2023 Snapshot of New York State Museums
Data fielded August 1 - 18, 2023

116 New York State museums responded to this survey from all ten REDC regions, with representation from museums of multiple disciplines and budget sizes.

MANY compared this data to the American Alliance of Museum’s 2023 National Snapshot of United States Museums, fielded in March and April 2023 by Wilkening Consulting with 340 museum responses.

While NYS museums are trending at the same rate as nationally reported data in some areas, in other areas they are lagging behind.
57% of responding NYS museums have recovered to pre-pandemic attendance numbers. New York’s post-pandemic attendance average is 25% higher than the national average reported by AAM.

43% of responding NYS museums have yet to recover pre-pandemic attendance numbers, averaging a 66% attendance rate compared to pre-pandemic attendance.

*MANY did not ask NYS museums to report any increase in attendance from pre-pandemic.*
56% of respondents reported that staff size is the same as it was pre-pandemic.

16% of respondents reported an increase in staff size.

28% of respondents reported a decrease in staff size. In 2021 MANY reported a 12% loss in full-time and part-time staff. The 28% represents an additional 16% loss in staff since 2019.

36% of respondents said that they are actively recruiting for positions.
17% of respondents reported a decrease in their museum’s operating budget.

33% of respondents reported an increase.

50% of respondents reported that their museum’s operating budget remain relatively the same as it was pre-pandemic which is 13% higher than the national data.

Some of the reported operating budget increases may be attributed to the 2022 6.5% inflation rate as reported by the US Labor Department.
Pandemic Relief

52% of responding museums received some type of federal pandemic relief funding.

142 NYS museums received Paycheck Protection Program loans during the pandemic which protected 7,062 museum jobs.¹

4% of total CARES Act funding to US museums went to NYS museums in 36 grants totalling $5,056,041 from the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

61 NYS museums were awarded ARPA funding through IMLS, NEA, and NEH grants, totaling $6,807,259.

53 NYS museums received a Shuttered Venue Operating Grant (SVOG), totalling just under $115 million.

Selected additional comments regarding museum’s recovery over the past three years.

We were focused on creating online programming and outdoor accessibility during the pandemic. We have continued and even expanded the offerings post pandemic. We reopened as soon as we were allowed to because we are a LEED certified building and we were well positioned to provide a safe space for the public.

We are a small historical society serving a rural township and locale. We are an all-volunteer organization and applied for several local relief grants to help with operating and capital expenses. We received no funding. Our comeback has been entirely due to the tremendous fundraising efforts of our volunteers, Town support, and our membership.

While we may have the same number of people coming through our doors, we have not been able to recover the energy needed from volunteers to organize events and activities.

Because we are connected to a university, this affected recovery and growth quite a bit. Higher education has not recovered from the pandemic and the side effects of this include budget cuts, hiring freezes, and extra financial approvals. This often directly affects our operations.

We had heavy board loss from which we have not recovered. With an increased cost of living, there are salary pressures without us feeling confident about increasing fees for events. Audiences are returning, but patterns/composition are shifting and for a very small staff it is hard to respond quickly in our planning & marketing.

We have pivoted to doing most of our talks online or a hybrid -which remains very problematic but inescapable now, as in-person attendance has not recovered. Our reach is much bigger online and of course, the event is recorded and shareable.

The pandemic provided our organization the opportunity to focus on identifying more effective ways of accomplishing our mission, resulting in tremendous growth during the past three years.

The recovery funding was key to helping us get through the pandemic years. While we filed for ERTC funding, we have not received the funding yet. The dollars never arrived and we have been told it might still be years till they arrive (if ever) because the IRS is backed up. The 2022-2023 fiscal year has been harder now that there are no PPP loans but we still have increased operating costs due to inflation, increases in goods and services costs, and staffing costs. We are finding it very hard to recruit new staff at former staff salary rates. Our attendance numbers have rebounded, but we are admission free. So we are thrilled to be serving more people again, but that does not bring in more revenue. In fact, it just means we have needed to increase admission desk hours, increased guards, and education and visitor services staff.
Alphabetical List of Respondents

Adirondack Sky Center & Observatory  
Afton Historical Society Museum  
Albany Institute of History & Art  
Alice T. Miner Museum  
American Museum of Natural History  
Antique Wireless Association  
Arcade Historical Society  
Big Springs Museum  
Black Rock Historical Society  
Bolton Historical Museum  
Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village  
Cambridge Historical Society and Museum  
Canal Society of New York State  
Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University  
Chemung County Historical Society  
Chenango County Historical Society and Museum  
Clermont State Historic Site  
Clinton County Historical Association  
Clinton Historical Society  
Corning Museum of Glass  
Cornwall on Hudson Village Museum  
D&H Canal Museum  
Dunkirk Historical Museum  
Eastville Community Historical Society  
Everson Museum of Art  
Fenton History Center  
Fireboat Fire Fighter Museum  
Fort Ticonderoga  
Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College  
Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery  
Frank Lloyd Wright’s Martin House  
Franklin Square Museum  
Frontenac Museum  
Gates Historical Society  
George Eastman Museum  
Godwin-Ternbach Museum  
Greater Fleischmanns Museum of Memories  
Greater Oneonta Historical Society  
Hagaman Historical & Preservation Society  
Hallowell Museum Farm  
Hampton Bays Historical Society  
Hanford Mills Museum  
Hart Cluett Museum of Historic Rensselaer County  
Haverstraw Brick Museum  
Heckscher Museum of Art  
Heritage Discovery Center  
Herkimer County Historical Society  
Historic Geneva  
Historic Saranac Lake  
Historical Society of the Nyacks  
Hofstra University Museum of Art  
Intrepid Museum  
Irish American Heritage Museum  
Irvington Historical Society  
Kent-Delord House  
Long Beach Historical Society  
Long Island Children’s Museum  
Long Island Explorium  
Long Island Museum  
Mandeville Gallery, Union College  
Mid-Hudson Discovery Museum  
iSci  
Morgan-Manning House  
MOST  
Mount Gulian Historic Site  
Museum at Eldridge Street  
Museum of Arts and Design  
National Women’s Hall of Fame  
New York Museum of Transportation  
Niagara Aerospace Museum  
Niagara County Historical Society  
Noah Hallock Homestead  
North Star Underground Railroad Museum  
North Tonawanda History Museum  
Old Fort Niagara  
Plattsburgh State Art Museum  
Pollock-Krasner House & Study Center  
Putnam Arts Council  
Raynham Hall Museum  
Roger Tory Peterson Institute  
Rome Sports Hall of Fame and Museum  
Rye Historical Society  
Sagamore Institute  
Samuel de Champlain History Center  
Sanborn Area Historical Society  
Schuyler County Historical Society  
Schweinfurth Art Center  
Sci-Tech Center of Northern NY  
Sciencenter  
Seneca Art and Culture Center  
at Ganondagan State Historic Site  
Seward House Museum  
Shelter Island Historical Society  
Sherwood House  
Shushan Covered Bridge Museum  
Skaneateles Historical Society  
South Street Seaport Museum  
Southold Historical Society  
dba Southold Historical Museum  
Spencerport Depot and Canal Museum  
Staten Island Museum  
The Historical Association of Lewiston  
The Hyde Collection  
The Museum at Bethel Woods  
The Museum at FIT  
The Rockwell Museum  
The Sembrich  
The Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence  
Town OF Diana Historical Museum  
Town of Pompey Historical Society  
Valley Stream Historical Society  
Village of Williamsville Historical Society & Museum  
Voelker Orth Museum  
Westhampton Beach Historical Society  
William Miller House  
World Awareness Children’s Museum  
Yager Museum of Art & Culture, at Hartwick College  
Yeshiva University Museum