

National Museum of Ireland — Charter of Inclusion

(Aligned with AsIAM Autism-Friendly Accreditation)

Our Commitment

The National Museum of Ireland is committed to being a space where everyone belongs, a place of learning, creativity, and connection that welcomes people of all neurotypes.

This Charter of Inclusion reflects our strategic goal (2023–2028) to “Increase accessibility and engage community” and sets out our commitment to autism and neurodiversity inclusion across all Museum sites, programmes, and workplaces.

We recognise that inclusion is an ongoing process of listening, learning, and adapting. This Charter guides our work to ensure that autistic and neurodivergent visitors and staff can participate fully and confidently in everything we do.

1. Environment

- We will create physical and sensory environments that are welcoming, comfortable, and supportive for autistic and neurodivergent individuals.
- Conduct sensory audits of all museum sites to identify potential barriers (lighting, sound, layout, signage).
- Develop and publish sensory maps and visual guides on our website accessibility page for visitors in advance of their visit.
- Designate and clearly signpost on our visual guides quieter spaces in each site where visitors can regulate and rest.
- Incorporate universal design principles in new exhibitions and capital projects.
- Seek feedback from autistic visitors, families, and advocacy partners to guide environmental improvements.

2. Predictability

- We understand that predictability and choice can significantly enhance comfort and participation for autistic and neurodivergent visitors.
- Provide clear, detailed pre-visit information online on our accessibility page — including photos, maps, transport links, accessibility details, and “what to expect” guides.

- Offer visual schedules and step-by-step guides for family workshops and tours.
- Communicate any changes to layout, lighting, or activities in advance, both online and on-site.
- Schedule monthly quiet or sensory-friendly visiting hours to reduce sensory overload.
- Ensure visitors can control aspects of their experience (e.g., using ear defenders, avoiding crowded routes, self-guided pacing).
- Ensure visitors and their Guide dogs wearing the correct lead and harness consistent with relevant Irish legislation are welcomed in the Museum.

3. Communication

- We commit to ensuring that all communication — written, verbal, and digital — is clear, inclusive, and supportive.
- Train all new staff in autism awareness and inclusive communication with AsIAM training resources through the staff induction process.
- Use plain language, visual supports, and clear signage throughout our sites.
- Ensure our website and printed materials meet accessibility standards, including easy-read options and visual stories.
- Provide options for visitors to ask questions in advance or request specific supports.
- Use multiple communication modes — written, visual, verbal — in exhibitions, tours, and workshops.

4. Judgement & Attitude

We are committed to building an organisational culture of understanding, empathy, and respect for neurodiversity.

- Embed autism-inclusion training for all staff through AsIAM accreditation renewal process.
- Celebrate Neurodiversity Awareness events and share stories that promote positive representation.
- Promote autism-friendly recruitment opportunities, ensuring our processes are inclusive.
- Encourage staff to adopt non-judgemental approaches and recognise that each person's experience of the museum is valid and unique.

- Work in partnership with AsIAM and the wider autism community to review and improve our practices continuously.

5. Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Inclusion is a shared responsibility. We will:

- Establish an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) steering group in NMI and recruit an EDI officer to support the work of the NMI in this area.
- Review this Charter annually in collaboration with autistic and neurodivergent stakeholders.
- Track progress through visitor feedback, staff surveys, and accessibility reviews.
- Integrate inclusion goals into all strategic, operational, and capital plans of the Museum.

Our Invitation

We invite visitors, families, communities, and partners to work with us as we build a truly autism-friendly National Museum of Ireland — one that recognises neurodiversity as an essential part of our shared cultural identity.

Together, we strive to make the Museum a space where everyone feels seen, supported, and inspired.