



# STRATEGIC ART MANAGEMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY MUSEUM: A CASE STUDY OF NEW UZBEKISTAN'S DEVELOPMENTS

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Article history:	Abstract:
<b>Received:</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 <b>Accepted:</b> 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	This article examines the relationship between art management and museum innovation in the context of New Uzbekistan. It provides information on the recent role of Uzbek museums in the production and management of cultural products.
<b>Keywords:</b> Uzbekistan museums, museum innovation, museum management, New Uzbekistan, museum research methodologies, digitalization, community engagement, creative economy.	

**INTRODUCTION.** Nowadays, museums around the world are transforming into dynamic spaces that reflect national history and culture. At the same time, they are operating in an increasingly complex environment. This environment is characterized by expanding collaborations, intricate institutional relationships, and growing commercial demands. In this context, the museum sector in Uzbekistan is also undergoing significant changes from historical, political, economic, ideological, and methodological perspectives. As a result, there is a need to revisit theoretical concepts and practical management approaches through new perspectives. This article focuses on the necessity of integrating modern research methods with the evolving museum practices in the context of New Uzbekistan. Using the principles and tools of art management, this analysis explores how contemporary research approaches can be applied to enhance the innovative potential of museums in Uzbekistan and improve their management efficiency. Ultimately, this will contribute to increasing the global competitiveness and cultural influence of the country's museums.

**ANALYSIS OF RELEVANT LITERATURE.** Uzbekistan is making significant strides in improving governance, investing in education, and diversifying its economy. The main goal is to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework necessary for the creative economy, develop human capital, and ensure a macrostructural shift toward the service sector. With its rich cultural heritage and a population where 60% is under the age of 30, Uzbekistan possesses both a historical foundation and

vast future potential for a dynamic, vibrant, and creative economy. The World Conference on Creative Economy (WCCE), held in October 2024, provided further impetus for progress, drawing global attention to the country. It positioned Uzbekistan as a potential leading force in the global creative economy in the coming years..

A number of specialists, scientists, and industry representatives have conducted numerous studies on the activities, development prospects, achievements, and problems of museums in the 21st century in Uzbekistan and abroad and have published their scientific research in scientific articles, manuals, and monographs. Among them are "Museums, Galleries, and Art Centers of Tashkent", "Museum and Society", "Modern World Museology", "Formation and Development Prospects of Tourism in Museum-Enriched Objects in Historical Cities of Uzbekistan (Second Half of the 20th Century - Early 21st Century)", "Museum and New Technologies. On the Way to the Museum of the 21st Century", "Protection of Museum Monuments and Description of Their Preservation", "Formation and Development Prospects of Tourism in Museum-Enriched Objects in Historical Cities of Uzbekistan (Second Half of the 20th Century - Early 21st Century)", "Museum and New Technologies. The issues being researched are covered extensively in sources such as On the Way to the Museum of the 21st Century, Protection of Museum Monuments and Description of Their Preservation, and The Role of National and International Organizations in the Development of the Field of Museology (XX-XXI Centuries)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Catalog of materials of the IV World Conference on Creative Economy. Ismailova Zh.Kh., Levteeva L.G. Museums, galleries, art centers of Tashkent. T.: "Science and technology", 2017. - 236 p. With ill. Ismailova Zh., Nishanova K., M. Mukhamedova. Museum and society. - Tashkent: Chinor ENK, 2015. - 176 p. Ismailova Zh.Kh., Mukhamedova M.S., Modern world museology. Educational

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Museums in the 21st century have transcended their traditional role as static repositories of historical artifacts and works of art. They are becoming dynamic centers for education, cultural exchange, and public engagement, using technology and innovative approaches to connect with diverse audiences. This transformation requires a sophisticated understanding of arts management, a multifaceted discipline that includes strategic planning, effective resource mobilization, careful curatorial oversight, effective marketing, and stakeholder coordination. In essence, arts management provides the foundation for museums to remain vibrant, relevant, and sustainable in an ever-evolving cultural landscape.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.** With a rich and layered history along the Great Silk Road, Uzbekistan is currently undergoing significant cultural reforms under the concept of "New Uzbekistan." This national policy emphasizes openness, innovation, and a new focus on national identity, creating a favorable environment for the modernization of its many museums. With priceless collections that tell the story of civilizations, trade, and artistic expression, these institutions are now tasked with preserving their unique heritage while adapting to modern demands. This period of change highlights the need for professional museum and arts management expertise. Navigating this new era successfully requires a delicate balance: respecting and preserving Uzbekistan's deep-rooted traditions, while strategically

adopting modern management principles and innovative practices, increasing the presence, engagement, and long-term sustainability of cultural institutions. The effective application of the principles of artistic management plays an important role in shaping the future direction of Uzbekistan's museums and ensuring their development as important cultural centers in the 21st century.

**ANALYSIS AND RESULTS.** Today, 134 museums operate across Uzbekistan to preserve and promote the country's heritage for future generations. Currently, state institutions hold about 2.6 million exhibits and artifacts, of which more than 135,000 are on display. In recent years, strong efforts have been made to digitize these works and introduce electronic cataloging systems: currently, 46 state museums are part of the central online cataloging system, and more than 1.2 million exhibits are electronically registered.

But beyond their permanent exhibitions, these museums also provide important focal points for the cultural life of Uzbekistan. In the first half of 2024 alone, the country's museums organized 1,920 events, including 138 scientific and practical conferences and seminars, 880 cultural and educational events, 373 master classes, and 147 theater performances. This work helped attract more than 2 million visitors to the country's museums during this period, of which more than 560,000 were international visitors (Table 1).

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1999. 216 p. Okhrana muzejnykh pamyatnikov i opisaniye ix sokhrannosti. - M.: Profizdat, 1964. – 226 p. Mukhamedova M.S. The role of national and international organizations in the development of museology (XX-XXI centuries). - T.: Yosh Kuch Press, 2017. - 299 p.

### Museum events in Uzbekistan (first half of 2024)

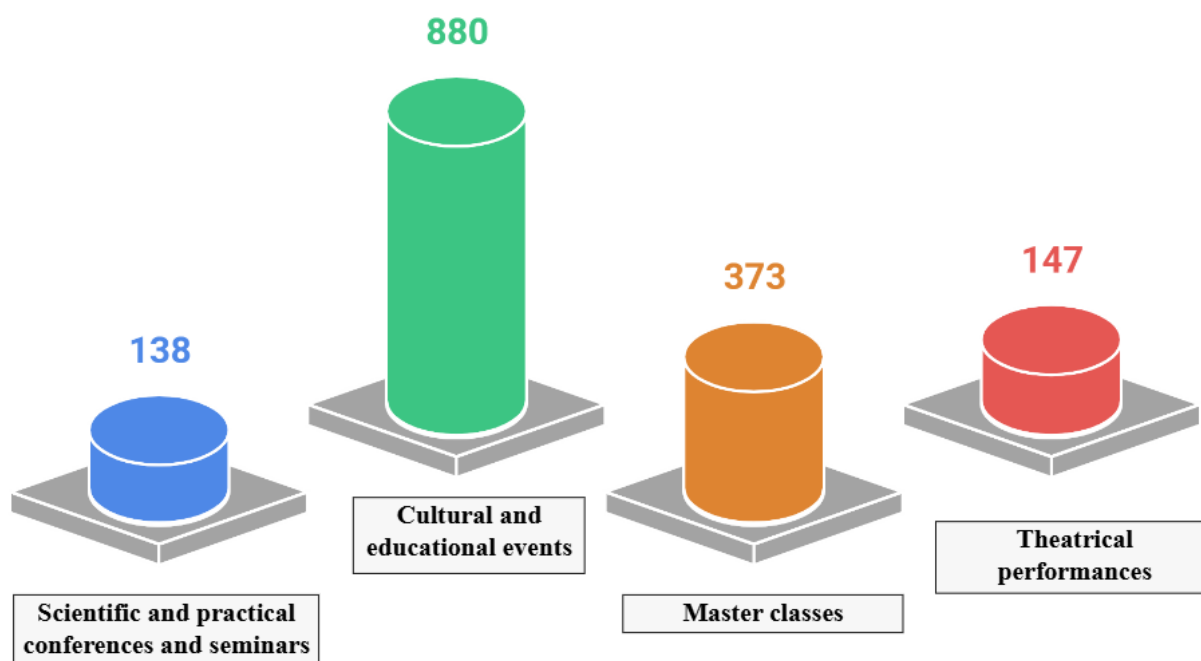


Table 1. Museum events in Uzbekistan (first half of 2024).

At the same time, the creative economy is becoming increasingly important, driving economic growth, creating jobs and stimulating innovation. Harnessing human creativity contributes to the well-being and prosperity of our society and fostering cultural diversity. As emerging technologies transform all aspects of our lives, it is impossible to overestimate the importance of the creative sector in ensuring sustainable economic growth. The Uzbek government currently divides the creative economy into 15 sectors: literature, audiovisual arts, design and fashion, performing arts, fine arts, applied arts, media, advertising, publishing and printing, digital technologies, architecture, engineering and urbanism, museums and art galleries, restoration, cultural events and production. Most importantly, this creates a great opportunity for Uzbekistan's youth. With an average age of just 28.7, the country's population is younger than any other country in Europe. This new generation of artists, performers, chefs, teachers, scientists, and musicians is already reaching new heights. With the right support, Uzbekistan's youth will

propel the country forward to take its place on the world stage.

Historically, museology research has been largely object-based, relying more on art historical scholarship, expert appraisals, and the study of the provenance of works. While such traditional approaches are still important in understanding museum collections, the changing role of museums in the 21st century requires them to be studied in a broader and more multidisciplinary, i.e. multidisciplinary, way. Today, modern museology increasingly draws on methods from the social sciences, marketing, economics, and management to address complex issues such as audience engagement, financial sustainability, and social impact. Such modern methods can be deepened by the principles of art management. For example, audience analysis—a key component of successful art management—can be applied to museology research. Beyond visitor statistics, museums can use in-depth surveys, focus groups, and ethnographic research—methods widely used in marketing and audience



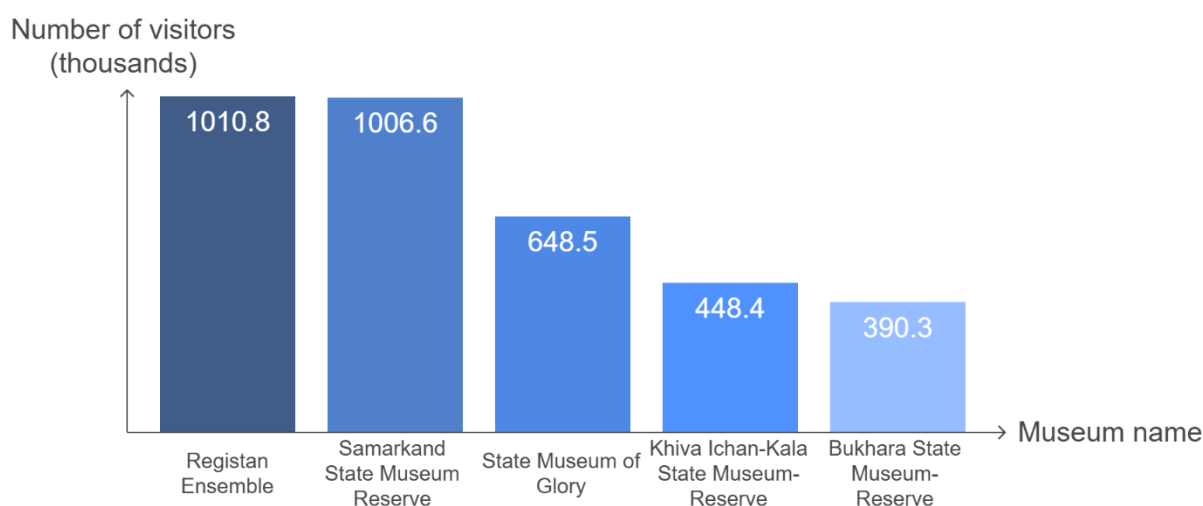
research—to understand the motivations, interests, and learning styles of visitors. This information can then be used to design exhibitions, plan educational programs, and public relations, and help make museum offerings relevant and engaging for different audiences. In the context of the new Uzbekistan, such research can help determine how different segments of the population respond to the national history and culture presented in museum exhibitions, and thus create culturally sensitive and impactful presentations. In addition, financial analysis, an important part of art management, can be integrated into museological research. Cost-benefit analysis can be used to assess the effectiveness of different exhibition strategies or educational programs, while economic impact analysis can be used to determine the overall economic impact of museums on the local economy, through tourism and job creation. Such an informed approach will help museum managers in New Uzbekistan effectively allocate resources and justify the importance of museums to stakeholders. In arts management, understanding public opinion and building a strong brand are key factors in attracting audiences and gaining the attention of supporters.

Museums can also apply similar approaches to their research activities. For example, marketing research can be used to determine public awareness and understanding of specific historical or cultural topics before preparing an exhibition. This helps museums identify existing knowledge gaps and shape their narrative and interpretive materials accordingly, taking into account public interest. In this regard, according to the Statistics Agency, as of January 1, 2024, the number of museums in Uzbekistan was 140.

Museums were visited by 5.7 million people in 2023.

The top 5 museums in our country with the most visitors:

Registan Ensemble – 1,010.8 thousand people;  
Samarkand State Museum Reserve – 1,006.6 thousand people;  
State Museum of Glory within the Victory Park Memorial Complex – 648.5 thousand people;  
Khiva Ichan-Kala State Museum Reserve – 448.4 thousand people;  
Bukhara State Museum Reserve – 390.3 thousand people (Table 2).



**Top 5 museums in Uzbekistan by number of visitors**

Table 2. Top 5 museums in Uzbekistan by number of visitors.

Also, understanding the essence of the museum brand and its image in the public eye is important in communicating research results to different audiences — this ensures effective advocacy and active communication with the audience. Imagine, a study is

conducted in Uzbekistan to study public opinion on the heritage of the Silk Road — this can directly determine how the museum presents this history to local and international audiences. Another important tool in art management is project management. Museums often



carry out complex research projects, including cataloging collections, creating digital archives, or organizing exhibitions with large research components. Applying project management techniques to these processes — that is, setting clear goals, creating timelines, allocating resources, and assessing risks — can significantly increase the efficiency and effectiveness of research work. This is particularly important in the context of the innovative and reconstruction projects being carried out in the museums of New Uzbekistan, where well-managed research can be a key factor in planning and implementing these initiatives. Finally, stakeholder analysis, a key aspect of art management, is very useful for museums to set their research priorities and strengthen partnerships. By identifying a variety of stakeholders—government agencies, funding agencies, academic institutions, local communities, and international partners—and by understanding their needs and interests, museums can align their research agenda with broader societal goals and create important partnerships that increase the impact and reach of their research. For example, a museum in Uzbekistan could conduct research to explore how its collections can serve the educational needs of local schools—which would greatly help to strengthen community ties and demonstrate the museum's social relevance.

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.** In conclusion, the integration of modern research methodologies, especially approaches based on the principles of art management, has great potential to increase the effectiveness and impact of museums in the New Uzbekistan in the context of the complexities of the 21st century. By moving beyond traditional object-oriented research and adopting data-driven approaches that focus on audience analysis, financial sustainability, marketing, project management, and stakeholder engagement, Uzbek museums can gain a deeper understanding of their activities, audiences, and broader societal role. The innovative reforms underway in the museum sector of New Uzbekistan—technological integration, active engagement with the public, and increased international collaboration—are an important step toward aligning with global best practices. However, the real impact of these achievements will come from underpinning their planning, implementation, and evaluation processes with in-depth research. The application of art management methodologies can serve as a strategic foundation for these studies. A deeper understanding of visitor motivations through modern audience analysis leads to

the creation of more meaningful and relevant exhibitions. The use of financial analysis tools ensures the sustainable development of innovative projects. Marketing and branding principles serve to strengthen public communication and build strong community ties. Project management techniques, on the other hand, help to effectively implement modernization initiatives. Also, through approaches based on stakeholder analysis, museums can strengthen their collaboration and expand the impact of research. A commitment to modern and relevant research is essential for Uzbek museums to become dynamic venues for the representation of national history and culture on the world stage. By using strategic knowledge of arts management, embracing networked, that is, interdisciplinary approaches, Uzbek museums can find effective solutions to contemporary problems, take full advantage of new opportunities, and strengthen their position as important cultural and educational centers of the future. In this way, investing in research capacity and applying innovative methods is key to fully realizing Uzbekistan's rich museum heritage.

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