

Themes and Key Ideas

Born between 1981-1996, Millennials place a high value on unique experiences that can be found in museums and cultural institutions, and their engagement as both patrons and professionals is crucial for the present and future success of these institutions.

Programs and events targeting Millennials need to be engaging and focus on affordability, relevance, uniqueness, and accessibility.

Affordability – Though many Millennials are on a tight budget, as a generation they have tremendous spending power and actively choose to spend extra income on experiences they feel are meaningful.

Uniqueness – Developing innovative and creative programming is a great way to draw in the Millennial audience. Think about how the museum can use its mission to market a one-of-a-kind experience.

Relevance – Millennials want to attend events that align with their values. Programming aimed at Millennials should incorporate institutional values as well.

Accessibility – Have information about the institution such as hours of operation and parking instructions easily available. Millennials are more likely to visit if the logistics of their stay are clear.

Even in the wake of COVID-19 museums can use virtual strategies to keep millennial audiences engaged.

Examples

During the pandemic, [Hunter House Victorian Museum](#) in Norfolk held virtual tea parties, story times, scavenger hunts, and silent auctions.

[The Thinkery](#) in Austin Texas offers 21+ nights. These include a bar, food from local food trucks and live music while participants engage in activities related to science and technology.

[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#) hosts virtual yoga sessions.

Resources

[Museums and Millennials: Engaging the Coveted Patron Generation](#) by Jackie Spainhour.

[Canva](#) is an easy and free way to design eye catching graphics to promote events.

Colleen Dilenschneider's blog "[Know Your Own Bone](#)" includes data and tips for engaging a millennial audience.

[Email Jackie Spainhour](#) with questions.

Helpful Tips

Millennials generally prefer Instagram to Facebook.

Though Millennials like technology, they are not as interested in downloading apps for museum experiences and generally prefer in-person interactions.

Escapism and nostalgia attract Millennials to exhibits and events.

Invite Millennials to serve as board members. Lowering the cost of entry or hosting virtual meetings can make it easier to join.