



MONTREAL  
MUSEUM  
OF FINE ARTS

2024-2025 Sustainable  
Development Plan





# 1 BACKGROUND

Sustainable development in museums has become an increasingly pressing issue in recent years. More and more studies have highlighted the important role played by cultural organizations in this field.

On July 30, 2021, G20 culture ministers adopted a shared declaration establishing culture as a lever of sustainable socio-economic development. This context led the International Council of Museums (ICOM) to create a working group with a view to integrating the 17 goals of sustainable development (SDGs) into museum practices.

There is a general consensus today that museums must be managed in a responsible manner that is consistent with these sustainable development goals in order to mitigate negative environmental impacts and to enhance the social benefits of museums.

Museums worldwide are in the process of carrying out a wide-ranging review of their practices. They are looking at a broad diversity of topics ranging from the content and production of exhibitions to the visitor experience, employee well-being, community engagement, environmental management of buildings, and actions related to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion (DEAI).

It has become imperative for museums to conduct regular assessments of their impact on the environment and society based on the principles of sustainable development, to establish targets for the reduction of negative impacts and to implement measures to meet those targets. By adopting sustainable practices, museums can not only contribute to the preservation of the environment, but also take on a greater role in raising awareness and driving change within society.

# Sustainable development at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA)

Founded in 1860, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) has been built on the generosity of multiple generations of Montrealers. Its mission is to acquire, conserve, study, interpret and present significant works of art from around the world and from every era, in the hope that members of its community and all Museum visitors may benefit from the transformative powers of art.

The MMFA's collection showcases Quebec and Canadian heritage, Indigenous art and international art from a progressive and innovative perspective. It comprises close to 47,000 paintings, sculptures, graphic artworks, photographs, multimedia installations and decorative art objects dating from antiquity to the present. The MMFA's exhibitions and cultural programming aim to inspire new ways of looking at art and the history of art.

As a hub of art, community and exchange and a pioneer in the provision of art therapy, the Museum collaborates with partners in the fields of community organization, education, health and technology to offer all audiences an enriching and transformative experience of art. Thus, through each of its projects, the MMFA continues to strive towards a more inclusive, accessible and just world.

With a museum complex extending over more than 50,000 m<sup>2</sup> and with 13,000 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space, the MMFA ranks as the 18th largest art museum in North America. On a yearly basis, it produces about a dozen temporary exhibitions and welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors.

Sustainability is, therefore, an absolute necessity for the MMFA. It is an integral part of its core values and sustainable development is one of the priorities of the Museum's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. Making responsible choices in keeping with the times and a rapidly changing environment, and understanding that today's actions have repercussions for the future, are at the centre of the institution's practices.

To address this priority, the Museum has established a Sustainable Development Committee that reports to the Management Committee and is composed of representatives of each of its departments.

In collaboration with all the teams at the MMFA, the committee has drawn up this sustainable development plan, which is aligned with the institution's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. Since this is our first plan of this nature that establishes some baseline indicators, its time span is limited to the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The plan will be updated in early 2025, following a materiality analysis to validate the relevance of the priorities in terms of the importance and scope of each of them.

# Guiding principles

Based on the [Quebec government's Sustainable Development Act](#), the MMFA's first sustainable development plan focuses on **7 of the 16 principles** listed therein:

## HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE

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People, human health and improved quality of life are at the centre of sustainable development concerns. People are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

## SOCIAL EQUITY AND SOLIDARITY

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Development must be undertaken in a spirit of intra- and inter-generational equity and social ethics and solidarity.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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To achieve sustainable development, environmental protection must constitute an integral part of the development process.

## ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

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Measures favourable to education, access to information and research must be encouraged in order to stimulate innovation, raise awareness and ensure effective participation of the public in the implementation of sustainable development.

## PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

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The cultural heritage, made up of property, sites, landscapes, traditions and knowledge, reflects the identity of a society. It passes on the values of a society from generation to generation, and the preservation of this heritage fosters the sustainability of development. Cultural heritage components must be identified, protected and enhanced, taking their intrinsic rarity and fragility into account.

## BIODIVERSITY PRESERVATION

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Biological diversity offers incalculable advantages and must be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations. The protection of species, ecosystems and the natural processes that maintain life is essential if quality of human life is to be maintained.

## RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

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Production and consumption patterns must be changed in order to make production and consumption more viable and more socially and environmentally responsible, in particular through an eco-efficient approach that avoids waste and optimizes the use of resources.

# 2 GOALS

The MMFA's Sustainable Development Plan focuses on and concretely contributes to 5 of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





# SDG 13

## Measures to combat climate change



The MMFA wishes to contribute to **SDG 13** through actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and raising awareness of climate change and its causes. In 2024-2025, it will implement the following actions:

### ACTION 1

Use the Creative Green tool to draw up a first partial GHG assessment of the MMFA's spaces and activities for 2022-2023.

#### Indicator

State of progress on the assessment

#### Target

Finalization and dissemination of the assessment by June 30, 2024

### ACTION 2

Evaluate new international standards for preventive conservation and examine possible measures to combat climate change by following the guidelines developed by the Bizot Group.<sup>1</sup>

#### Indicator

State of progress on the evaluation

#### Target

Completion of the evaluation by December 31, 2024

### ACTION 3

Integrate issues related to climate change in the Museum's programming.

#### Indicator

Number of exhibitions and activities

#### Target

Three exhibitions or activities by December 31, 2025

<sup>1</sup> The International Group of Organizers of Major Exhibitions

# SDG 12

## Sustainable consumption and production



The MMFA wishes to contribute to **SDG 12** by adopting consumption patterns that prioritize reduction at source and, where appropriate, by selecting goods and services that use the Earth's resources responsibly and generate positive impacts for society and the local economy. In 2024-2025, the MMFA will implement the following actions:

### ACTION 1

**Develop a guide to sustainable exhibition design.**

#### Indicator

State of progress on the guide

#### Target

Finalization and dissemination of the guide by December 31, 2025

### ACTION 2

**Develop a sustainable procurement policy.**

#### Indicator

State of progress on the policy

#### Target

Adoption and dissemination of the policy on June 30, 2024

### ACTION 3

**Develop a guide to sustainable events.**

#### Indicator

State of progress on the guide

#### Target

Finalization and dissemination of the guide by June 30, 2024

### ACTION 4

**Optimize the residual materials management program.**

#### Indicator

Official recognition of the program

#### Target

Obtain certification from Recyc-Québec's ICI on recycle + program by March 31, 2025

# SDG 11

## Sustainable cities and communities



The MMFA wishes to contribute to **SDG 11** by ensuring that its spaces help make Montreal a resilient, safe and sustainable city. In so doing, it aims to improve the quality of life of its citizens while limiting its environmental footprint. In 2024-2025, the Museum will implement the following action:

### ACTION 1

**Green the MMFA's outdoor spaces and contribute to urban biodiversity and the greening of downtown Montreal.**

#### Indicator

State of progress on the project and assessment of biodiversity improvement; promotion of greening actions

#### Target

Implementation and evaluation of greening project by June 30, 2024

# SDG 3

## Good health and well-being



The MMFA wishes to contribute to **SDG 3** by implementing measures aimed at preventing physical and mental health issues and promoting overall well-being among both its internal and external stakeholders. In 2024-2025, it will implement the following actions:

### ACTION 1

Promote employee well-being and a healthy work environment.

#### Indicator

Employee engagement rate, as measured by an annual organizational survey

#### Target

10% increase in the employee engagement rate in the second year of measurement (7.6/10 in 2024 vs. 6.9/10 in 2023)

### ACTION 2

Better ascertain satisfaction levels of visitors as well as their personal or emotional responses to their Museum experiences.

#### Indicator

Administration of a post-visit survey to obtain a baseline

#### Target

Survey 25% of our visitors by December 31, 2025

### ACTION 3

Continue to be a leader in research into the impact of art mediation on audiences.

#### Indicator

Proportion of the number of activities that are based on research results

#### Target

Integration of research findings into 15% of the MMFA's activities program

# SDG 10

## Reduced inequalities



The MMFA wishes to contribute to **SDG 10** by implementing measures that seek to reduce inequalities by promoting social inclusion, regardless of ethnicity, origin, gender or any other characteristic. In 2024-2025, the Museum will implement the following actions:

### ACTION 1

**Consolidate the MMFA's community engagement program and offer it to a greater number of people.**

#### Indicator

Increase in the offering and in the number of participants

#### Target

Adoption of the program by the end of 2024; 20,000 participants by March 31, 2025 (based on a long-term goal of 75,000 participants by 2028)

### ACTION 2

**Develop a reference framework for community support in the event of an emergency (e.g. prolonged power outage).**

#### Indicator

Continued progress on the reference framework

#### Target

Adoption and dissemination of the frame of reference by December 31, 2024

### ACTION 3

**Facilitate access to exhibitions, collections, programs and activities at the MMFA for people from disadvantaged backgrounds.**

#### Indicator

Integration of free admission/discounts (accessibility measures) in pricing

#### Target

Adoption of the new pricing policy by September 30, 2024

### ACTION 4

**In line with the inventory report on DEAI actions produced in 2021, target meaningful actions that promote diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.**

#### Indicator

Establishment of measurable criteria for qualifying an action as meaningful, so as to establish the baseline

#### Target

Establishment of the baseline by June 30, 2024

## ACTION 5

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**Maintain and improve the training offered to MMFA staff in the field of DEAI.**

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### Indicator

Number of employees trained by December 31, 2024

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### Targets

- UQAT training: 11 employees trained
- Two awareness-raising activities: 40 to 60 participants
- Training capsule on welcoming general audiences and audiences with special needs: 90% of the reception, boutique, security and mediation staff trained

## ACTION 6

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**Ensure that the MMFA's programming is diversified and reflects the different collecting areas.**

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### Indicator

Promotion of social equity in the programming

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### Target

Offer diversified programming over a period of three years

## ACTION 7

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**Become an Equity Partner of Canoo.<sup>2</sup>**

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### Indicator

Finalization and announcement of the partnership

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### Target

Implementation of the partnership by April 30, 2024

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<sup>2</sup> Canoo is part of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship's integration programs for newcomers.

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# DEFINITIONS

Many of the terms relating to sustainable development have been defined in different ways by a number of credible sources; however, they tend to share common elements and meaning. The definitions proposed in this action plan are chiefly inspired by the [Vocabulaire du développement durable](#) produced by the Office québécois de la langue française (in French only). Certain adjustments have been made in order to tailor these terms to the context of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

## RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT

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Responsible procurement involves making purchasing decisions that take into account the environmental, social and ethical impacts of products or services. It aims to minimize negative effects on the environment, promote sustainable materials, respect fair working conditions, reduce waste, support the local economy and give preference to certified green products. This practice encourages more thoughtful consumption and helps promote sustainable and ethical business practices.

## GHG ASSESSMENT

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A GHG assessment measures the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with an activity, product, organization or individual. It measures direct and indirect emissions, including carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. The process includes defining the scope of the assessment, collecting data, calculating emissions, analyzing results and communicating conclusions. Some organizations may decide to calculate their carbon footprint based on transportation alone. In this case, the assessment should clearly indicate the scope of the exercise.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

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Climate change refers to long-term changes in weather and climate conditions on Earth. It is characterized by variations in average temperatures, precipitation, weather patterns and extreme events. These changes are mainly attributed to increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, largely as a result of human activities (fossil fuel use, deforestation, etc.). Climate change has major implications for ecosystems, human societies and the global economy. It generates increased risks associated with extreme weather events, rising sea levels and loss of biodiversity, among others.

## DEAI (DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION)

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DEAI practices encompass a set of principles aimed at promoting social justice and creating ethical and inclusive environments. Diversity recognizes individual differences, whether cultural, sexual, bodily or ability-based; equity aims to correct and avoid systemic inequalities; accessibility guarantees equal access for all; and inclusion promotes the participation and valuing of each individual, regardless of their differences. These principles are essential to creating respectful, equitable and accessible societies, organizations and communities.



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Sustainable development is an approach aimed at meeting the needs of the present without compromising those of future generations. It seeks a balance between economic, social and environmental dimensions, while promoting fair, responsible and equitable growth. This holistic approach takes into account long-term impacts, preservation of natural resources, social equity and sustainable economic prosperity.

## ECO-DESIGN

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Eco-design is a design approach that seeks to reduce the environmental impact of a product, building or service over its entire life cycle. It aims to minimize resource consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and waste generation by optimizing the use of raw materials, favouring sustainable materials, considering the entire life cycle, reducing waste and improving energy efficiency.

## ECO-RESPONSIBILITY

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Eco-responsibility is defined as a conscious, individual or collective and systematic commitment to environmentally friendly practices. It is based on actions aimed at reducing our environmental footprint and promoting social responsibility. Eco-responsibility involves the implementation of concrete measures to minimize the negative consequences of our actions for the planet, while promoting ethical behaviour within the community and organizations.

## CARBON FOOTPRINT

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The carbon footprint measures the total quantity of greenhouse gases, mainly carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), emitted directly or indirectly by a person, organization, product or activity. It encompasses all emissions linked to energy consumption, goods production and land use, and includes emissions from transport in particular. Reducing the carbon footprint therefore requires the adoption of sustainable practices, energy efficiency, the use of cleaner energy sources, as well as initiatives to reduce emissions generated by travel, thus helping to mitigate climate change.

## GREENHOUSE GASES (GHG)

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Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are atmospheric compounds that contribute to the greenhouse effect and thus to global warming. The emissions associated with an organization are divided into three categories called “scopes.” Scope 1 covers direct emissions from sources directly controlled by the organization; Scope 2 concerns indirect emissions resulting from the production of electricity, heat or steam purchased or consumed by the organization; and Scope 3 concerns indirect emissions from activities external to the organization, such as visitor travel, purchased goods and services, and waste management.

## RESIDUAL MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

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Residual materials management encompasses all activities aimed at collecting, processing, recycling and disposing of residual materials in an efficient and environmentally responsible manner. The goal is to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, encourage the recycling of recoverable materials, and adopt sustainable practices in order to minimize the environmental impact of waste management. This includes implementing sorting, composting and recycling programs, as well as promoting reduction at source and the responsible use of resources.

