



Arizona Museum of Natural History

Roles of museums



Department and Art and Culture
City of Mesa
2024



Momofuku Ando Instant Ramen Museum

Underwater Museum in Cancun, Mexico



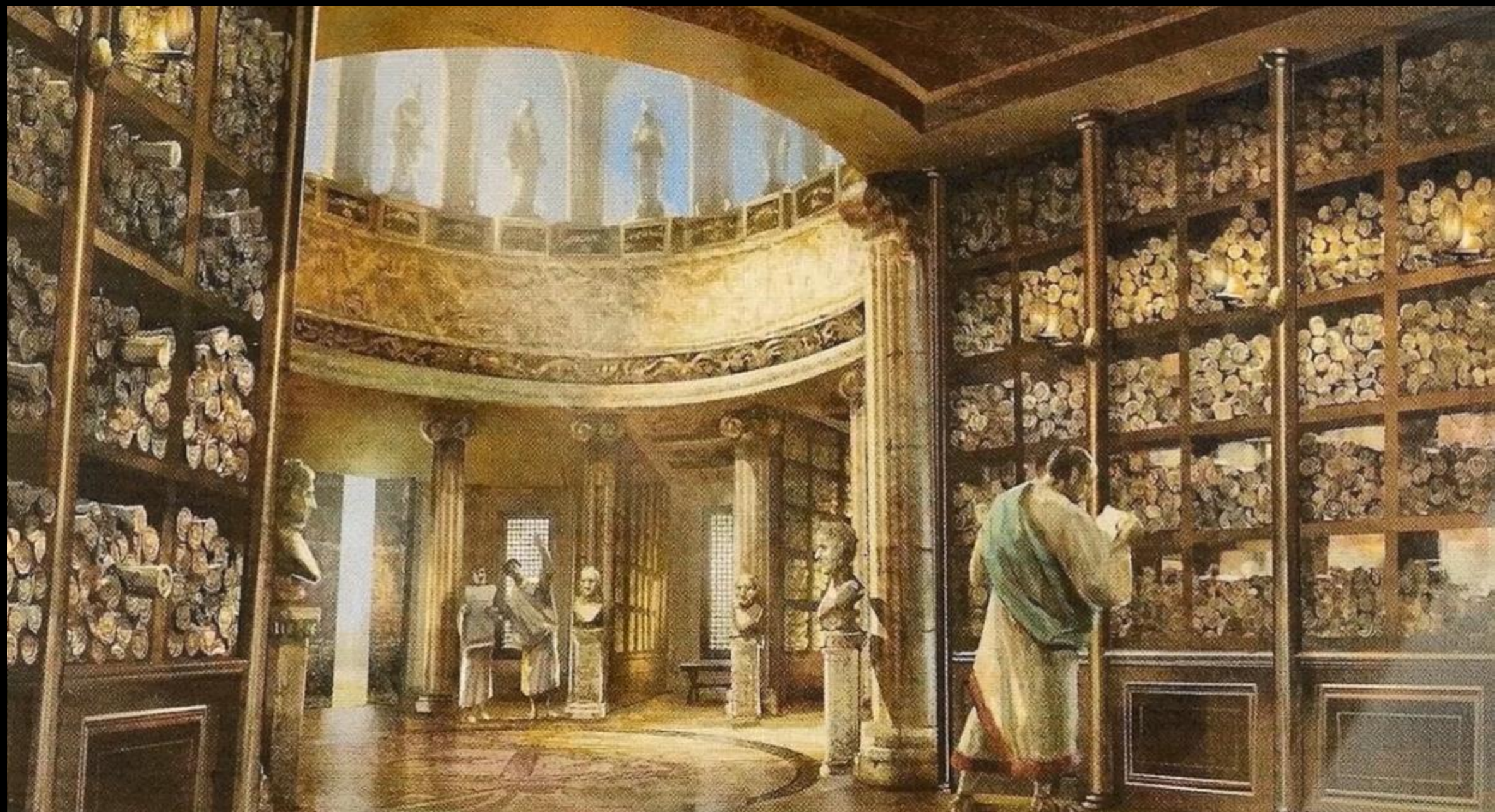
Sulabh International Museum of Toilets

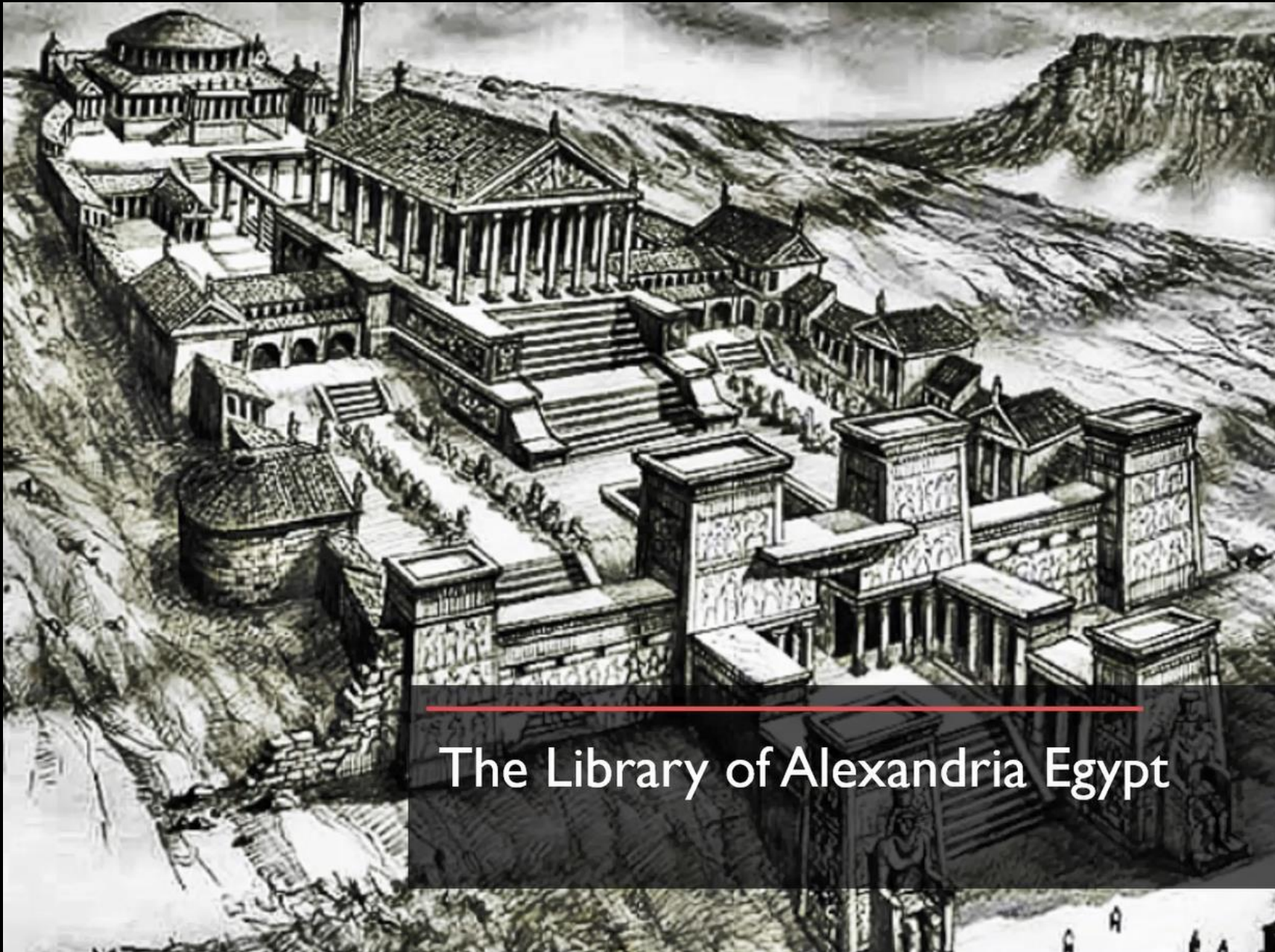




'Sarcophagus of the Muses' (2nd century AD) (Photo: Jastrow via Wikimedia Commons Public Domain)

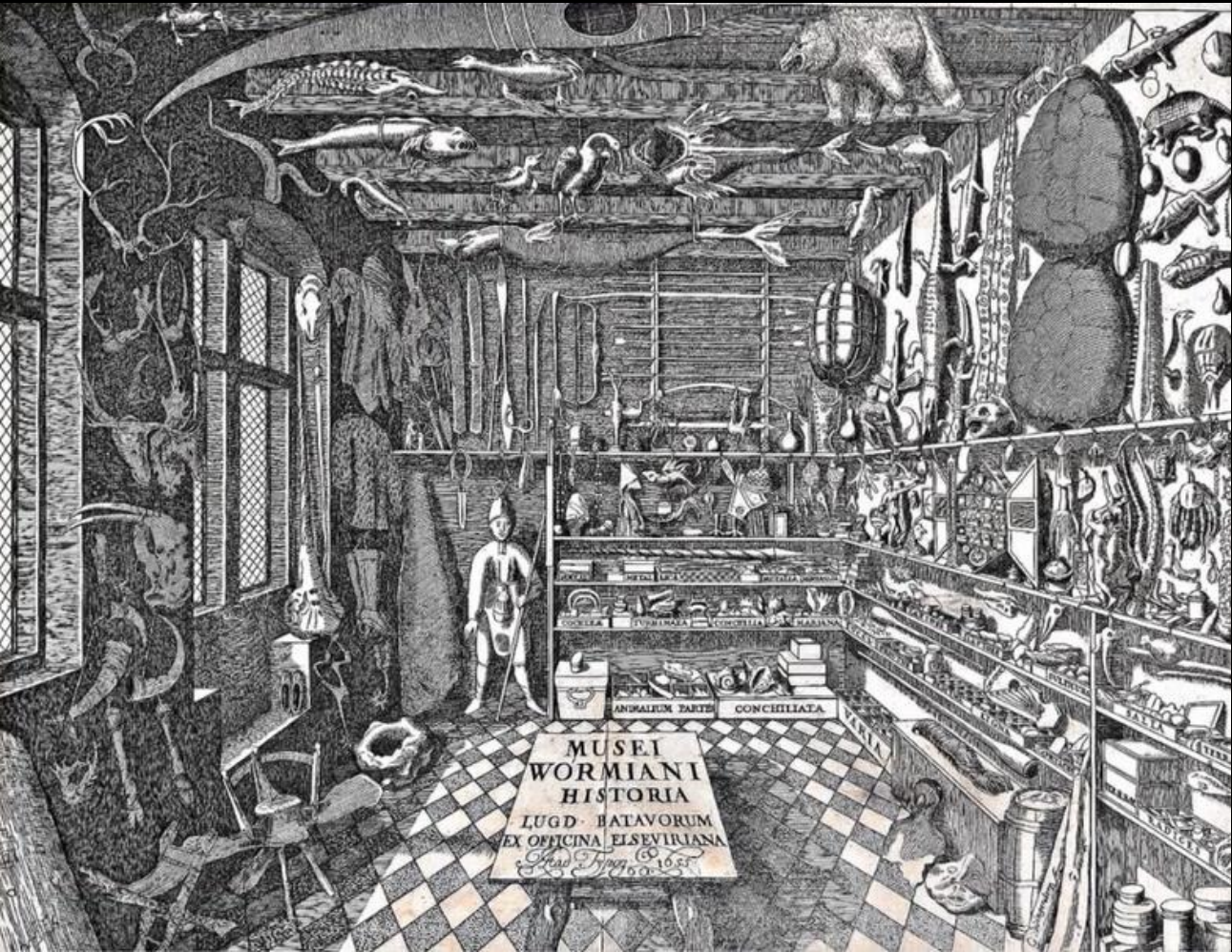
The 9 Greek Muses were perfect patrons of institutions of science and art





The Library of Alexandria Egypt

“Musei Wormiani Historia” Cabinet of Curiosities



Ole Worm
17th Century



First museums:
The British Museum
London 1759

The Louvre

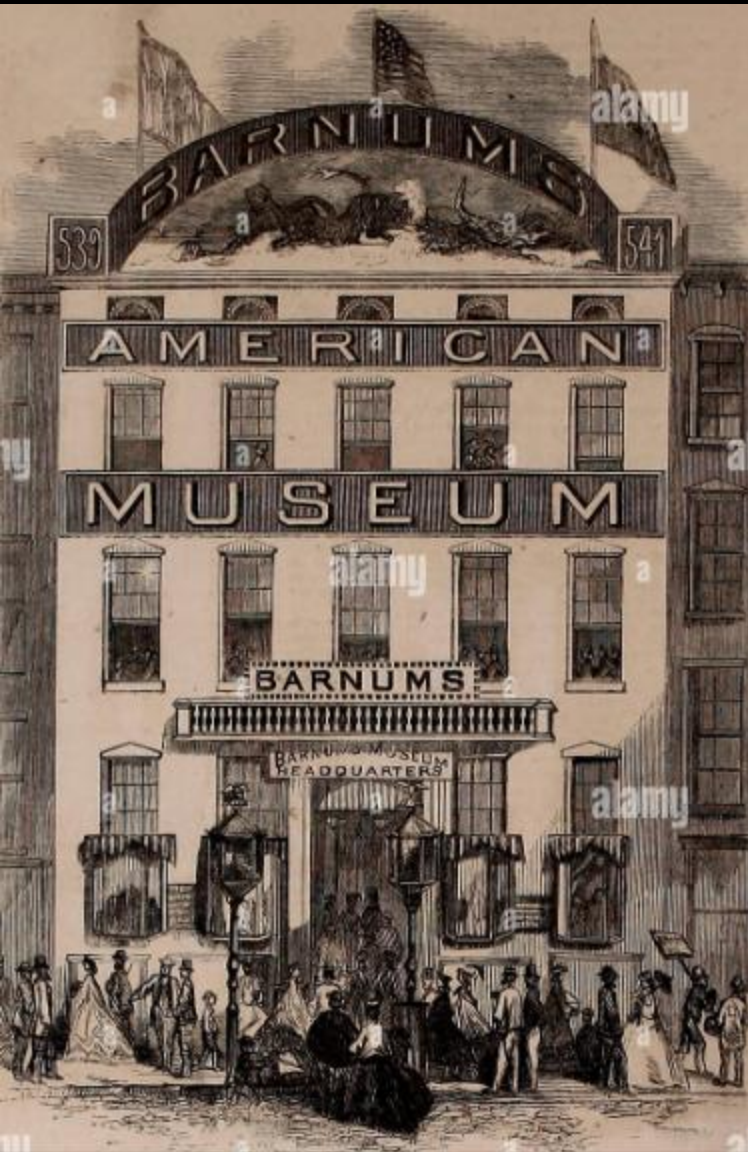
1793 The Louvre opens its doors as the first French public museum during the French revolution



Charles Wilson
Peale's Cabinet
of Curiosities
1786



Education or entertainment?



Barnum Museum 1841

Smithsonian Institution

Congress hired a scientist to run the Smithsonian
Scholarship and research not entertainment
Now 20 museums and galleries and a zoological park



James Smithson, c. 1765-1829
Artist: Hattie Elizabeth Burdette

Arizona Museum of Natural History



The AZMNH is part of the Department of Arts and Culture, and sister institutions to the Mesa Arts Center and IDEA Museum.

Built in 1936: As a municipal building it has been the Mesa City Hall, municipal courts, library, police, and fire departments.

1977: The building was converted to a museum which later became the Arizona Museum of Natural History.

Our vision & purpose



Vision:

Curious communities empowered by exploration of science, culture, and lived-experience.

Public Purpose:

To be a hub of discovery, discourse, and positive change that shares evidence-based perspectives about Arizona and the surrounding region.



Role: Economic Impact



Roles: Research

The Arizona Museum of Natural History has ongoing Archaeological and Paleontological research

We have scientists and labs!



As an active research center, the museum is involved in furthering science in the areas of paleontology and archaeology and presenting new discoveries to the public.

Bi-national research programs including Arizona-Sonora collaborations (AZMNH - INAH/UNAM).

We steward and house over 60,000 objects, artifacts and specimens from Arizonia and the Southwest.



Role: Guardians of cultural and natural history heritage items



Vent Haven Museum of Ventriloquist Dolls





Arizona Museum of Natural History collections



Role: Providing a voice to the past



Harriet Tubman's Home

**AFRICAN
AMERICAN
CULTURAL HERITAGE
ACTION FUND**

National Trust *for* Historic Preservation



“The preservation of African-American cultural assets signifies that Black people matter,”

Brent Leggs

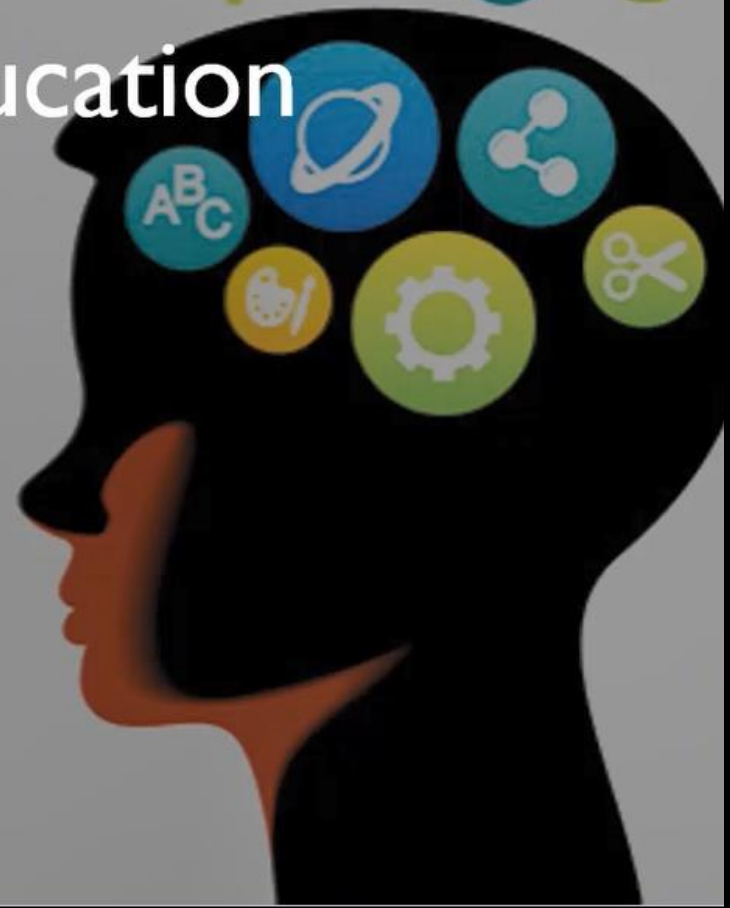
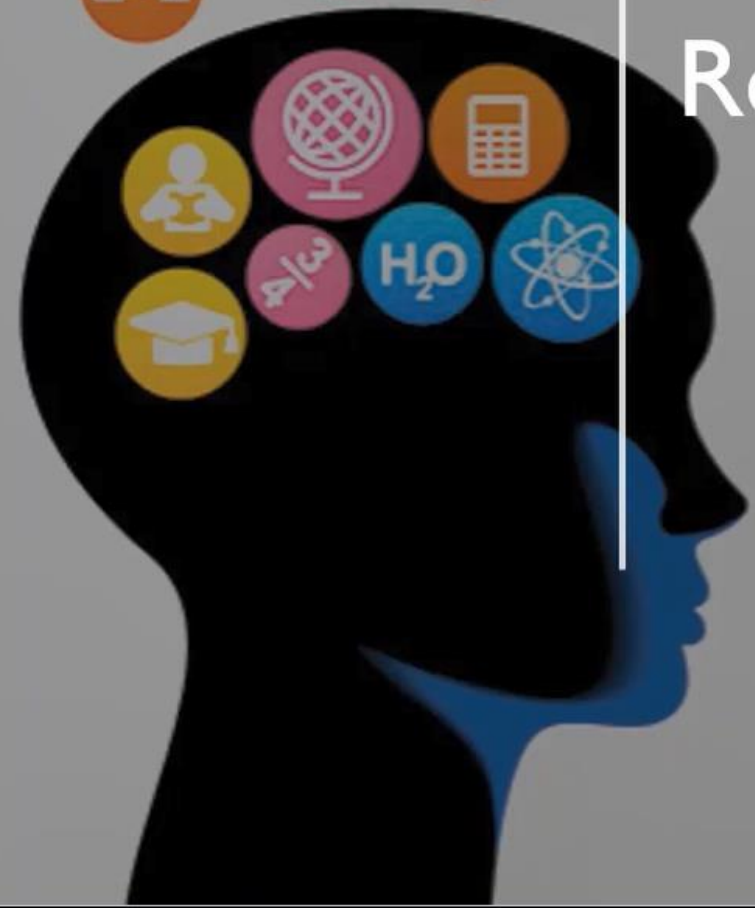
Stewards of Mesa Grande Cultural Park



- **Built by the ancestral Sonoran Desert dwellers in AD1100**
- **Once a vibrant civic and government center**
- **First City of Mesa historic preservation project**
- **In 2013 the site was opened to the public**
- **AZMNH works closely in collaboration with Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and Gila River Indian Community**



Role: Education



Educating our community



- Events
- Educator guided field trips
- Offsite school programming
- Teacher boxes and the virtual museum
- Partner with libraries, community centers, and parks and recreation



Introducing STEM professionals



Developing our Workforce



Formal internship program aimed at developing equitable career pathways for the next generation of museum and STEM professionals.

- Open to University, Technical school, high school students, and anyone looking to find pathways into related careers
- Recruit underserved audiences
- Paid internship program

Role: from Advocacy to Activism



Jennie Carvill Schellenbacher.

If museums can inspire action in their visitors to become more active citizens, more engaged in their communities, more involved in democracy at the local, regional and national level, more informed about how their everyday actions. They can affect real change and the more relevant museums will be.

We are storytellers built on facts and experiences!



Real, Real, Real Science As a science hub and research facility, we can tell stories based on scientific evidence.

Climate and habitats With our collections and research we can discuss deep time and how climates shifted, habitats have changed, and what we can learn.

How do we get along? Many different peoples have lived in Arizona, remaining here today. We can have conversations about all of our contributions and how they have shaped our lives today.



Role: Provide different experiences

- Explorer
- Experience Seeker
- Facilitator
- Professional Hobbyist
- Recharger

Role: Health and Well Being



Role: A service to our community



AZMNH supports the community in many ways, reducing barriers to access and connecting people to other offerings in their community.

- Outreach programming
- Direct service events- Free admission days, Sensory gentle times, Dino Preschool Party (connecting the public to social service providers),
- Scholarships and family admission programs to the Community Court restorative justice program, Neighborhood Services program, and nonprofit social service organizations

Diversity, equity and inclusion



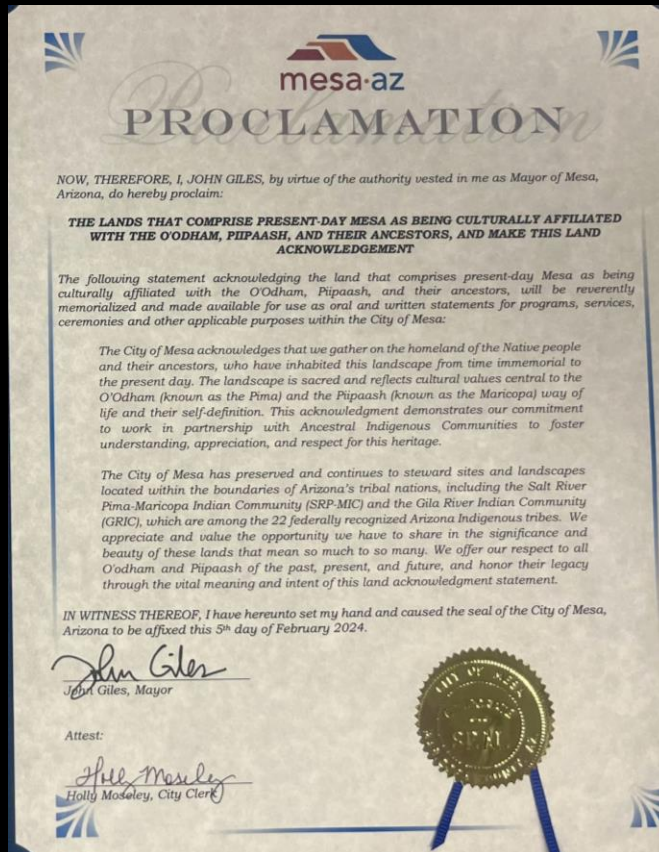
The museum is a leader in the community in reducing barriers and creating a welcoming and safe space for all.

- **Autism Certified Institution**
- **Sunflower lanyards for hidden disabilities – 1st US city**
- **Bilingual exhibits experiences (English and Spanish)**
- **Accommodation devices such as noise-canceling headphones, wheelchairs and light-sensitivity glasses**
- **Sensory Guides, ASL and Audio Tour**
- **Museums for All initiative with IMLS (discounts for economically disadvantaged)**

Our Tribal Partners

AZMNH acts as the steward of the region's natural and cultural history.

- Federal agencies and State repositories for paleontology and anthropology collections
- NAGPRA work on repatriation of ancestors, sacred and cultural objects back to the Tribes
- Stewardship of Mesa Grande Cultural Park
- Acting City Archaeologist



Future of the AZMNH

Reimagining the museum to reflect the universal interests and needs of the community.

- **Museum master planning the future**
- **Share up-to-date science and cultural conversations**
- **Co-authorship with our community**
- **Greater impacts to our underserved communities**
- **Greater access to all of our communities**





THANK YOU

