Hello Future: Manchester Museum to reopen



Rickshaw being painted as part of the South Asia Gallery at Manchester Museum Manchester Museum

Supported by National Lottery players, the museum will offer visitors the chance to see never-before-displayed collections, explore unique co-curated galleries and learn about extraordinary projects and research.

The spectacular neo-Gothic building designed by Alfred Waterhouse – reopening Saturday 18 February – now boasts a new modern two-storey extension housing new exhibition spaces and a contemporary entrance along with new inclusive facilities.

Building greater understanding between cultures and bringing to life the lived experience of diverse communities through its historic collections and new displays, is at the heart of the museum's transformation.

> Beautiful new galleries and exhibitions will showcase the best of the museum's historic collections, as well as addressing the urgencies of the present day and highlighting the complexities of our world.
>
> *Esme Ward, Museum Director of Manchester Museum*

The new South Asia Gallery, a partnership with the British Museum, is the UK's first permanent space to explore the lived experience of South Asian diaspora communities. The gallery has been co-curated with the South Asia Gallery

Collective, a group that includes community leaders, educators and artists. It delves into the connection between South Asia and Britain and the legacy of Empire alongside contemporary South Asian culture and creativity – perspectives that have not been shown before.

Another new space created through the transformation is the Lee Kai Hung Chinese Culture Gallery. Visitors can explore personal stories of migration, friendships and collaboration, showcased through rarely and never displayed objects. It has been developed in partnership with the University's Manchester China Institute, and draws on both historical and contemporary links between Manchester and China.

The first new permanent gallery that visitors will see is the Belonging Gallery. The creation of the gallery has been led by the museum's first ever Curator of Indigenous Perspectives, Alexandra P. Alberda. The gallery provides a space for visitors to reflect upon what it means to belong, drawing upon the museum's collections and diverse cultural perspectives.

On the new spaces, Esme Ward, Museum Director of Manchester Museum, said: "Beautiful new galleries and exhibitions will showcase the best of the museum's historic collections, as well as addressing the urgencies of the present day and highlighting the complexities of our world."

Future facing

Central to the extensive transformation is making sure that Manchester Museum is a place that heritage can be enjoyed by future generations for years to come.

Named the world's first Carbon Literate Museum, environmental sustainability is front and centre of their work. During renovation works they recycled and reused material within the museum, and the practice is extended to other construction and exhibition projects. They are also working with local sustainable producers and suppliers in order to reduce their environmental impact.

Environmental action and social justice is a core driver for the museum with new projects and exhibitions setting out to inspire and support climate and ecological action.

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Dr Habib and Stephen Welsh with project participant, Urussa



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