

# Innovation Readiness Assessment of Cultural Organization (Museum): A Methodological Aspect

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## Abstract

Innovation has emerged as a critical driver of sustainable development across industries, including the cultural and creative sectors. Museums, as key cultural institutions, face increasing pressure to enhance their operational efficiency, audience engagement, and value creation through innovation. This paper addresses the need for a structured approach to evaluate innovation readiness within museums, recognizing their complex, multifunctional nature. Drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives—ranging from management and organizational theory to cultural studies and innovation management—this study proposes a comprehensive methodological framework for assessing museum innovation readiness. The framework integrates sectoral policy analysis, organizational diagnostics, and stakeholder evaluation to provide actionable insights for strategic planning. The proposed model aims to support museum leaders, policymakers, and researchers in identifying innovation gaps, aligning resources, and designing evidence-based strategies to foster institutional transformation. This research contributes to the broader discourse on applied innovation in non-profit and service-oriented organizations within the cultural economy.

**Keywords:** *Creative cultural industry, Cultural organization, Museum, Innovation, Innovation readiness, Assessment methodology.*

## ARTICLE INFO

### Review paper

Received: 02 May 2025

Accepted: 02 June 2025

Published: 04 June 2025

DOI: 10.58970/IJSB.pdf

## CITATION

Otgonsuren, D., Oyuntsetseg, L., & Mandukhai, B. (2025). Innovation Readiness Assessment of Cultural Organization (Museum): A Methodological Aspect, *International Journal of Science and Business*, 47(1), 1-9.

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## Introduction

In recent years, museums have increasingly emerged as vital hubs for the integration of modern technology and innovation, positioning themselves as key players within the cultural and creative industries. According to the United Nations Statistical Office (UNSTAD, 2024), the global creative economy generated revenues of 2.3 trillion USD in 2023, marking a 15% increase from the previous year. This growth is largely attributed to the rapid incorporation of digital technologies into production and service delivery within the sector. Complementing this trend, a report by Azoth Analytics (2023) projects that the global museum market will reach 9.3 billion USD by 2024, driven by accelerated adoption of scientific and technological advancements and

innovations (Furferi, 2024). Scholars emphasize that museums do more than preserve and exhibit cultural artifacts; they produce creative content, actively engage audiences, promote social inclusion, and foster inspiration. Museums also act as crucial custodians of cultural capital, connecting heritage with contemporary culture, arts, and creative industries, while facilitating multifaceted collaborations that extend to diverse sectors and creative enterprises (Barnes, 2019). This complex and multifunctional nature underscores the unique challenges and opportunities museums face in embracing innovation. For developing countries, the integration of modern scientific and technological achievements into the museum sector represents a critical pathway to accelerate institutional development. Consequently, ensuring museums' innovation readiness becomes essential for their sustained growth and relevance. The concept of "readiness" is defined as "the state of being fully prepared for something" or "the willingness to do something" (Oxford Living Dictionary, 2017; Oxford Dictionary, 2018). In this context, "innovation readiness" refers to the extent to which an organization is prepared to implement and sustain innovation initiatives. Evaluating innovation readiness in museums entails a comprehensive assessment of organizational capabilities such as leadership effectiveness, strategic alignment, human resource capacity, resource availability, and service infrastructure. Understanding these dimensions is vital for crafting targeted strategies that embed innovation within the museum's broader mission and objectives. This study seeks to develop a methodological framework for assessing museum innovation readiness, providing museum leaders and policymakers with practical tools to support sustainable development and long-term institutional success.

Prior research has emphasized the critical role of digital transformation as a core component of innovation readiness in cultural institutions, including museums. Agostino and Costantini (2022) proposed a comprehensive measurement framework for assessing digital transformation in Italian cultural institutions, highlighting the importance of organizational adaptability, digital skills, and strategic vision in successfully integrating new technologies. Similarly, Cristobal-Fransi et al. (2021) analyzed museums' use of online communication and e-commerce, demonstrating how digital presence can enhance audience engagement and expand revenue streams. This digital shift is closely tied to museums' innovation readiness, as it requires readiness not only in technology adoption but also in rethinking traditional practices to meet evolving visitor expectations (Knight Foundation, 2020). The convergence of digital innovation and museum operations offers opportunities for enhancing service delivery, co-creation with audiences, and strengthening social inclusion (Barnes & McPherson, 2019). Moreover, methodological frameworks for assessing innovation readiness have been developed and adapted across various sectors, providing valuable insights for the museum context. Bisogni (2023) introduced a novel framework for evaluating innovation readiness levels of technologies, emphasizing the assessment of organizational capabilities and resource alignment as key indicators. In healthcare and long-term care organizations, Hoed et al. (2023) demonstrated that a multidimensional approach to innovation readiness—encompassing leadership, culture, and infrastructure—facilitates effective innovation implementation. These studies suggest that museums, given their multifaceted roles and organizational complexities, require a similarly comprehensive assessment approach. Developing a tailored innovation readiness framework for museums is essential for identifying strengths and gaps, thereby enabling targeted strategies to foster sustainable innovation and maintain cultural relevance (Mendoza & Talavera, 2025; Li & Zeng, 2023).

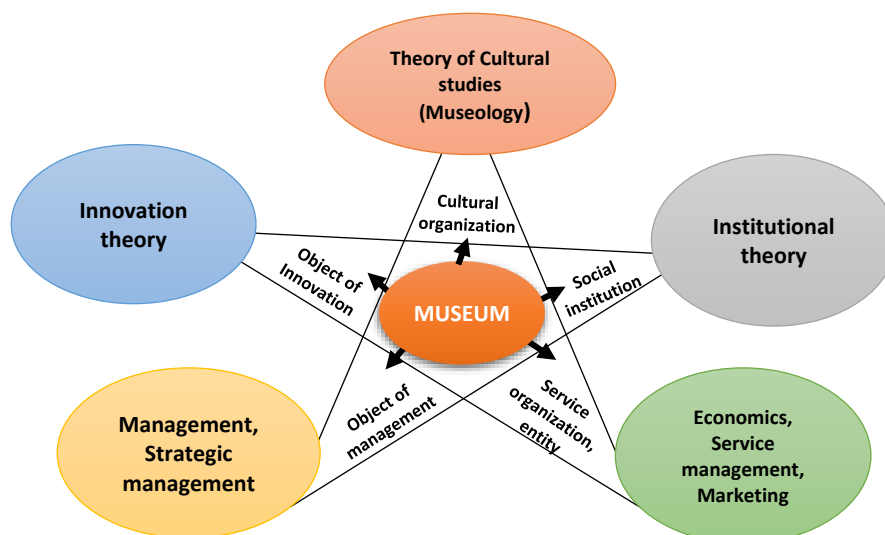
### **Innovation Readiness Assessment of Museums: Findings from the Literature Review**

In this age of rapid change, the need to evaluate innovation readiness has become increasingly urgent. Consequently, a wealth of literature and numerous online tools have emerged to support this evaluation. These resources address a broad spectrum of factors, ranging from the involvement of frontline employees (Lahti et al., 2023) to the seamless integration of organizational processes, customer service, and technological infrastructure (Rosén, 2018). The objectives of researchers vary widely; some propose comprehensive frameworks for innovation readiness evaluation complete with practical roadmaps for adoption and strategies to enhance readiness (Bisogni, 2024), while others focus specifically on assessing museums' digital transformation readiness (Agostino et al., 2022). In this study, digital readiness is highlighted alongside innovation readiness, recognizing that the effective use of digital tools and technologies is fundamental to fostering innovation in museums today.

Following a thorough literature review, researchers categorized existing studies into four main types to provide a clearer understanding of assessment methodologies. The first category includes assessment and diagnostic tools, encompassing both academic research instruments and practical web-based platforms. Examples include Innovation Readiness Assessment (IRA) tools available from Ideanote.com, Strategyzer.com, Kaizenjoy.com, and Culturepartners.com; Innovation Readiness Level Assessments (IRLA) developed by Setiawan et al. (2018) and Bisogni (2023); evidence-based models by Hoed et al. (2023) and Malakhatka et al. (2024); as well as the Open Innovation Readiness Test (Nesta spinout, 2023) and digital readiness indexes like the Digital Readiness Index (DRI) by Agostino et al. (2022). The second category consists of national surveys, such as the Digital Readiness and Innovation in Museums survey (2020), developed in partnership with the American Alliance of Museums and conducted by the Knight Foundation. This survey examined strategy, human resources, practical activities, customers (visitors), and partnerships, providing a broad overview of innovation and digital readiness across museums of various types and sizes. The third category comprises interviews and focus groups with museum professionals, particularly directors, which yield valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for innovation development, including digital transformation (Knight Foundation, 2020; Agostino et al., 2022; Cristobal et al., 2021; Mendoza et al., 2025). Key themes emerging from these interviews include leadership, strategy, operations, business processes, resources and infrastructure, innovation culture, digital transformation, collaboration and partnerships, and audience engagement. Finally, case studies are commonly used to assess innovation readiness by identifying best practices and lessons learned from successful initiatives (Rosén, 2018; Vation, 2025; Innovationcloud, 2025). These studies typically evaluate dimensions such as management leadership, strategy, human resources, operations and business processes, resources, infrastructure, innovation culture, collaboration and partnerships, audience, and digital transformation. A notable trend across these methodologies is the frequent use of quantitative analysis, modeling, and big data techniques. However, most studies have focused on the industrial sector and business enterprises rather than the public or cultural sectors. Research on cultural institutions, especially museums, predominantly employs qualitative methods such as questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and case studies. Moreover, many specialized organizations, primarily management consulting firms, offer online assessment tools in questionnaire form, enabling organizations from diverse industries to participate in surveys and self-assessments (e.g., Ideanote.io; Strategyzer.com; CAIL.com; Silverparkgroup.com; RevelX.co; DeSai.com; Unboundedthinking.com). While these qualitative methods provide important insights, they can introduce subjectivity into the research. Therefore, it is considered more rational and effective to combine innovation readiness assessments with comprehensive studies of the organizational context to ensure a well-rounded and objective evaluation.

### Theoretical Foundation for the Innovation Readiness Assessment of Museums

Museums fulfill a wide range of functions, including collecting, preserving, and safeguarding historical, cultural, and natural heritage. Beyond these roles, they engage in research, curate exhibitions with educational and artistic value, and provide cultural education to the public, thereby contributing to societal enlightenment. This multifaceted nature makes museums unique subjects for interdisciplinary research, as they can be analyzed through various academic perspectives such as cultural studies, heritage management, educational science, and digital innovation. Firstly, as cultural institutions, museums are central to cultural studies and museology, with foundational work by scholars such as Pickering (2008), Tucker (2020), and the International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM, 2019, 2021), as well as Vergo (1989) and Mensch (1992). Secondly, museums function as social institutions—they are nonprofit, publicly accessible, and serve societal development—placing them within the realm of institutional theory and related policy studies (Robert, 1988; Kimberly, 2011; Pagani, 2017). Thirdly, museums operate as organizational entities with ongoing activity, making management and strategic management theories crucial for understanding their development (Morse et al., 2018; Mendoza et al., 2025; Indian MHRD Project, 2015; Reussner, 2023). Fourthly, as service organizations, museums must be studied through the lenses of economics—specifically cultural economics—as well as customer service, service management, and marketing theories (Sawczuk, 2012; Sorensen, 2017; Patel, 2025). Lastly, as modern cultural service organizations, museums continuously update their diverse activities—including collection, preservation, study, display, and promotion of cultural heritage—by applying innovation and innovation management theories (Li Min & Zeng Hao, 2023; Trunfio et al., 2021; Pierroux, 2024). Understanding these diverse roles is essential to developing effective strategies for enhancing museums' impact, particularly regarding innovation. To address this complexity, the "Multidimensional Model of Museum" has been developed as a theoretical and methodological foundation for this study. This model offers a structured framework for analyzing museum service innovation and aligns closely with the study's objective to identify effective strategies for improving museum services (see Figure 1).



Source: by the authors

**Figure 1. Multidimensional model of Museum**

### **Methodological Framework of the Assessment of Museum Innovation Readiness**

This study proposes a methodology for assessing museum services and innovation readiness, developed based on the “Multidimensional Model of a Museum” and an interdisciplinary research approach. The methodology consists of two main stages that together provide a comprehensive evaluation framework.

#### **Stage One: Evaluation of the Museum Sector's Current State, Development Policy, and Regulatory Frameworks**

The first stage focuses on assessing the current condition of the museum sector alongside the relevant development policies and regulatory environment. This begins with an analysis of the sector’s developmental trajectory, exploring its origins and growth. Key indicators such as sector structure, total number of museums, workforce size, visitor statistics, and museum service income are considered to position the museum sector within the broader arts, culture, and creative industries. Alongside this, the study examines the regulatory framework governing museums and related cultural sectors. This involves analyzing international conventions, national laws, strategic policy documents, and standardized regulations issued by public authorities. Research methods such as document analysis, content analysis, and policy research are employed to understand how these frameworks shape sectoral innovation and development.

#### **Stage Two: Case Study-Based Analysis of Museum Services and Innovation Readiness**

The second stage involves a detailed case study approach to evaluate museum service delivery and innovation readiness through multiple organizational dimensions. This includes an analysis of management structures, operations, and the scope of museum activities such as preservation, research, public engagement, and education programs. The adequacy and development of human resources are examined alongside employee satisfaction through surveys and program reviews. Financial and economic activities are analyzed in terms of income dynamics, cost structures, and productivity indicators—measuring the relationship between organizational outputs and resource inputs. Marketing activities and the organization’s digital presence (e-image) are evaluated by reviewing marketing policies, implementation outcomes, and online visibility. Customer and audience satisfaction are assessed through surveys that cover diverse stakeholder groups including children, adults, professionals, and partner organizations. The evaluation culminates in an assessment of innovation readiness, considering factors such as leadership vision, strategic innovation goals, operational processes, resource availability, organizational culture, digital transformation capacity, collaboration and partnerships, and consumer engagement. Sociological survey methods and specifically designed questionnaires provide quantitative and qualitative data to measure innovation readiness comprehensively. Together, these stages form a robust framework that integrates sectoral analysis with in-depth organizational case studies, enabling a nuanced understanding of museum innovation readiness and offering a foundation for strategic development in museum services.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

A notable trend identified in recent academic literature on the museum sector is the progressive emergence of technological and social innovation. In today’s rapidly evolving social landscape, cultural institutions—especially museums—must prioritize innovation strategies to remain relevant and resilient. As institutions of social memory, museums play a critical role in safeguarding both the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and individual nations. Their core functions encompass the systematic collection, preservation, research, and exhibition of cultural and historical artifacts. Beyond these traditional roles, museums also provide public education, respond to evolving cultural needs, and promote active engagement with history and

identity. This broad spectrum of responsibilities underscores the importance of approaching museums through an interdisciplinary lens, incorporating insights from organizational studies, cultural theory, museology, and education. In response to this complexity, the paper proposes a Multidimensional Model of the Museum that captures its multifaceted and dynamic nature. The model conceptualizes museums through five interconnected perspectives: as cultural institutions rooted in cultural studies and museology; as social institutions framed by institutional theory; as organizational entities guided by management and strategic management theories; as service-oriented businesses informed by economics, cultural economy, service management, and marketing theories; and finally, as cultural service providers driven by continuous innovation, drawing on innovation management theory. This interdisciplinary framework not only enriches our understanding of contemporary museum roles but also serves as a practical tool for museum professionals, policymakers, and scholars striving to align institutional objectives with broader cultural and societal contexts. Building on this multidimensional model, the study introduces a Methodological Framework for Evaluating Museum Innovation Readiness. This framework enables a comprehensive analysis of both internal capacities and external environments, employing targeted analytical tools to assess a museum's innovation potential. By embracing the complexity of innovation-related factors, it offers valuable guidance for institutional planning and supports innovation-led transformation within the museum sector. Moreover, conducting an innovation readiness assessment equips museums with a holistic understanding of their internal strengths and limitations. Such insights empower institutions to prioritize innovation initiatives more effectively and allocate resources in a strategic manner. Ensuring strategic coherence means that innovation efforts not only yield creative outcomes but also meaningfully contribute to the museum's overarching vision and mission. As a crucial next step, applying this methodological framework to real-world case studies will provide empirical validation and facilitate deeper exploration of the contextual factors influencing innovation dynamics in cultural institutions.

### **Applications of Innovation Readiness Assessment in Various Sectors**

The methodology for assessing innovation readiness, while developed with museums as a primary focus, offers valuable applications across a diverse range of sectors, including business, education, healthcare, and public administration. In the business sector, innovation readiness assessment is crucial for companies aiming to maintain competitive advantage in rapidly changing markets. By evaluating organizational culture, leadership, resource allocation, and process efficiency, businesses can identify strengths and gaps in their innovation capabilities, enabling strategic investments in new product development, digital transformation, and customer engagement strategies. Similarly, in the education sector, institutions can apply innovation readiness frameworks to assess their preparedness for adopting novel pedagogical approaches, integrating technology-enhanced learning, and fostering creative problem-solving skills among staff and students. Healthcare organizations benefit from such assessments by gauging their ability to implement innovative medical technologies, improve patient care models, and streamline operations to enhance service delivery. Public administration and governmental agencies can also utilize innovation readiness assessments to evaluate their capacity for policy innovation, digital service provision, and cross-sector collaboration, ultimately improving public sector responsiveness and efficiency. Across all these sectors, the core value of innovation readiness assessment lies in its holistic approach, enabling organizations to align strategic priorities with innovation capabilities and external environmental demands, thus facilitating sustainable growth and adaptive transformation.

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