

## **Connections of Science Museums and Universities are Mutually Beneficial and Enhance all Parties**

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A reasonably obvious partner for a science museum is a local college or university. This presentation will explore some different relationships between the two institutions and then devote most time to the benefits that flow in both directions. These benefits make the connections obvious and mutually beneficial.

I can discuss this from my own experiences where my museums in three different US cities had formal connections with nearby universities and I personally benefitted in several ways.

The most obvious connections are when the university itself hosts the museum as one of its units. There are examples of this relationship in many countries. Here in ASPAC we have university museums including the Kyoto University Museum and eight separate museums as part of the University of Tokyo.

Also there is the University of Melbourne Museum and the Maclea Museum (one of several) at the University of Sydney, Australia; the Lee Kong Chin Natural History Museum of the National University of Singapore; the Museum of Zoology of Malaya University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and the EWHA Women's University Museum in Seoul, South Korea. And then looking to Europe and North America there are numerous university museums representing many disciplines.

The discussion will examine the proximities of museums and universities. Naturally, most university museums are on the campus, and there are independent museums in various locations in the same city or metropolitan area as the university. Either way, proximity is an advantage.

The examination of the museum-university relationships is to see how they benefit each other's missions and outcomes. I use the term "mutually beneficial" to demonstrate that benefits flow in both directions. The presentation will include demonstrations of all of these elements.

From the university to the museum: academic research and knowledge is available to the museum as is faculty and student research work in the museum collections and their availability as resources for exhibitions and programs.

From museum to the university: university faculty and researchers have access to a large public with whom they can share their research and information (often useful in obtaining funding), there are facilities for appropriate housing of collections and opportunities for student research.

Mutual: recruitment of university faculty and museum staff is enhanced, each are more visible to the broad public, achievement of missions and goals are enhanced, and often financing in both directions is made easier.

My own personal experience as a curator and director as well as more recently as a consultant to many museums has proven to me that connections between museums and higher education are essential and, as stated above, mutually beneficial.