

you exhibit

here's how you do it ...

An exhibition can be a lot of things. Before you get started, here are the **top 7 things** we think you need to consider ...

1) Think about your audience

What are you trying to achieve? Displays should:

- Entertain
- Give information by showing real objects
- Be more than just putting things on walls
- Explain the objects, pictures and photographs
- Be attractive
- Use strong images when possible
- Be safe and accessible for visitors
- Protect the exhibits against people and climatic conditions (excessive heat, strong light, dryness or humidity)

2) Location

Look at the space available and think carefully about how you might use it. Consider:

- Are cases and panels at an accessible height level for children or people in wheelchairs? (1300 mm from the floor).
- What lighting do you have available?
- Are your objects safe and secure?
- Don't try and cram too much into the space or it may end up looking cluttered. Less is more!

3) Theme

What is your exhibition going to be about?

- What subjects do you want to deal with in the space you have available? We encourage you to explore one key theme.
- Think about what images/objects/resources you already have that can contribute to telling your story.

4) Resources

How are you going to represent your theme? Make a list of the resources you need to do this.

- If you have memories – are these written down already? Do you need to speak to people to get their memories?
- Photographs - do you need to collect personal photographs? If so, is this possible or are they accessible?
- Do you have images or film material to support what you are saying? If not, where can you source them?
- Do you have objects to represent your theme? If not, does MNH have any objects?
- Other things that may represent your theme are stories, music, art work, costume etc.
- Do you need to create anything?

5) Presenting Your Information

- We recommend you choose one person from the group to be responsible for developing and writing text so there is one “overall” voice in the exhibition.
- Editing text will be a joint process between your group and your MNH Contact.

Text

Exhibition text has to follow museum interpretation standards. Key things to remember are:

- A wide and varied audience will be reading the text; therefore it has to be easy to understand.
- Your audience may know nothing about your subject, so keep to basics.
- Museum text should be written for the average reading age of an 8 year old.
- Think about catchy panel headers to entice your audience.
- Avoid complicated language and long sentences. People's attention spans are not long so text should be simple and to the point (avoid the 'book on a wall' approach).
- Less is more; can a well captioned image tell your story better than lengthy text?
- Each panel should have a maximum of 150 words. Captions should be 30 words maximum.
- We recommend a punchy opening paragraph which sums up the panel (this is what most people will read). Longer explanatory text can be included in later paragraphs for those who want to learn more.

Images

- When using images, make a note of where you found the image and who was responsible for taking it. You may need to ask the copyright holder's permission to get high quality copies.
- You will need high-resolution, high quality images for your exhibition panels. Images taken from the internet therefore may not meet the standard required. We recommend that, where possible, you use high quality original images.

6) Programming

Do you want to deliver an event alongside your exhibition? You will need to make a booking with MNH if you wish to use our venue for your event(s).

- MNH can host a private viewing of your exhibition during site opening hours. If you wish to have a viewing outside of usual opening hours, this may incur hire costs.
- Does your event require a guest list? Please speak to your MNH Contact who can arrange for distribution of invitations (this may incur a cost).
- Does your event require catering? Notify your MNH Contact who will supply you with contact information for MNH catering partners (this will be at your own cost).
- Consider your resources. What do you already have? What could MNH supply? This must be agreed and confirmed a minimum of 4 weeks before the event.
- Who is the target audience for your event? Is it to be a ticketed event? Please speak to your MNH Contact who can arrange marketing and advertising.

7) Retail

Does your exhibition contain work (e.g. prints, craft items) that you propose to sell? Are there linked retail items that could compliment the display?

If you wish to include saleable works in your exhibition you will need to discuss full details of the product, pricing and arrangements with MNH's Retail Team.

Please note the MNH Programming Team will make the final decision as to whether your additional event is suitable for our audience, and whether we will support it.

