

# Hunterian Access and Inclusion Policy 2024–27

The Hunterian is dedicated to fostering an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued and inspired. We commit to providing access and ensuring inclusion for all visitors, staff and partners.

## 1. The Hunterian Strategic Context

**1.1 MISSION:** As an integral part of the University of Glasgow, The Hunterian preserves and develops its collections and expertise for innovation and engagement, to create meaning, value and relevance with academic, museum and civic communities.

**1.2 VISION:** To be an **ethical** and **accessible** museum organisation that **engages critically with its historic legacy** for the benefit of all of its stakeholders and audiences, in support of the University's effort to **positively affect society**.

**1.3 VALUES LED:** The Hunterian aspires to be a values-led organisation.

### AMBITIOUS

- We influence our sector by experimenting and prototyping ways of working.
- We create rich and meaningful physical and digital experiences.
- We develop sustainable practice for the benefit of current and future generations of stakeholders.

### TRANSPARENT

- We maintain integrity in dealing with our staff, stakeholders and audiences.
- We are honest in our examination of the past and how we represent the, sometimes uncomfortable, narratives present in our history.
- We evaluate projects and practices critically and honestly, to learn and improve.

### CURIOUS

- We welcome the knowledge, experience and perspectives of others to co-curate collections and displays.
- We provide the infrastructure necessary to document and preserve growing dynamic datasets for university and public users.
- We pioneer and promote innovative collections-based learning, research and engagement, while learning from the best practices of others.

### INCLUSIVE

- We are inclusive and equitable in our staffing, partnerships, programming and opportunities for learning and professional development.
- We collaborate and share our initiatives generously with our sector.
- We support and encourage the use of collections in new ways and by people of all backgrounds and abilities.

## 2. Equality, Access and Inclusion

The Hunterian will adhere to all national and international statutes of law, including specifically in relation to access, but not exclusively the Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018. This is consistent with the University of Glasgow's Equality and Diversity policy and the principle that the University of Glasgow is committed to inclusiveness, which "embraces diversity by valuing and respecting the perspectives and contributions of all our colleagues and students" to the benefit of the University community in respect of its learning, teaching, research, management, administration and support service activities. The Hunterian will follow national standards, ethical codes and best practice guidelines including, but not limited to, Spectrum, the UK museum collections management standard.

### 2.1 Barriers to Access

The Hunterian recognises there are multiple barriers to access, and that people have identities that intersect in ways that impact how they are viewed, understood and treated. We define the barriers to access as:

- **Psychological:** perceptions of the museum as not for them or feeling it is not relevant.
- **Cultural:** spiritual, relational or dietary, language, communication or information needs of certain groups and individuals are assumed, not taken into account, valued or given weight.
- **Social:** discrimination based on e.g. gender, ethnicity, race, religion and socio-economic status.
- **Financial:** financial barriers associated with participating in or visiting the museum.
- **Physical:** barriers such as accessing buildings, specialist equipment, braille and hearing loops.

We want to identify and remove these barriers to participation. This means acknowledging, listening and taking action. We need to focus on our welcome and the crucially important interaction with our staff. We need to think about the environments we create – the design, facilities, noise, lighting and the vital access elements such as lifts, toilets and accessible language(s). We need to make sure people can find their way to us, find their way around our venues comfortably and feel they can be themselves in our spaces, as well as see themselves reflected in our staff and our displays. We need to ensure venues are financially accessible.

### 2.2 Social Justice and Anti-Racism

The Hunterian Strategy lays out the vision: *To be an ethical and accessible museum organisation that engages critically with its historic legacy for the benefit of all of its stakeholders and audiences, in support of the University's effort to positively affect society.*

Increasingly The Hunterian is framing this as a commitment to social justice and anti-racism. Social justice is where everyone has equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities. It enables self-realisation through compassion and classless cooperation without violence and oppression. In our commitment to social justice, we strive to identify, address and remove systemic barriers that contribute to discrimination and inequality, fostering an inclusive environment where everyone can fully participate and thrive.

The Hunterian has identified a specific gap in our staff and partners in relation to racial diversity and we are focussing on this area of work.

The Hunterian aims to be an anti-racist museum. This means adopting an anti-racist approach that requires us to look at the ways that racism is present in our policies, formal and informal rules and regulations and generally the ways in which we work. It is an active process, which acknowledges the past as well as making conscious change for the future. We will take an intersectional approach to our work by actively including BAME individuals and communities from diverse background in all areas of our functions, theories and practice.

In an anti-racist museum, displays will challenge rather than reinforce existing power structures and it will be a space created based on the lived experiences and narratives of every aspect of society. It will be responsive to individual needs and the staff will reflect the racial diversity of Glasgow and the University. It will be empathetic – a museum which is run by people who care about others. There will be acknowledgement of the work needed and a plan that is actionable and active as well as continually evolving and improving.

### 3. Access and Inclusion at The Hunterian

At The Hunterian access and inclusion encompasses research, engagement programmes and institutional practice.

The Hunterian wants to expand physical and digital access to the collections, to work in partnership with a wider range of communities and to foster an inclusive, supportive and fair working environment that enables every member of staff to engage confidently with our goals. We want to ensure we increase the range and diversity of our audiences and stakeholders, to enhance their experiences of visiting or engaging with us and that we are building social, educational, cultural and economic capacity, fostering good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.

We are developing a model of sharing cultural capital between the institution, staff, students and Glasgow communities. We want people to feel that The Hunterian is relevant and that they can equitably contribute to shaping our future. For The Hunterian, access and inclusion means embracing and actively seeking diversity in our staff and our audiences. We want to ensure wherever possible and practicable, that a space or programme can be enjoyed regardless of circumstance, that it is people centred – that we listen to, understand and respond to a diversity of needs.

We will monitor and evaluate progress using metrics such as community engagement, diverse representation among staff and audiences and partner and visitor feedback. We will continue to adjust our priorities and activity based on feedback and results.

#### 3.1 Access to Collections

**Our ambition is to strengthen understanding of the collections’ potential for meaningful engagement, making the past relevant in the present. We want to develop our role as a partner in the co-production of knowledge, memory and connection with our communities.** Access and use are the purpose of the collections, and collections management processes are aimed at providing careful access. Access to collections is provided through:

- Free public venues with permanent and temporary exhibitions and displays.
- Use in university teaching, and school and community outreach programmes.
- Collections engagement for researchers and the public.
- Participatory approaches to research and displays.
- Digital access through our online collections search.
  - Digital engagement tools - website, blog, podcasts, Bloomberg Connects and social media.
  - Remote object engagement through visualisers in the collections search spaces.

Information about our collections is provided via our online collection search where we are making catalogue records of all The Hunterian collections available. Access to paper records and documentation about the collections is available by appointment subject to the requirements of GDPR.

Access to the stored Hunterian collections is available to all and is primarily provided in The Hunterian Study Centre facility in Kelvin Hall.

Our interpretive approach includes exhibition display, written text panels and labels, video (with subtitles), events (both in person and online), large print text and printed translations in multiple languages. Our digital Bloomberg Connects app is used extensively in our venues with tour functions, object context and links to our collections search. It features audio (with transcript) and video content (with subtitles) with 20 plus automatic language translations. It also features tour content in British Sign Language and audio description of specific works.

Knowledgeable and engaging Visitor Experience staff in our venues provide welcome and contextual information. There are tours every day, designed and delivered by student volunteers, which are free to access, cover a range of subjects and are offered in some additional languages.

We aim to follow best practice, not just be compliant, in our design of space and graphics, in our interpretation provision and facilities e.g.

- Design and language: contrast, fonts, no unexplained terminology, inclusive tone.

- Alternative formats: large print, range of languages, BSL, Audio description, Video with subtitles, audio transcript, provision of materials for children, video and audio tours.
- Space design: desk height, rest places, free movement of wheelchairs, signage and layout.
- Digital accessibility: access to equipment, accessible information, alt text, alternative provision.
- Facilities: rest areas, baby change, storage, disabled parking, quiet spaces, assistance animals supported.
- Financially accessible: free entry, concession rates, group visits.

The Hunterian has collections management processes and procedures in place to ensure we balance the care and management of collections with extensive and equitable access.

### 3.2 Audience Development

**The Hunterian is committed to becoming a more meaningful place for more diverse audiences.** Audience understanding and participation are at the heart of achieving The Hunterian's vision. Connecting our collections and expertise with the experiences, perspectives and responses of these audiences will foster new ways of working, greater relevance of the collections, and integrity.

Our audience ambitions, access assessment, ways of working and actions planning are captured in our **Audience Development Plan** which is reviewed annually. The Audience Development Plan details the thinking, process and tools for developing audience understanding and identifying audience need and how this will be met. This includes:

- Audience research programme including consultation with groups.
- Regular access assessments, venue inspections and action plan.
- Broader demographic and sector research.
- Project evaluation.
- Marketing and communications.

### 3.3 People

The Hunterian aims to empower and to ensure equal and inclusive access for all staff to professional development and support. The People Working Group, whose members are drawn from all levels of staff across the organisation, will meet monthly to discuss and develop ways of working that relate to staff development, staff satisfaction, wellbeing and support, equality, diversity and inclusion. The Hunterian will:

- Ensure an equal and inclusive approach to recruitment, induction and training to diversify and support the workforce, using Positive Action to achieve this.
- Uphold the core principle of equal access for all staff to skills and career development opportunities.
- Embed values-based leadership throughout the organisation.
- Focus on core behaviours with emphasis on respectful, non-prejudicial relationships.
- Support working groups that address equality, diversity and inclusion in their work plan.
- Set up project teams with specific accountability for using Participation Framework, inclusive planning and agreeing target audiences and evaluation.

### 3.4 Resources and Estates

The Hunterian will prioritise resources and estate management that enable access and inclusion.

Activity will include:

- Audience research, including surveys and focus groups.
- Staff consultation through surveys and discussion with staff working groups.
- Training and development including bespoke EDI training.
- Prioritising access to venues and development of accessible and inclusive spaces and tools.

## 4. Implementation

Access and inclusion need to be identified and addressed throughout our work as well as the organisational culture and individual practices, behaviours and attitudes. We will strive to take an intersectional approach. Access and inclusion are embedded in the **Strategic Plan** and the implementation is delivered through the actions and priorities in the annual **Strategy Delivery Plan**.

### 4.1 Participation Framework

We will embed participatory practice in all areas of our work and aim to involve a broader and more diverse group of people in shaping the future of their heritage – in guiding the thinking and in designing the approaches, programme and content. We will work with partners, stakeholders, audiences and staff to develop work in a range of participatory ways – from consulting and involving through to collaborating and co-producing.

We will use the [Participation Framework.pdf](#) as a basis to establish and define different modes of participation. We have five levels of participation and will ensure we are clear on where the work is framed:

- Inform (non-participatory)
- Consult
- Involve
- Collaborate
- Co-produce

### 4.2 Inclusive Planning

Inclusive planning is embedded throughout our project planning process, and we have developed an Inclusive Planning Checklist to be completed as a team. [Inclusive Planning Working Document.docx](#)

The purpose is to identify the following:

1. Might anyone be denied or find it harder to access this work because of a characteristic they have?
2. Will this work contribute to
  - (a) eliminating discrimination and harassment,
  - (b) advancing equality of opportunity,
  - (c) fostering good relations between those with and without a protected characteristic?
3. Or is there a chance it could detract from any of those?

By adopting a people-centered approach we are aiming to go beyond our legal obligations and develop best practice. If it is deemed necessary, a full Equality Impact Assessment will be completed and submitted to the University EDI Unit.

### 4.3 Content Working Group

A delegated group of Hunterian staff will develop, oversee and support the production of public written information for The Hunterian across all our platforms to ensure it is accessible and inclusive.

## 5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Across The Hunterian: Going Forward

All areas of work in The Hunterian are connected and there needs to be recognition of the organisation-wide responsibility for their equal importance. **Access and inclusion are everyone's responsibility.**



## 6. Communication and Monitoring of this Policy

This policy has been drawn up following consultation with community stakeholders and Hunterian staff.

This policy will be shared with all Hunterian staff and it will be available on our website.

The Strategic Development Board and Leadership Team will monitor performance against the Action Plan (Appendix 1) as appropriate and the impact of the Policies on board members, staff, volunteers, students and visitors, to ensure that real improvements are being made in tackling discrimination and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

## 7. Approval and Review:

**Approved by The Hunterian Strategic Development Board on 21 November 2024**

**Date of Policy Review: November 2026**



## Appendix 1. 2024–25 Key Action Planning

Full actions are detailed in the Strategy Delivery Plan. [Hunterian Strategy Delivery Plan 2024 5.pdf](#)

### 1. Governance

- Take action to diversify the boards, provide induction and ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are considered in board decision making.

### 2. Management and Leadership

- Focus Hunterian Leadership Team and wider organisational work on values-led leadership.

### 3. Audience Understanding

- Continue and deepen audience research activity to underpin decision making.
- Develop focussed development activity on underrepresented communities in Glasgow.

### 4. Communications

- Communicate transparently with stakeholders and provide regular updates that includes input from staff and community members.
- Ensure representative communications and develop inclusive writing skills.

### 5. Collections Development

- Include alternative and multiple voices in research process/practice.

### 6. Teaching and Learning

- Support University teaching and school initiatives, especially those that align strategically.
- Work closely with Widening Participation/Into University to provide learning programmes to interpret the collections for pupils from Glasgow communities.

### 7. Programming

- Plan for participation in design, selection, development and delivery of programme.
- Address voices and lived experiences that would otherwise be absent from collections records.

### 8. Visitor Welcome and Facilities

- Ensure equal access to our buildings, making alternative provision where necessary.
- Equip facilities to ensure all visitors feel welcomed, comfortable and supported in their visit.
- Support and train Visitor Experience staff to welcome all visitors according to needs.

### 9. Interpretation and Display

- Embed participation framework in development/delivery of interpretation.
- Strengthen methodologies for inclusion of alternative and multiple narratives around collections.

### 10. Collections Management

- Ensure equal access to collections through the collections search, research access and engagement.
- Develop and expand how we include alternative perspectives in collections records.

### 11. Recruitment Practice

- Address recruitment practice to ensure equity and diversify the team through Positive Action.

### 12. Induction, Training and Awareness

- Clear, thorough and person-centred induction programme for staff and board members to emphasise values and core behaviours.
- Principle of equal access to opportunities for skills and career development, encouraging all staff to look at their professional development.
- Staff training programmes including University mandatory training, Dismantling White Supremacy workshop, visitor access, reading lists/group and regular discussion of access and inclusion.

### 13. Support and Wellbeing

- Empathetic staff support accommodating of individual needs.