

Mission Statement

The Metropolitan Museum of Art was founded on April 13, 1870, “to be located in the City of New York, for the purpose of establishing and maintaining in said city a Museum and library of art, of encouraging and developing the study of the fine arts, and the application of arts to manufacture and practical life, of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects, and, to that end, of furnishing popular instruction.”¹

This statement of purpose has guided the Museum for over 140 years. The Met is devoted to an encyclopedic collection of art in the service of the public. During the 2015 strategic-planning process, the need for an updated, simpler mission statement with a more tightly articulated expression of that purpose became apparent.

To that end, on January 13, 2015, the Trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art reaffirmed the above statement of purpose and supplemented it with the following statement of mission:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art collects, studies, conserves, and presents significant works of art across all times and cultures in order to connect people to creativity, knowledge, and ideas.

Core Values

Throughout the Met’s history, the essential values of excellence, inspiration, integrity, and accessibility have been manifest in different ways and to varying degrees, reflecting the evolving priorities and demands of each era. Future growth will require that the Met maintain these core values across all Museum functions, according to the following broad definitions:

- Excellence: Scholarly, Articulate, Rigorous, Efficient
- Inspiration: Creative, Relevant, Vibrant, Challenging
- Integrity: Authentic, Transparent, Responsible, Ethical
- Accessibility: Generous, Welcoming, Engaging, Inclusive

Guiding Principles

During fiscal year 2015 the Met defined a set of institutional guiding principles. To carry out its mission, the Met follows these guiding principles:

- Build, study, conserve, and present collections that represent the highest achievement in art across all cultures and times.
- Create educational opportunities that demonstrate the relevance and potential of art to all audiences.
- Use technology strategically to share scholarship and content, engage audiences, and achieve internal efficiency.
- Connect the broadest audience to our scholarship and collections in multiple languages across all platforms.
- Foster a collaborative, diverse, and high-performing staff at all levels and within all functions of the Museum.
- Provide superior facilities and services for the public and for the full scope of the Museum’s work.
- Maintain a strong financial position by operating strategically and responsibly.
- Develop and engage a dedicated and diverse Board committed to the Museum’s success.
- Serve a leadership role among art museums worldwide.

Five-Year Strategic Goals 2015–20

- Position our collection, scholarship, and expertise to create greater access, dialogue, and understanding around these resources.
- Connect to a broader, more diverse audience to inspire increased engagement with our work and to cultivate new relationships with visitors, collectors, and supporters.
- Attain organizational and operational excellence to enable greater transparency, efficiency, collaboration, and communication.

¹Charter of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, State of New York, Laws of 1870, Chapter 197, passed April 13, 1870, and amended L.1898, ch. 34; L. 1908, ch. 219.