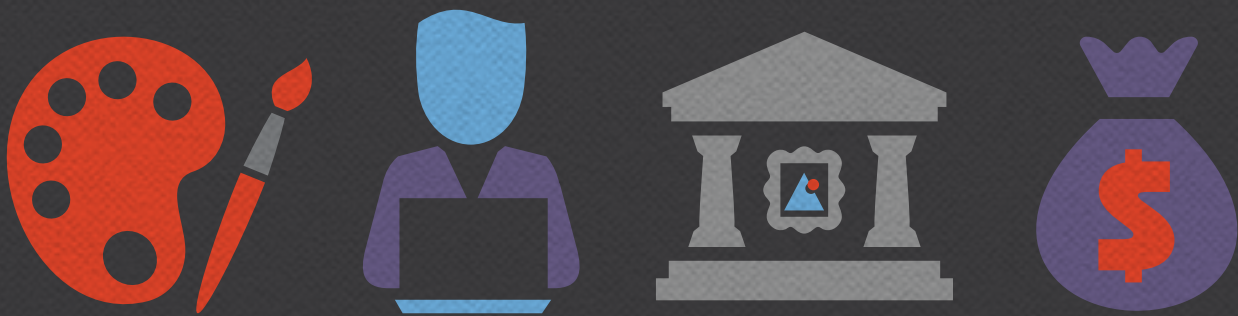




# ART MUSEUMS BY THE NUMBERS 2015

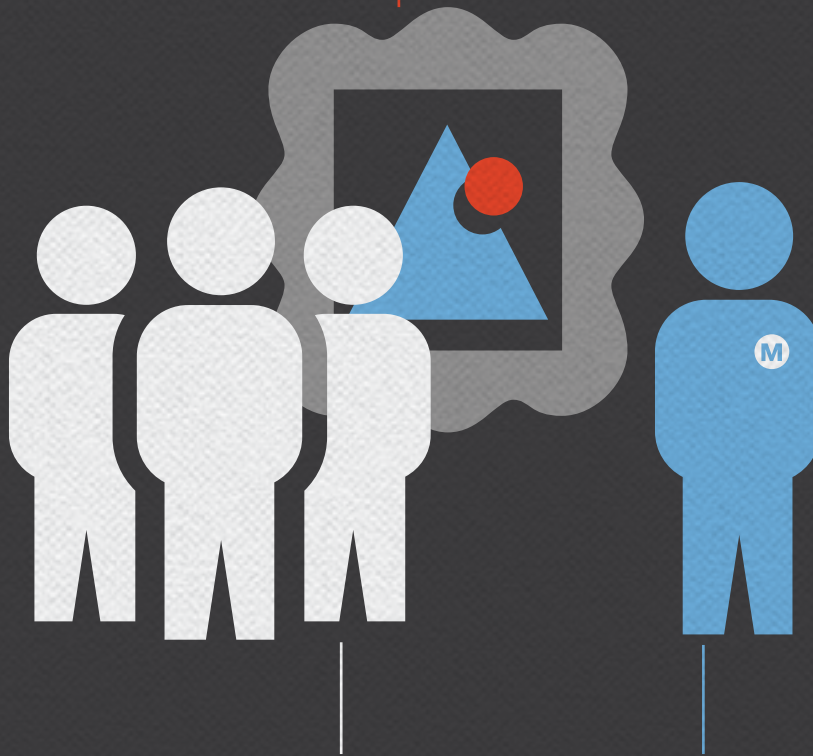


The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) released its first annual “Art Museums by the Numbers” report in 2014 to provide benchmarking data on the field and insights on how art museums serve their communities. The following report is the second “Art Museums by the Numbers,” with aggregated data from the 2015 survey of AAMD members. The report is designed to inform thinking—inside and outside the field—about art museums’ operations and their public service. A comparison of 2014 and 2015 data shows almost no fluctuation and points to the continued stability of the art museum field.

The report includes information on revenue, expenses, and support, as well as attendance and collections. A new addition to the 2015 report is a breakdown on the percentage of AAMD member museums that offer free admission. As new data is added to the report on an annual basis, AAMD will be able to chart trends in the art museum field over time. The 2015 report follows and the 2014 report can be accessed at [aamd.org](http://aamd.org).

## Collections and Audience

**13,688,926**  
Total Collection Objects



**61,386,062**  
Total Attendance

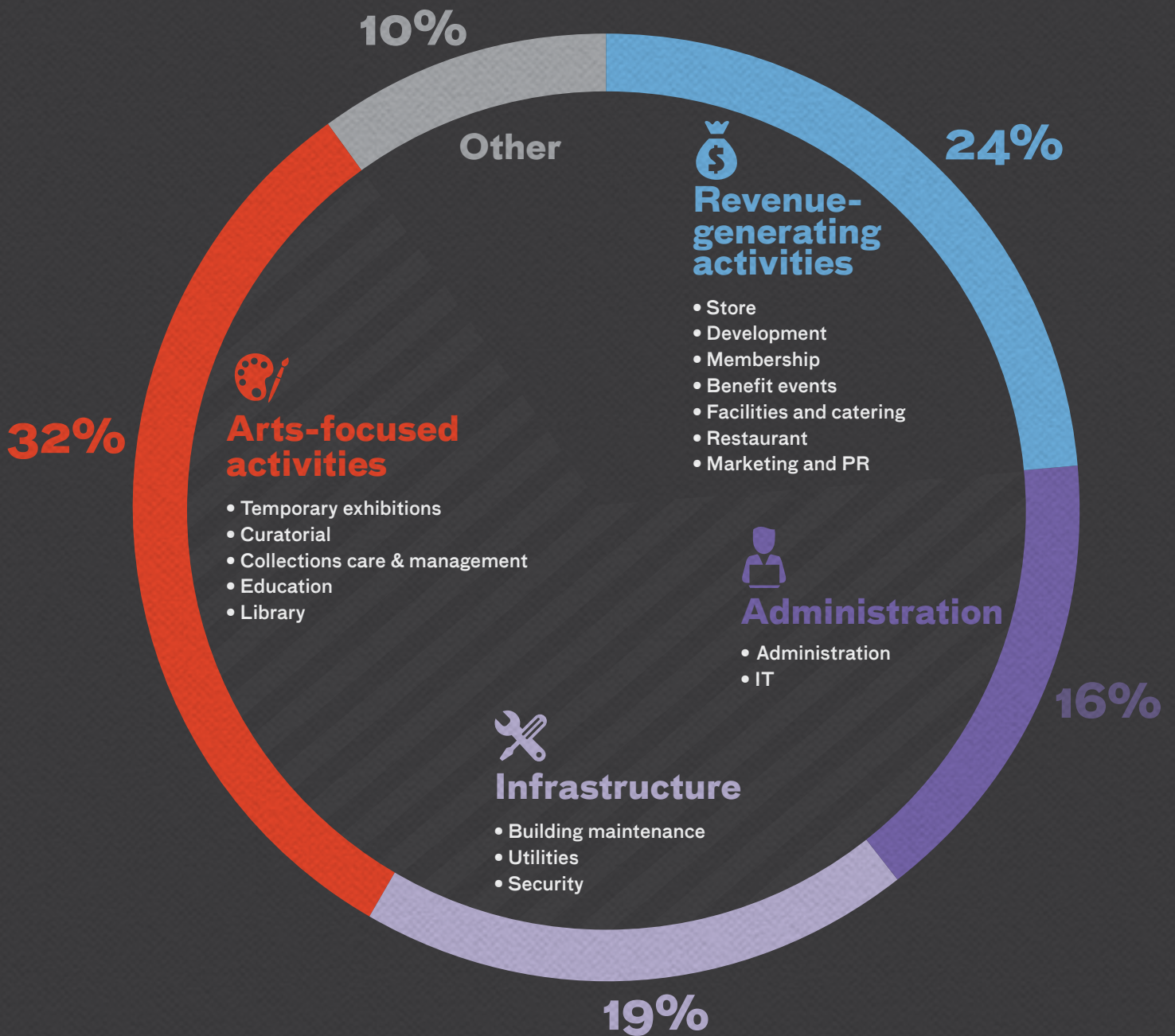
**1,967,425**  
Total Members

Source: 215 AAMD museums across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico

# Average Operating Expenses

More than two-thirds of museums' annual expenses in 2015 went towards activities such as the care and management of collections, exhibitions, education, curatorial activity, museum libraries, and other arts-focused activities, as well as the costs associated with maintaining infrastructure, security, and museum operations on-site and online. Approximately one-third of expenses were devoted to revenue-generating and other activities. These percentages were unchanged from 2014.

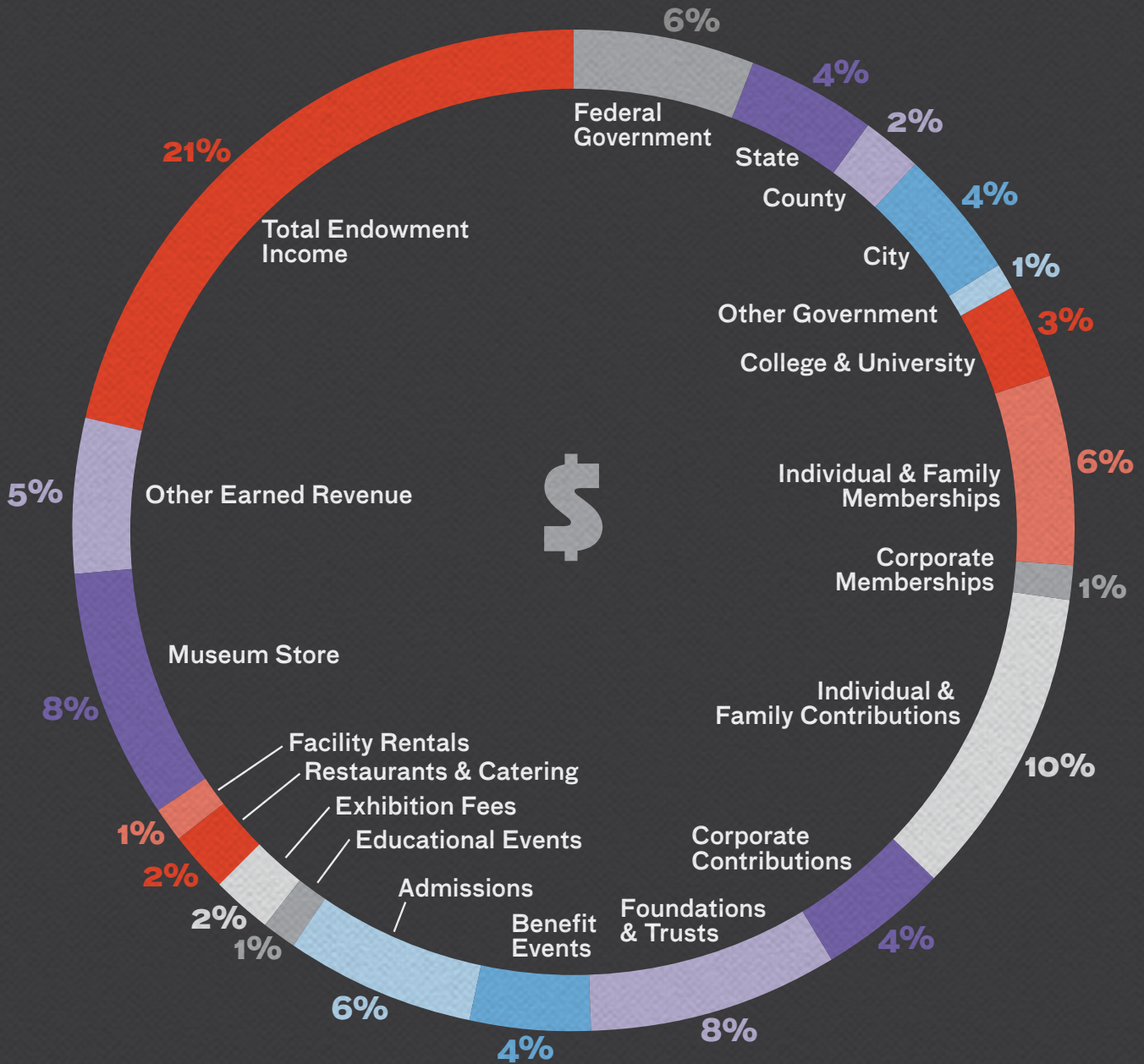
Source: 215 AAMD museums across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico



# Average Sources of Revenue & Support

Museums continue to have diversified sources of support, with little or no change in the percentage of overall support from different sources between 2014 and 2015. Having numerous revenue streams ensures the financial resilience of museums and enables them to use different resources to meet their needs.

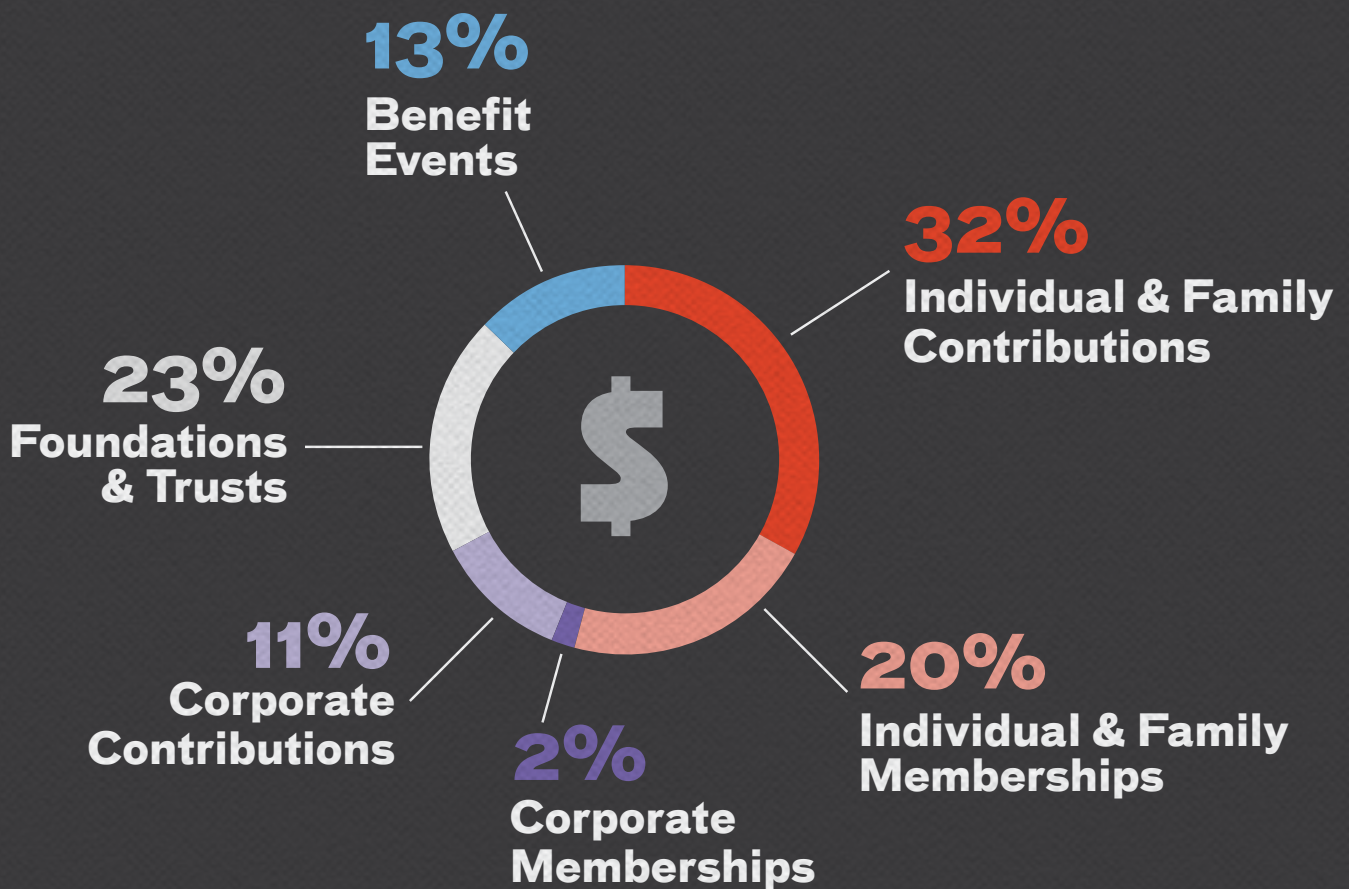
Source: 215 AAMD museums across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico



## Contributions to Art Museums

Support from individuals continues to be among the single strongest sources of funding for art museums in the U.S., with 2015 data showing that more than 50% of contributions came from family and individual donations and membership programs. This reflects the long-standing tradition of private support for art museums and recognition of the important role they play in their communities.

Source: 201 AAMD museums across the U.S.



## Admissions

A third of all museums offer free admission, slightly more than 6% of museums ask for a suggested donation, and 60% charge a set admission fee. Of the museums that offer free admission, 25% charge for special exhibitions and 75% do not.

Source: 221 AAMD museums across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico



## Revenue vs. Expenses per Visitor

There was almost no change in the average amount visitors spent per museum visit in 2014 and in 2015 (including the cost of admission and any ancillary purchases), with an average of \$8 in both years. Museums' average investment per visitor increased slightly, from \$53.17 in 2014 to \$55.25 in 2015. Visitation revenue continues to cover approximately 15% of the total expense for each individual visit, underscoring museums' commitment to investing in their public service. The percentage of overall revenue derived from admissions dropped very slightly, from 7% in 2014 to 6% in 2015.

Source: 215 AAMD museums across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico



## Total Number of Objects Purchased vs. Total Number of Objects Received by Donation

Gifts and bequests continue to underpin the growth of art museum collections in North America, with 85% of works acquired by museums in 2015 coming from contributions. These gifts of works of art mirror the private financial support that is essential to the health and success of art museums.

Source: 215 AAMD museums across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico



## Total Number of Objects Loaned vs. Borrowed

Nearly 30,000 loans were reported in 2015, a 9% increase from 2014. In addition to loans between AAMD members, museums also borrow artworks from international art museums, state and private collections, galleries and artists.

Source: 218 AAMD museums across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico



## Comparison Data 2014–2015

### COLLECTIONS AND AUDIENCE

	2014	2015
Total Attendance	61,457,283	61,386,062
Total Members	1,926,008	1,967,425
Total Collection Objects	13,329,116	13,688,926

### AVERAGE OPERATING EXPENSES

Expense	2014	2015
Arts-focused activities	33%	32%
Revenue-generating activities	24%	24%
Administration	16%	16%
Infrastructure	21%	19%
Other	6%	10%

### AVERAGE SOURCES OF REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Source	2014	2015
Government Support	18%	17%
Memberships and Contributions	34%	35%
Earned Revenue	27%	26%
Total Endowment Income	21%	21%

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO ART MUSEUMS

Source	2014	2015
Individual & Family Memberships	21%	20%
Corporate Memberships	2%	2%
Individual and Family Contributions	33%	32%
Corporate Contributions	11%	11%
Foundations & Trusts	21%	23%
Benefit Events	13%	13%



## REVENUE VS EXPENSES PER VISITOR

	2014	2015
Revenue per Visitor (admissions only)	\$3.70	\$3.70
Revenue per Visitor (admissions, shop and restaurant)	\$7.93	\$8.02
Art Museum Expenses per Visitor	\$53.17	\$55.25

## OBJECTS PURCHASED V OBJECTS RECEIVED BY DONATION

	2014	2015
Objects Purchased	12,197	11,934
Objects Donated	69,516	67,871
Objects Received by Bequest	4,297	4,081

## OBJECTS LOANED VS. BORROWED

	2014	2015
Objects Loaned	27,135	29,586
Objects Borrowed	99,460	97,245

The data reflected in "Art Museum by the Numbers" was collected in 2015 and reflects AAMD members' Fiscal Year 2014 or Fiscal Year 2015 data, depending on their fiscal calendar. While the composition of AAMD membership fluctuates slightly from year to year, the aggregated data in "Art Museum by the Numbers" provides for a snapshot of the art museum field as a whole.

The Association of Art Museum Directors, representing 236 art museum directors in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, aids its members in establishing and maintaining the highest professional standards for themselves and the museums they represent. It serves as a forum for the exchange of information and the exploration of ideas, and as a voice with which museum directors may express their joint concerns and those of their institutions. Since its founding in 1916, AAMD has played a leading role in helping to define the best practices for its members and for the art museum community as a whole. An important component of this work is the publication of AAMD's "Professional Practices in Art Museums," first adopted in 1966, most recently updated in 2011. This document provides a framework for museums to make informed and responsible decisions regarding their institutional management. Further information about AAMD's professional practice guidelines and position papers is available at [www.aamd.org](http://www.aamd.org).