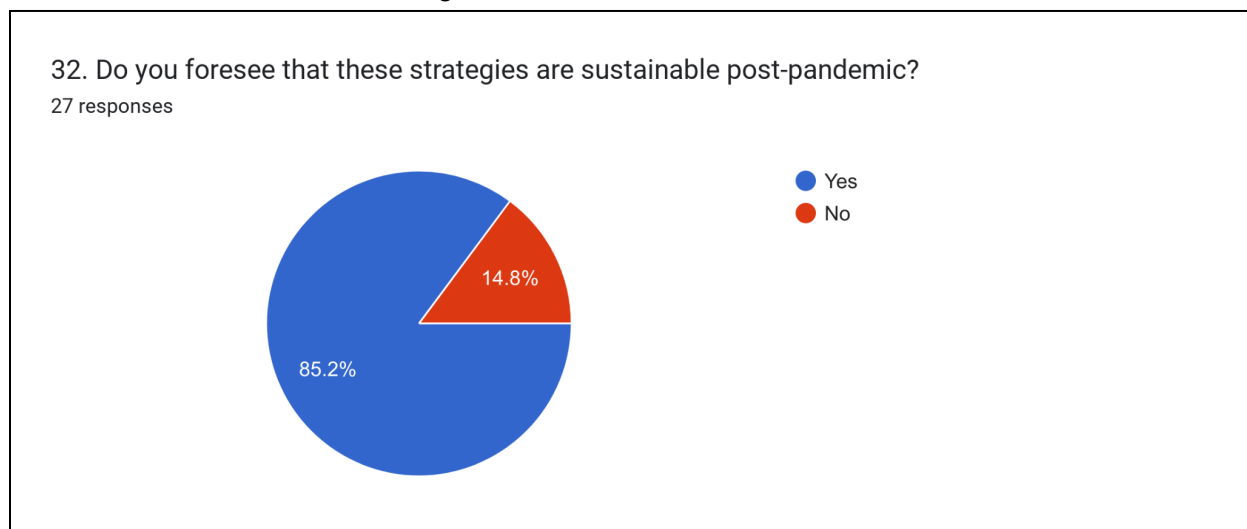
From July 2021 to July 2022, have Major Regional Events/Festivals in Your Country Been Canceled?



Over 80% of museums surveyed responded that major regional events and festivals in their countries had been canceled between July 2021 and July 2022.

FIGURE 21

Do You Foresee that these Strategies are Sustainable Post-Pandemic?



Most (86%) of the museums surveyed, that did not experience the cancellation of regional events and festivals, foresee that the strategies they developed are sustainable post-pandemic.

Digital Resources In Caribbean Museums

This section of the MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey Report summarizes statistical data about the digital and technological resources used by Caribbean museums and cultural organizations that completed the survey before the pandemic and currently.

FIGURE 22

What Social Media Platforms did Your Institution Use Before the Pandemic, and Which Ones Does it Currently Use?

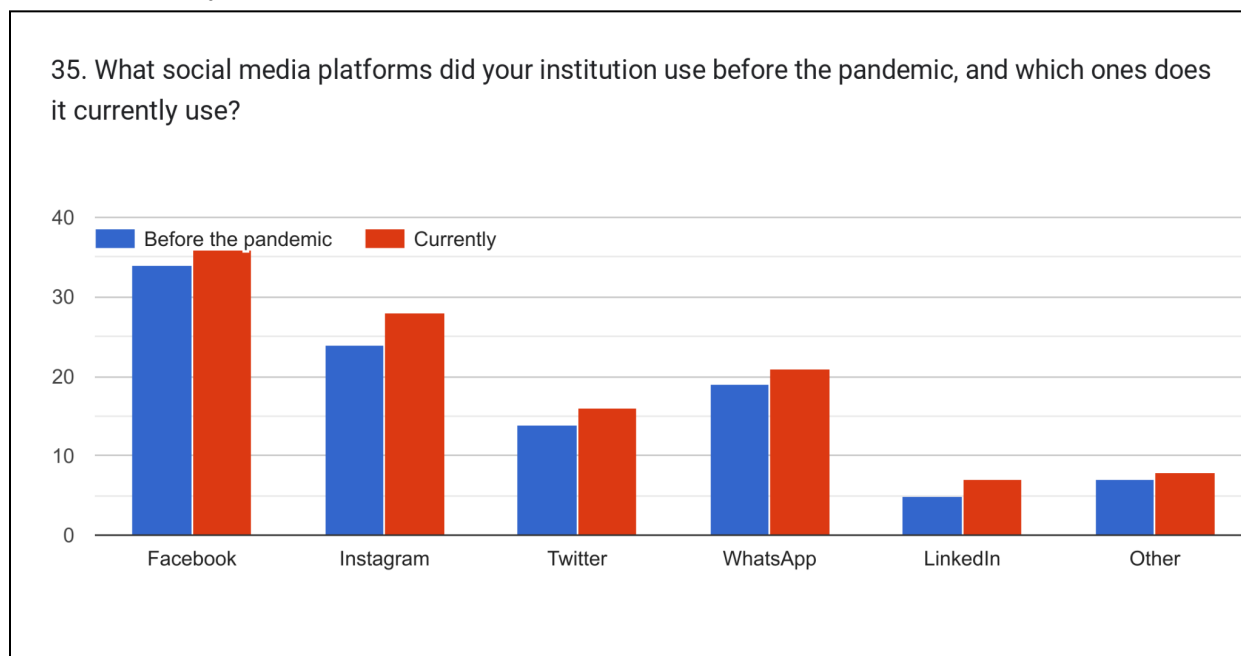
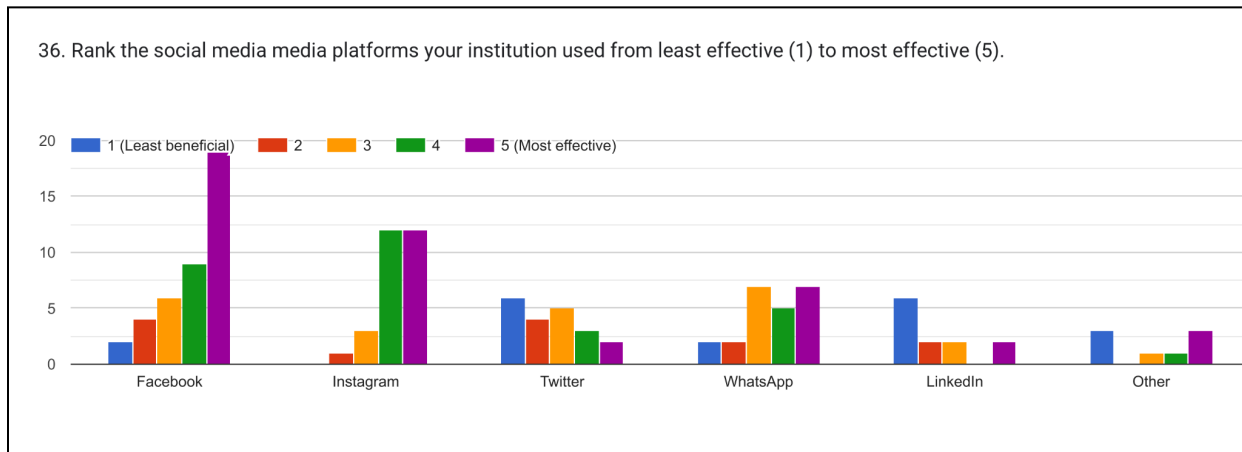


FIGURE 23

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Rank the Social Media Platforms your Institution Used from Least Effective (1) to Most Effective (5)



In Figure 22 and 23, over 50% of museums surveyed reported that they used Facebook and Instagram before the pandemic and currently. These two social media platforms have also been identified as the most effective by 25% to 40% of respondents, when compared to Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and other platforms.

FIGURE 24

Does Your Museum Provide Digital Technology for Visitors?

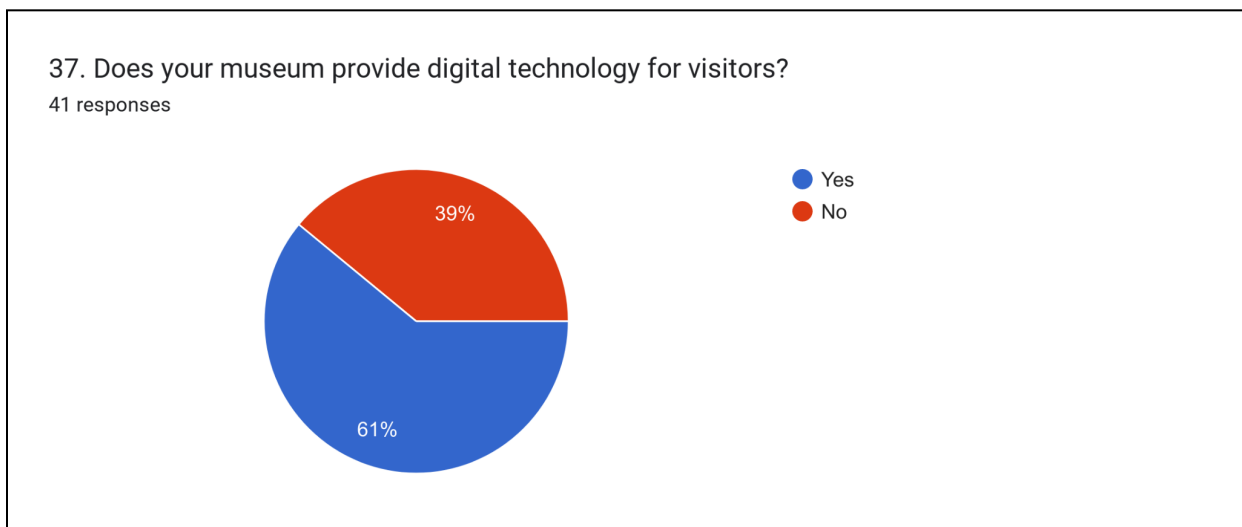


FIGURE 25

If You Answered ‘Yes’ Which Digital Resources did you have before the Pandemic and Which do you Currently Have?

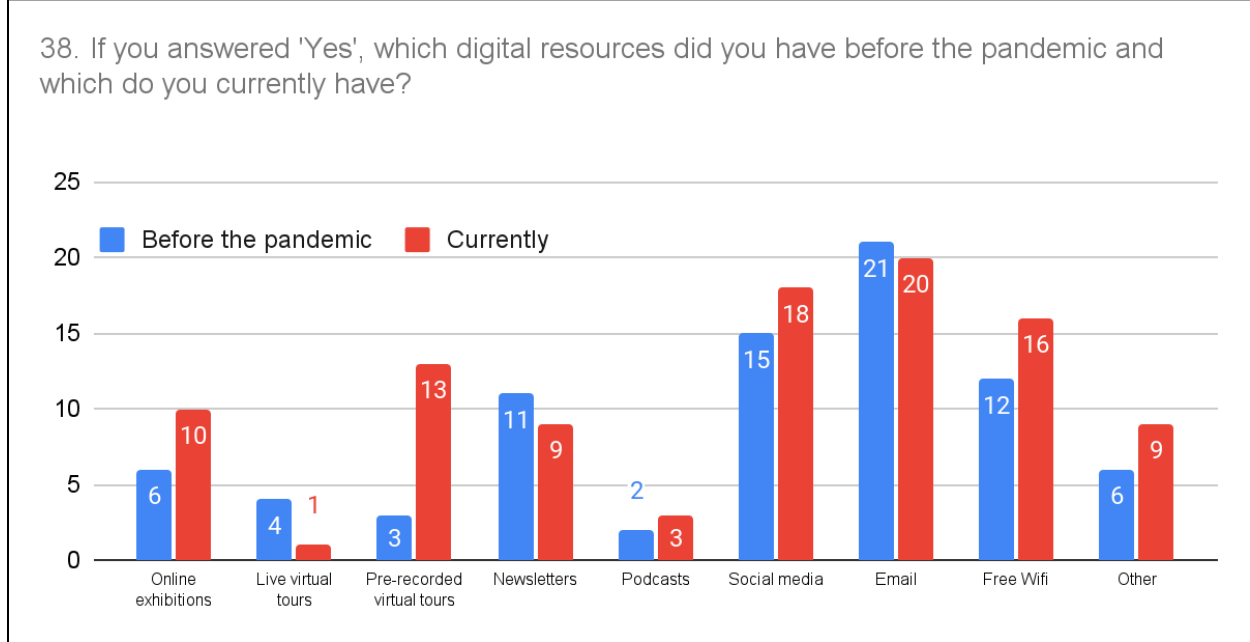
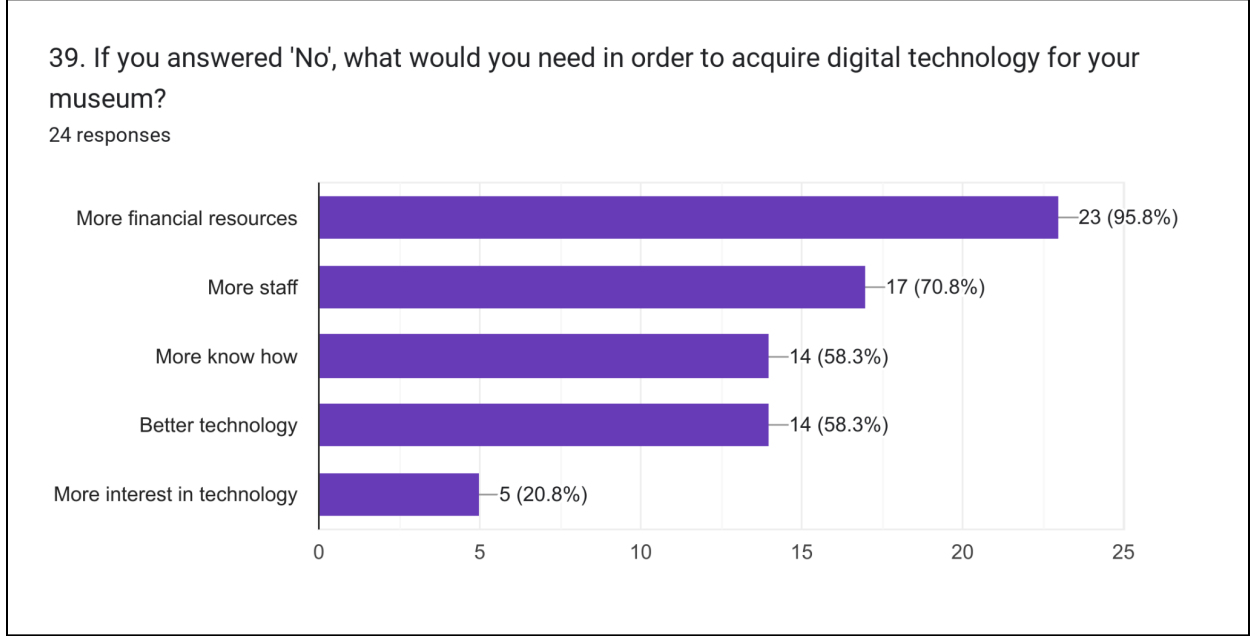


FIGURE 26

If You Answered ‘No’, What Would You Need in Order to Acquire Digital Technology For Your Museum?



In Figures 24 and 25, most museums surveyed (61%) reported that they provide digital technology for visitors, of which email and social media were most prevalent before the pandemic. However, currently the museums surveyed report that these percentages have increased for social media, free Wifi, pre-recorded virtual tours and online exhibitions. Museums that do not offer digital resources for visitors reported mostly that they need more financial resources (96%), more staff (70%), more know-how and better technology (58%) (Figure 26).

FIGURE 27

A publication of the Museums Association of the Caribbean® 2023

Does Your Museum Provide Digital Technology for Internal Use (For Museum Staff)?

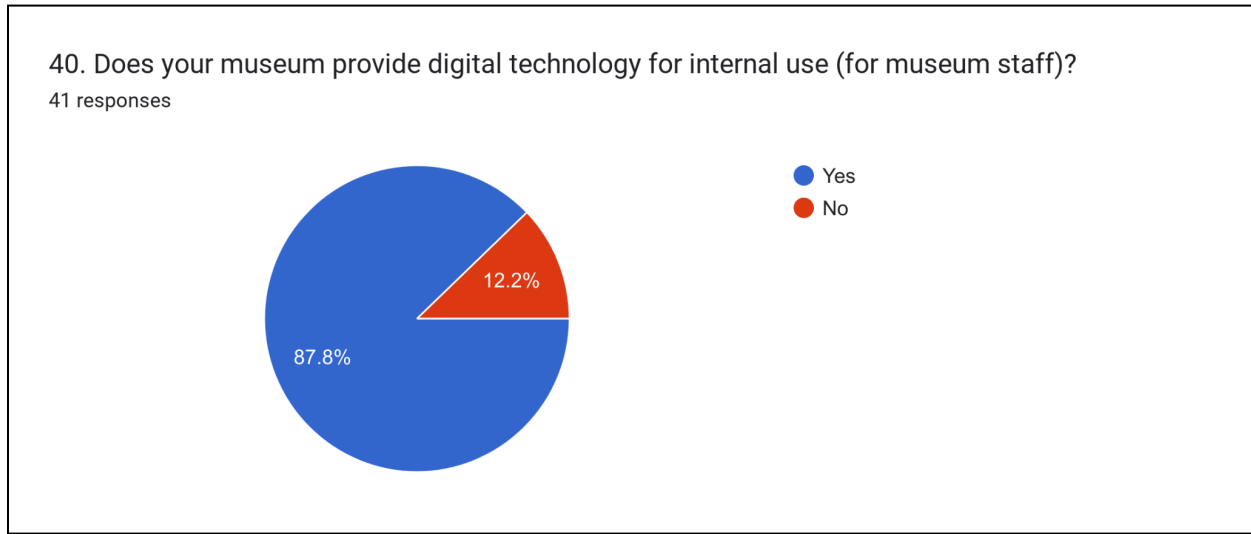


FIGURE 28
If You Answered ‘Yes’, Which Digital Resources did you Have Before the Pandemic, and Which do you Currently Have?

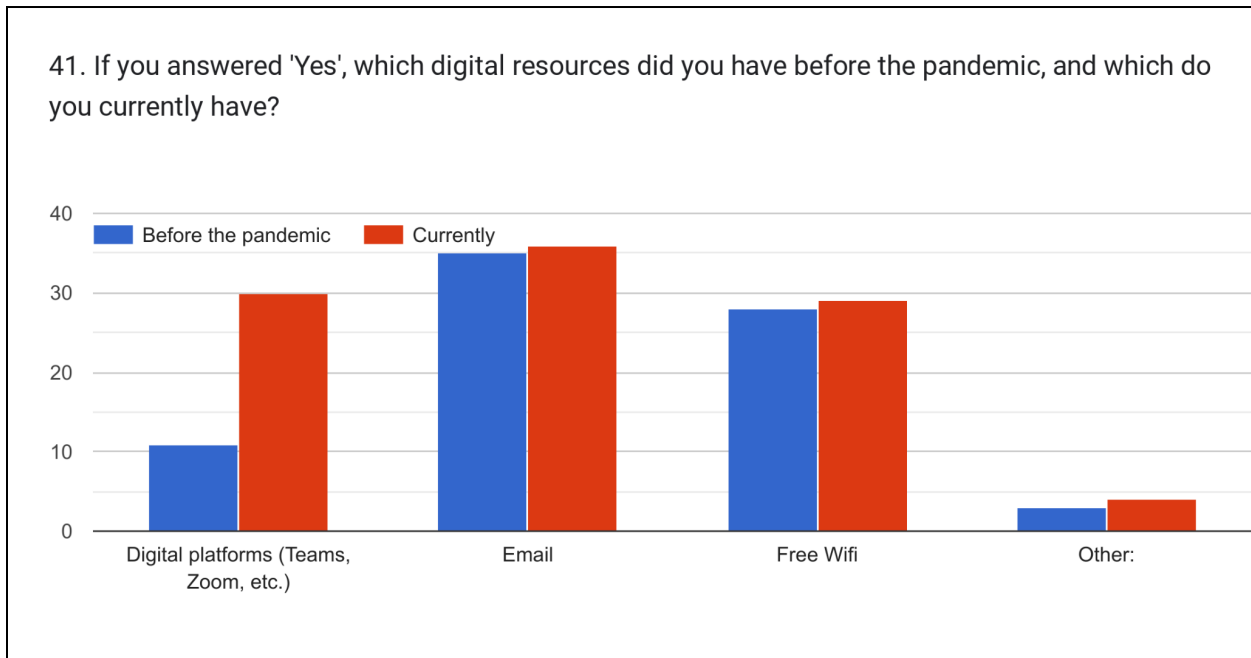
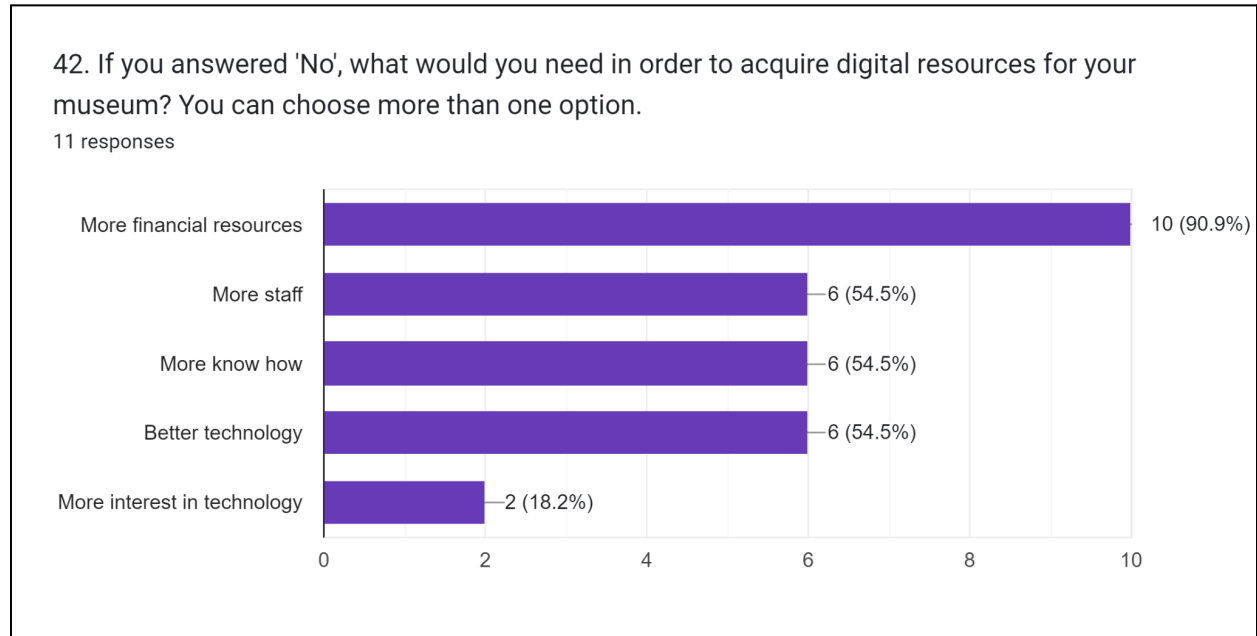


FIGURE 29
A publication of the Museums Association of the Caribbean® 2023

If you Answered 'No', What Would you Need In Order to Acquire Digital Resources for Your Museum? You Can Choose More Than One Option



In Figures 27 and 28, most museums surveyed (88%) reported that they provide digital technology for museum staff, of which email and free Wifi were most prevalent before the pandemic. However, currently the museums surveyed report that these percentages have increased for digital platforms (80%, up from 30%), and they have remained nearly the same for free Wifi (80%), and Email (95%). Only a few museums (12%) reported that they do not offer digital resources for museum staff, and that they need more financial resources (90%), as well as more staff, know-how and better technology (55%) in order to be capable of offering this kind of resource (n=11) (Figure 29).

FIGURE 30

A publication of the Museums Association of the Caribbean® 2023

How Were Digital Resources Used in Your Museum Before the Pandemic? You May Select More Than One Answer

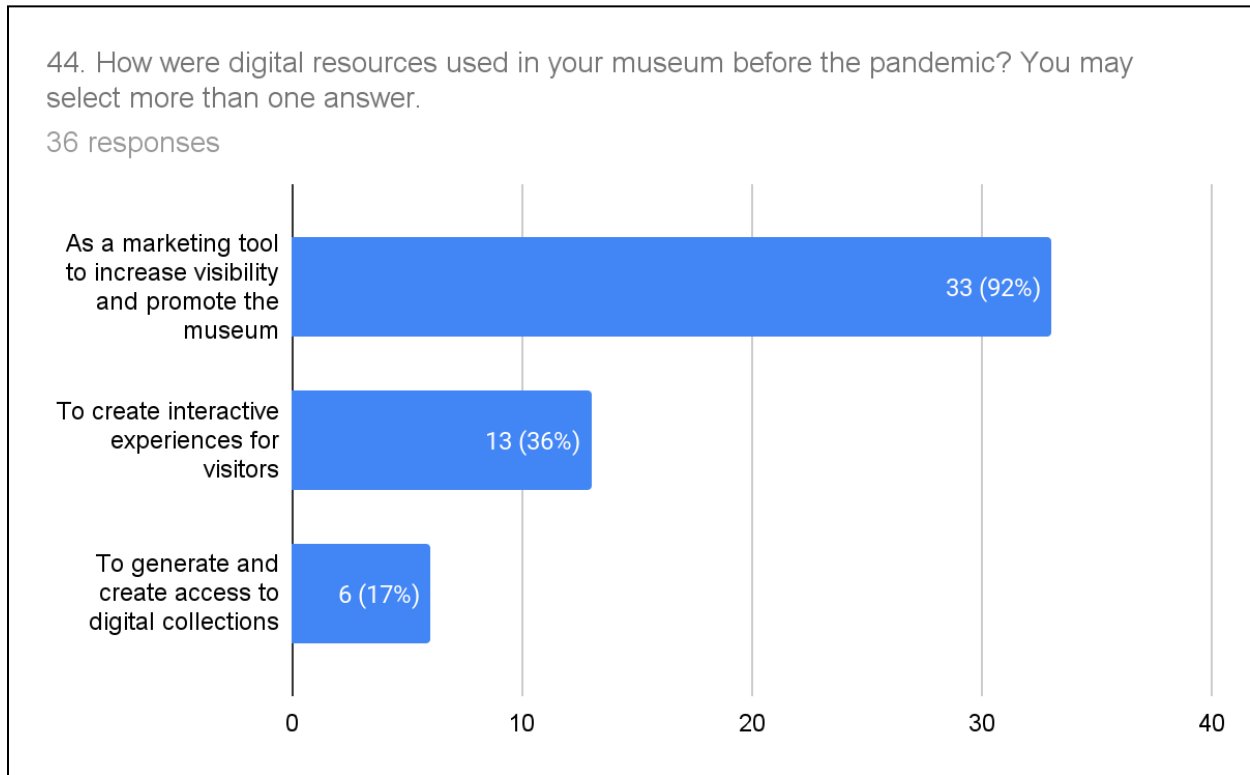
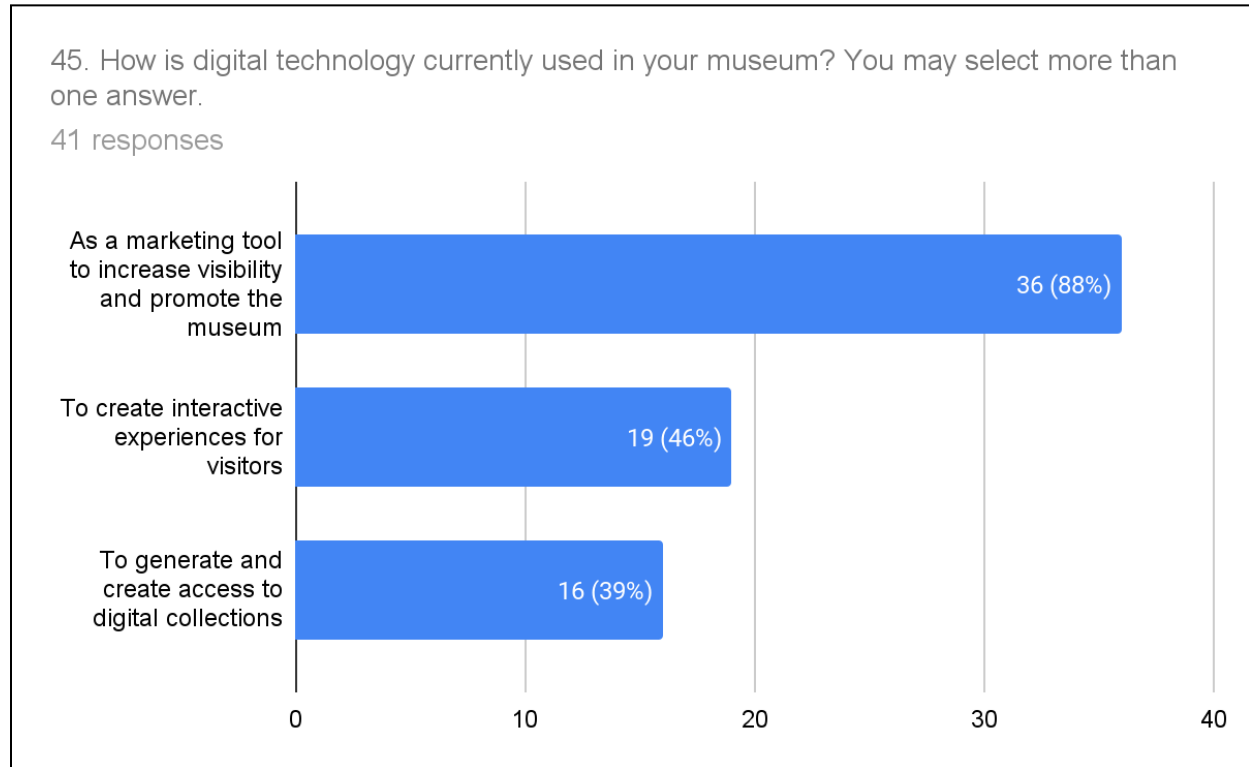


FIGURE 31

How is Digital Technology Currently Used in Your Museum? You May Select More Than One Answer.



In Figures 30 and 31, more than 80% of museums surveyed reported that they used digital technology mostly as a marketing tool to increase the visibility and promote the museum currently and before the pandemic, however, currently museums reported that they also use digital technology to generate and create access to digital collections (39%) and to create interactive experiences for visitors (46%).

FIGURE 32

Have You Been Able to Develop New Digital Resources to Respond to the Current Context?

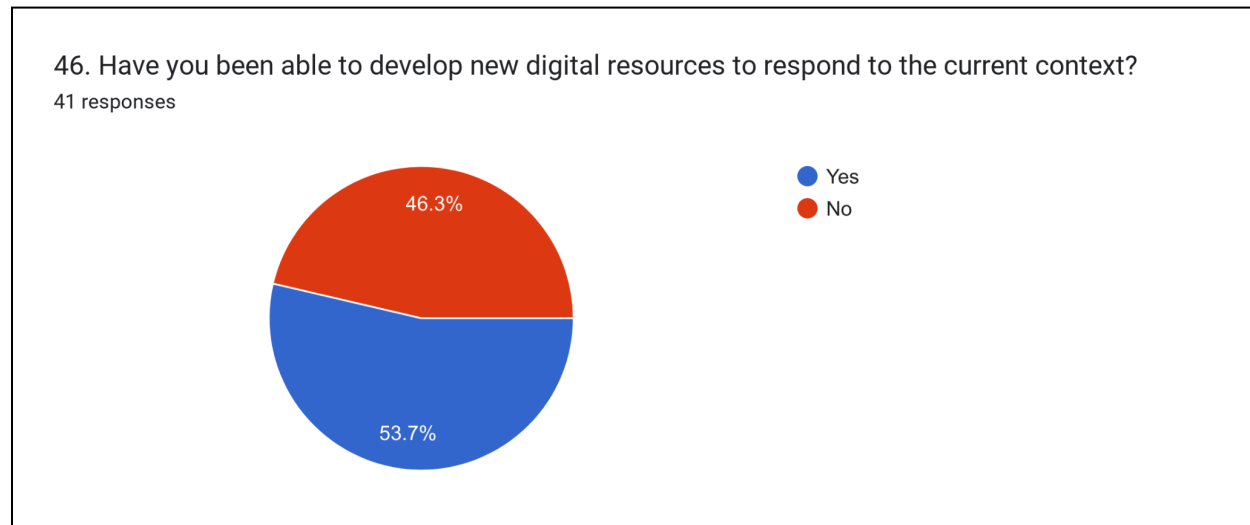


FIGURE 33

If You Answered 'Yes', Which New Digital Resources Have You Developed?

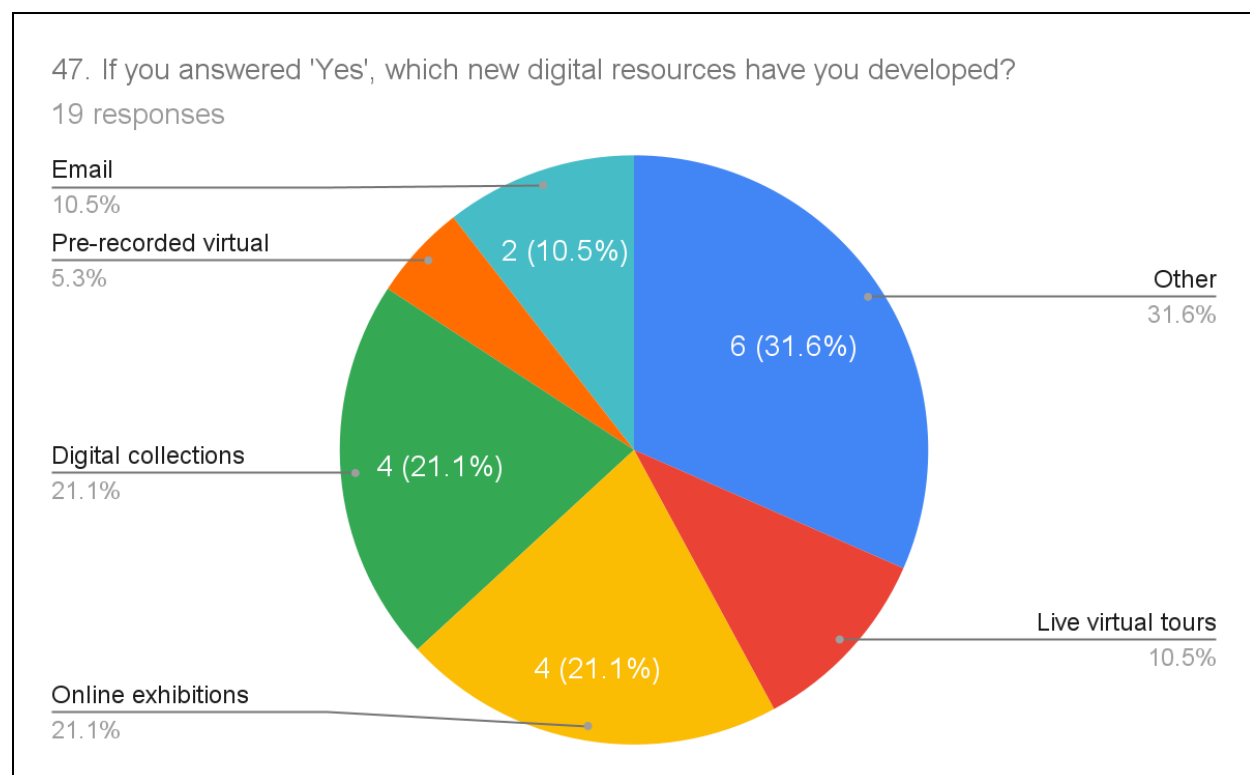
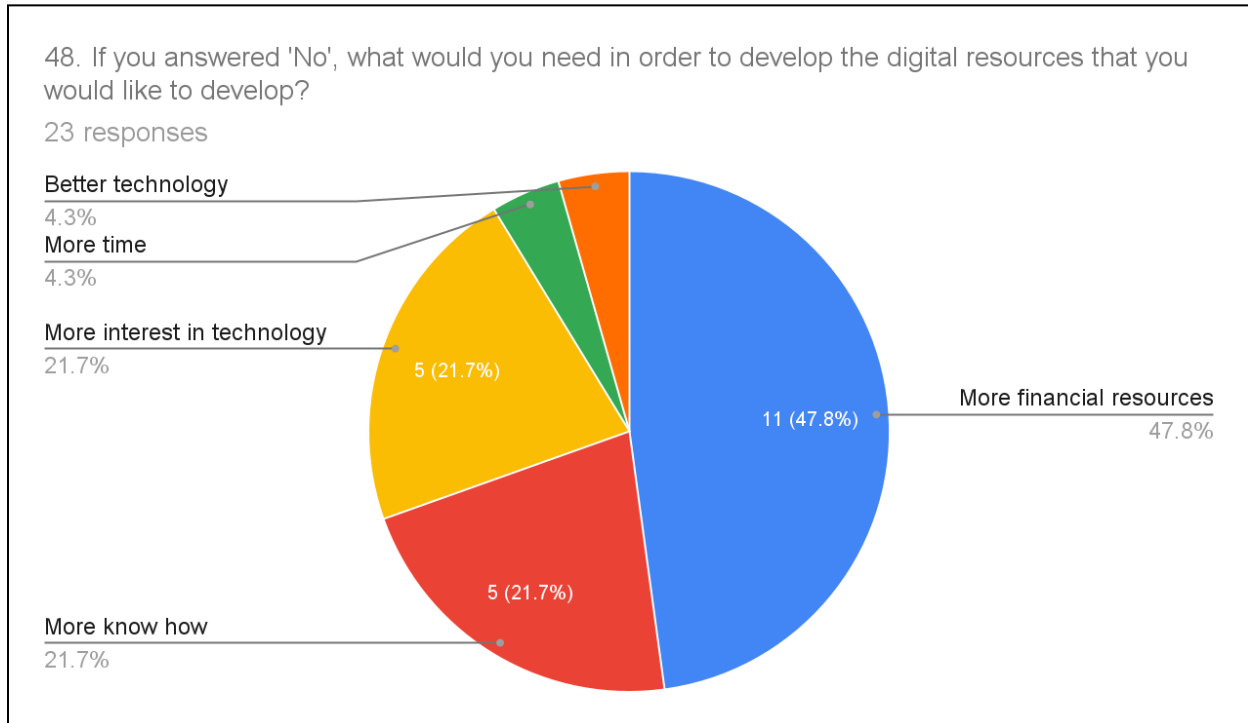


FIGURE 34

If You Answered 'No', What Would You Need In Order to Develop the Digital Resources that You Would Like to Develop?



In Figures 32, 33 and 34, more than half of the museums surveyed (54%) reported that they have been able to develop new digital resources to respond to the current context (n=41), including online exhibitions (21%), digital collections (21%), as well as live virtual tours and email (10%; n=19). Those that were not able to develop new digital resources cite the need for more financial resources (48%), know-how (22%) and interest in technology (22%; n=23).

FIGURE 35

Evaluate the Following Digital Resources from the Least Beneficial (1) to the Most Beneficial (5) for Local Audiences

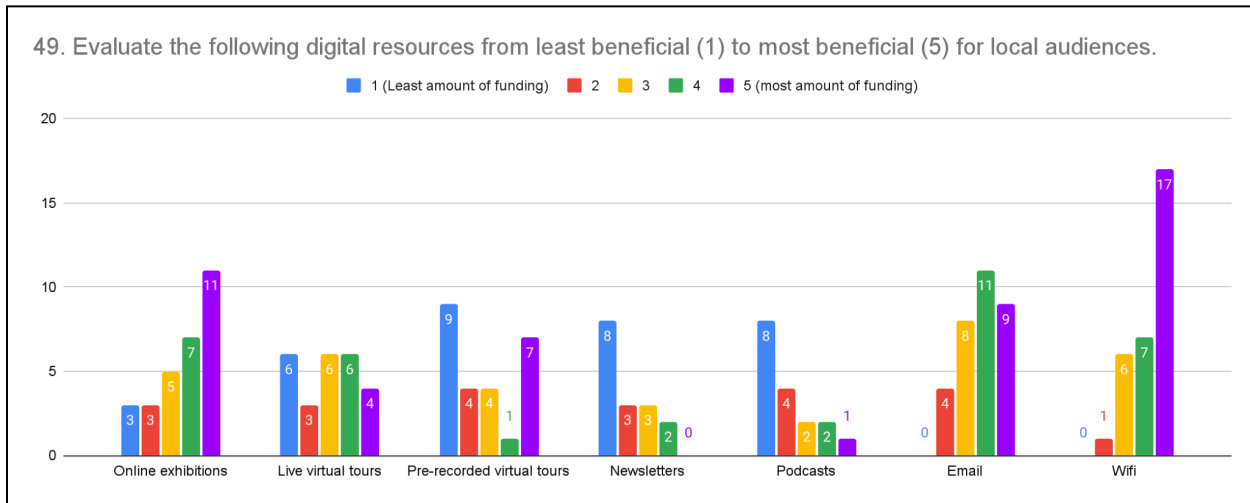
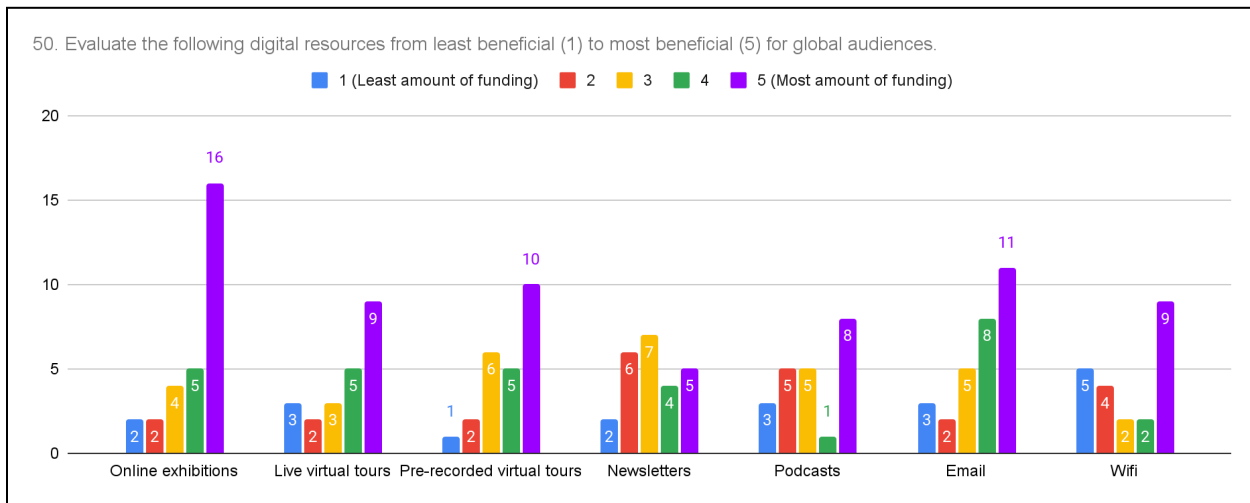


FIGURE 36
Evaluate the Following Digital Resources from Least Beneficial (1) to Most Beneficial (5) for Global Audiences



In Figures 35 and 36, museums surveyed ranked Wifi as most beneficial for local audiences, followed by online exhibitions and email; newsletters and podcasts received the lowest ranking for local audiences. In contrast, most museums surveyed ranked online exhibitions as most beneficial for global audiences, followed by email, pre-recorded and live virtual tours, WiFi and Podcasts.

How Are Caribbean Museums Dealing With The New Reality Brought On By The Pandemic?

This section of the MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey Report summarizes statistical data about the resources available and current status of the Caribbean museums and cultural organizations that completed the survey.

FIGURE 37

Does Your Museum Have Access to COVID-19 Relief Funds?

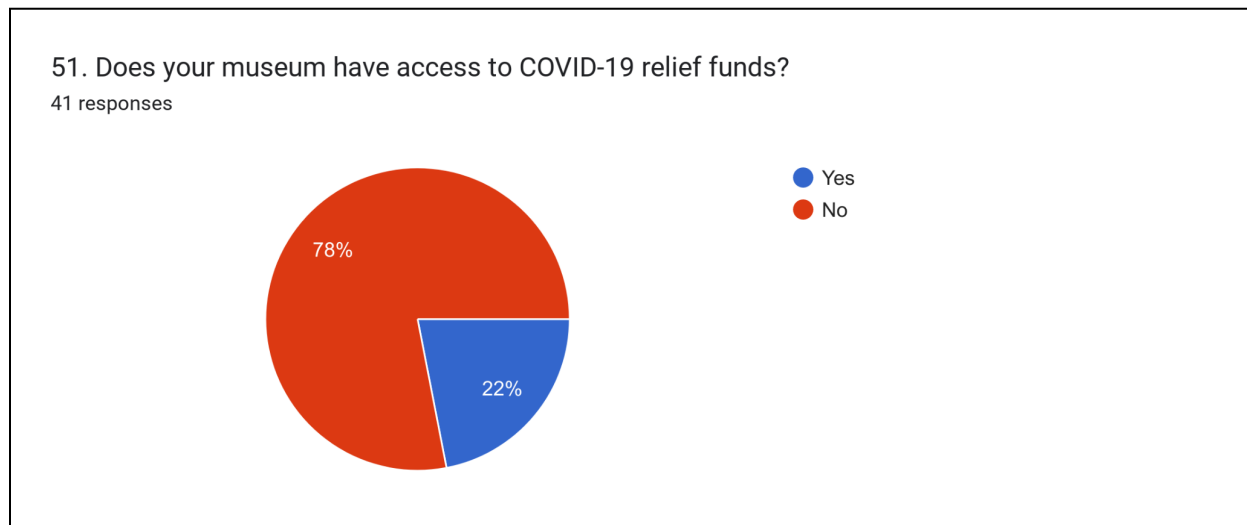
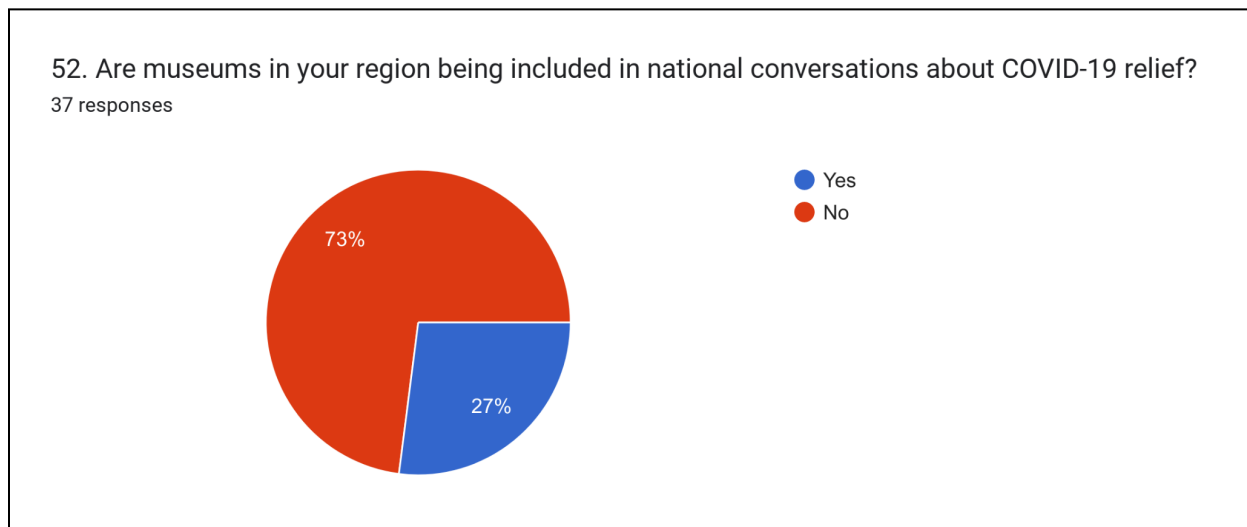


FIGURE 38

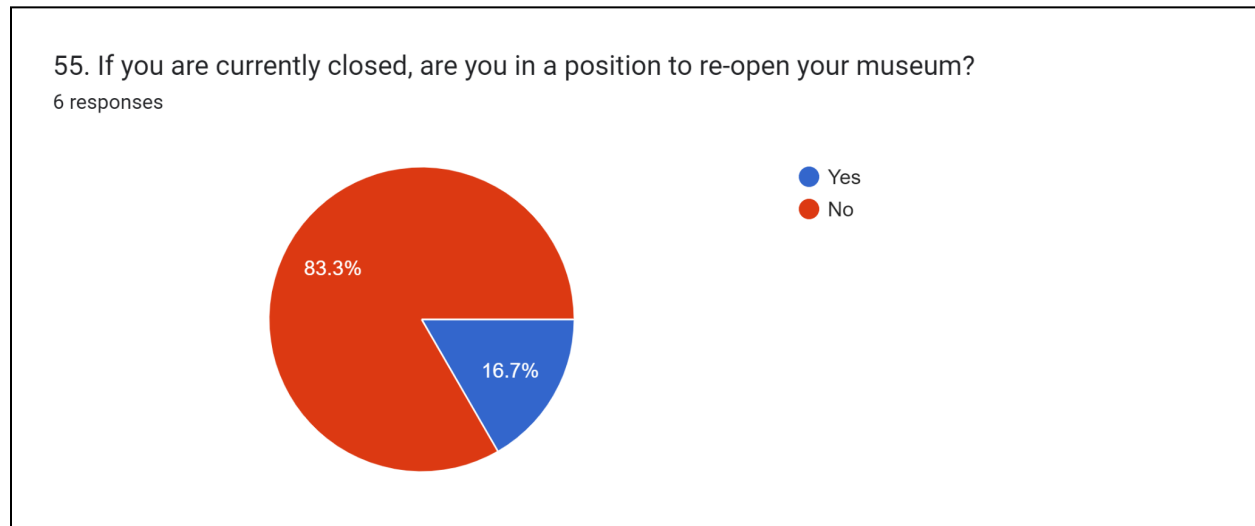
Are Museums in Your Region Being Included in National Conversations about Covid-19 Relief?



Less than a quarter of museums surveyed reported that they have access to COVID19 relief funds and a similar percentage (25%) reported that they are being included in national conversations about COVID19 relief.

FIGURE 39

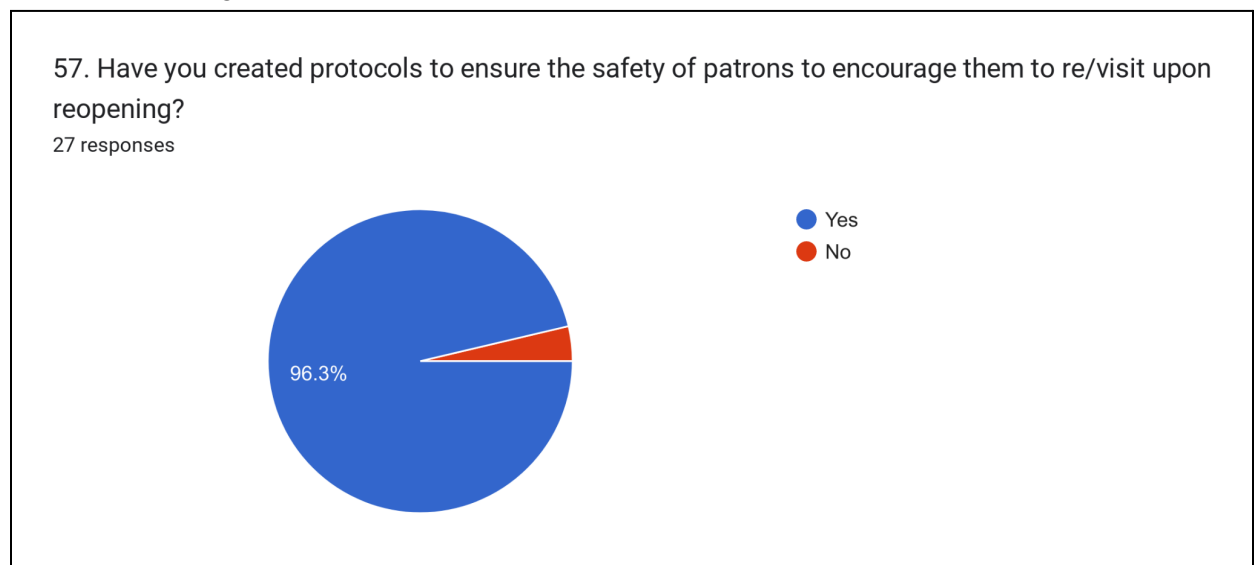
If You Are Currently Closed, Are You In a Position to Reopen Your Museum?



Of the 6 museums surveyed who reported that they are currently closed, only 17% are in a position to reopen.

FIGURE 40

Have You Created Protocols to Ensure the Safety of Patrons to Encourage Them to Re-visit Upon Re-opening?



96% of museums surveyed reported that they created protocols to ensure the safety of their patrons.

Qualitative Data

In Their Own Voices

In an effort to gain insight about the strategies that museums are implementing to move forward, the MAC Follow-up Covid Survey also included 13 open questions to allow respondents to share, in their own words, any strategies they are implementing, their perceived impact of these strategies, and any insights they have uncovered during these uncertain times (Table 2).

Table 2

Open Questions from the MAC Follow-up Covid Survey

| Focus of Questions | Open Questions |
|------------------------|---|
| Pre Pandemic Strategy | 30a. If you answered 'Yes' (major regional events/festivals have been canceled), how did your museum benefit from these events when they functioned? |
| Impact of the pandemic | 24. What else would you like us to know about the status of your museum? (I.e. won an award; special press or community acknowledgement) 30b. How have the cancellations (of major regional events/festivals) affected your museum? 54. If you answered 'No' to question 52 (being included in national conversations about COVID-19 relief), how has being excluded from these national conversations negatively affected your organization? |
| Strategy | 19. If you answered that you had 75% to 100% retention (of programs), what have been your most successful programs? 20. If you answered that you have only been able to retain 75% or less of your programs, how are you compensating for community outreach? 24. What else would you like us to know about the status of your museum? (I.e. won an award; special press or community acknowledgement) 31. If you answered 'No', how have these events been re-positioned to manage during this time? Please share details on the new strategy for the events. 53. If you answered 'Yes' to question 52 (being included in national conversations about COVID-19 relief), how has |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| | <p>being included in these national conversations benefitted your organization?</p> <p>56. What plans do you have in place for re-opening (if you are currently closed)?</p> <p>59. If you answered 'No' (have you created protocols to ensure safety), what do you need in order to get your protocols in place?</p> <p>60. If you could have given your museum advice in April 2020, what would it have been?</p> <p>61. Kindly use this space to share any additional successful strategies that you have implemented in response to the current context (collections, exhibitions, programs, audience engagement, community outreach, etc.).</p> <p>62. What critical issues do you believe MAC should be discussing and placing emphasis on when it comes to professional development training?</p> |
| Impact of the strategy | <p>24. What else would you like us to know about the status of your museum? (I.e. won an award; special press or community acknowledgement)</p> |

The response rate per question varied among respondents. Forty two of the 43 respondents surveyed, who agreed to allow us to share their data, answered at least one open question to help us gain insight into their current strategies and perceived impact. However it must be noted that respondents provided their insights mostly for questions about the effect of the cancellation of regional events/festivals, critical training needs and strategies developed in hindsight (between 28 and 29 quotes), and they provided less answers to questions about the effect of the continuation of events/festivals, strategies for reopening of closed museums, and the impact of being included in national COVID-19 relief. When we analyze the response rate for the 13 open questions by linguistic region, we found that most responses were provided by respondents from museums in the English-Speaking Caribbean (11 responses on average), followed by respondents from the Spanish Speaking Caribbean (5 responses on average), and the least number of responses were provided by respondents from the French Speaking Caribbean (3 responses on average). These variations in response rate per question and per linguistic region have an impact on the data which will be discussed in the conclusion.

Given that there was a lot of overlap in the responses to the 13 open questions provided by respondents, they were organized into 3 different groups:

1. Perceived impact of the pandemic
2. Strategies developed or modified in response to the pandemic

3. Perceived impact of the strategies used to deal with the pandemic

Each of these three groups was further divided into subgroups that represented the range of answers within each group (Table 3).

Table 3

| Group | Subgroup | Frequency |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Perceived Impact of the Pandemic</i> | negative impact- visibility | 6 |
| | negative impact- financial | 5 |
| | negative impact- ethics | 2 |
| | negative impact- lack of autonomy | 1 |
| <i>Strategy</i> | increase visibility | 46 |
| | increase knowledge base | 24 |
| | better financial strategies | 10 |
| | increase community engagement | 6 |
| | increase programs | 6 |
| | increase ethical behavior | 3 |
| <i>Perceived Impact of the Strategy</i> | positive impact- visibility | 8 |
| | positive impact- financial | 4 |
| | positive impact- knowledge base | 1 |
| | positive impact- community | 1 |

Perceived Impact of the Pandemic

“As a result, we have had to cut back on staff, hours, and may have to close our facility” (Martinique)

“The cancellations resulted in a significant drop in attendance” (Martinique)

“We are physically losing our artefacts, and losing our unique historical perspective by 'assimilation' into another” (Barbuda)

A total of 14 quotes from responses to open questions in the survey demonstrated that respondents perceived that the negative impacts of the pandemic caused a decrease in visibility evidenced by lower tourism traffic, less awareness about museums and their role in society during challenging times, a shift in the priorities of the museum, and less local and international press. The effect of a decrease in tourism also reinforces the centrality of tourism to the survival of the Caribbean cultural sector of which museums are a part. Respondents also perceived that there was a negative financial impact evidenced through reduced funding, postponed events, reduced spending on both essential and non-essential needs, cutbacks on staff, and reduced revenue streams from space rentals, as well as other kinds of rentals. A small number of respondents also mentioned negative impacts related to the ethics of the organizations which included a lack of guidance in challenging times and loss of heritage during the pandemic, and one respondent referred to the impact of the lack of autonomy during challenging times.

Strategies

“Reinventing the digital and virtual capabilities of the organization will be the key to success, staying connected to the community, and ensuring financial viability.” (Cayman Islands)

“How to pivot and move the museum to an online interacted space where teachers can log in and be able to use the collection to better teach their students” (Trinidad & Tobago)

“Intensify relationships with local visitors” (Martinique)

“How to pivot and move the museum to an online interacted space where teachers can log in and be able to use the collection to better teach their students” (Trinidad & Tobago)

A total of 95 quotes from responses to open questions in the survey referred to the strategies museums used to deal with the pandemic. These strategies included increasing those that increase visibility, financial strategies, community outreach, increasing knowledge base, and promoting ethical behavior.

Strategies to increase visibility included activities and resources such as school programs, public programs (including exhibitions, conferences and workshops) and digital programs. This has led to the generation of online resources, increased interactions through online communication platforms, communication through social media posts about the museums projects and social impact. Other important exhibition and collections based activities included temporary exhibits which help to generate local and international recognition or press coverage, investment in restoration projects, accreditation, new departments or projects, revision of strategic plans, increased access to collections and exhibitions, changes in locations, schedules, durations and capacity of events and activities, collaboration with other museums and cooperation with government agencies and the tourism sector, creating safe spaces.

Financial strategies included getting staff to take on additional responsibilities, increasing sales, diversifying services offered to third parties, improving financial management and budgeting, improving strategy to be eligible for funding, and getting funding needed to generate and implement new protocols.

Community outreach strategies include those that allow museums to reach out to new communities as well as those activities that generate a positive impression on the community leading them to advocate for their museums.

Strategies to increase knowledge base include those that are focused on the training of museum staff in multiple areas to help them be better prepared for current and future needs. These areas include those that build skills that are most needed during challenging times such as COVID-19 and other health safety protocols, contingency plans for risk management, as well as leadership and budgeting skills needed during uncertain times, post pandemic museology, and multidisciplinary staff training. Other areas focus on building skills to improve basic museums services and resources such as interpretation of collections, information technology (IT), social media, program evaluation, museums standards and marketing. Lastly, some areas

mentioned focus on ways to promote a sense of connection, health and safety in the communities we serve through networking, training in wellness and mental health, and in inclusion and social justice to address issues such as ableism, racism, sexism and protection of land rights).

Strategies to promote ethical behavior include working hard to gain board consensus on implementation of contingency plans, being honest with stakeholders regarding how the museum is faring with the pandemic, and ensuring special care for cultural heritage and memory.

Perceived Impact of the Strategies

“Gov’t relief was not identified or provided to artists so our museum lobbied for direct funding relief to be granted to artists who could apply.” (Cayman Islands)

“Increase our sales of books and magazines.” (Panama)

A total of 14 quotes from responses to open questions in the survey referred to the perceived impact of the strategies implemented by museums, which can be summarized into those that increase visibility and community outreach, improve finances and those that increase knowledge base. Increased visibility was evidenced through an increase in tourism traffic, local and international press, shared collections, awareness of the role of museums, networking, lobbying by museums, and evidence of regional support. Respondents report examples of improved finances through increased revenue streams, direct and indirect relief in the form of funding or other forms of relief, as well as an increase in funding or a change in funding source. Lastly, a perceived impact was also reported in an increase in community outreach leading to an increase in visitors and an increase in knowledge about COVID-19.

Conclusions

The majority of the respondents of the MAC COVID-19 Follow-up Survey were from the English and Spanish Speaking Caribbean, which gives us insight into MAC's current reach. It must be noted that the few respondents from the Dutch Speaking Caribbean responded to the English language survey. In order to be more inclusive in data collection efforts in the future, MAC should implement more targeted efforts to reach more museums from the French and Dutch Speaking Caribbean countries and territories. In addition, MAC should continue to amplify its outreach within the English and Spanish speaking Caribbean regions, so that future data collection efforts can include a larger sample of museums.

Initiatives geared towards museums and other cultural institutions and organizations in the Caribbean should focus on determining the needs of small and medium size organizations with a relatively small staff and budget, and few volunteers, which constituted the majority of the survey sample.

Efforts to help museums strategize moving forward should include those that help build upon the existing efforts museum respondents have identified or implemented which include: increasing visibility of the museum, knowledge base, financial strategies, community engagement, programing and ethical behavior.

Efforts to improve access to digital technology resources should be focused on funneling more financial resources in the Caribbean region so that museums can improve their strategic implementation of the digital resources that they currently have, as well as develop more interest and know-how in new digital technologies, as respondents of the survey have indicated.

In an effort to be better prepared for any future short or long term emergencies caused by pandemics, but also ongoing social unrest, political instability, and natural disasters, governments should consider establishing emergency funds geared towards maintaining the integrity of museums and their collections, as well as that of other cultural institutions and organizations and professionals of the cultural sector. This would address the needs of respondents who reported that they have not been included in national conversations about COVID-19 and have not received relief funds.

Appendix

Participating Institutions and Organizations

1. Barbudaful
2. Bermuda National Trust
3. Bermuda Underwater Exploration Institute
4. BIOMUSEO
5. Caribbean Museum Center For The Arts (CMCArts)
6. Casa Museo De Los Santos Reyes De Juana Díaz
7. Casa Museo Felisa Rincón De Gautier
8. Centre D'interprétation Paul Gauguin
9. Curacao Maritime Museum
10. Ecomusée De Marie-Galante
11. Ecomusée De Martinique
12. Folk Research Centre
13. Fundación Botánica y Zoológica de Barranquilla
14. Harry L. Johnson Museum
15. Jamaica Military Museum
16. Jewish Cultural Historical Museum
17. Maison De La Canne
18. Montserrat Museum
19. Musée D'archéologie De Martinique
20. Musée Départemental D'archéologie Amérindienne De Guadeloupe - Edgar Clerc
21. Musée Du Père Pinchon
22. Musée Frank A. Perret - Mémorial De La Catastrophe De 1902
23. Museo Arqueológico de Galapa
24. Museo Arqueologico Nacional Aruba
25. Museo De Antropología E Historia Del Estado Aragua
26. Museo De Arte De Bayamón (MAB)
27. Museo De Botones Destro
28. Museo De La Historia De San Germán Inc.
29. Museo De La Mola
30. Museo Del Mar (Atarazanas Reales)
31. Museo Fernando Peña Defilló
32. National Gallery of the Cayman Islands
33. National Museum Jamaica
34. National Museum of Bermuda
35. Natural History Museum Of Jamaica
36. Old Government House Museum
37. Saint Lucia National Trust
38. Santuario Museo San Pedro Claver
39. Sociedad De Amigos Del Museo Afroantillano De Panamá (SAMAAP)
40. St Eustatius Historical Foundation
41. The National Museum And Art Gallery Of Trinidad & Tobago
42. Toco Folk Museum
43. University Of The West Indies Museum