

53RD CONFERENCE OF
CIMUSET
LEON, MEXICO 2026



Science and Technology
Museums as Spaces of Hope:
Connecting Communities,
Knowledges, and Futures



LEÓN
AYUNTAMIENTO 2024-2027

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ICOM International
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International Committee
for Museums and Collections
of Science and Technology



Science and Technology Museums as Spaces of Hope: Connecting Communities, Knowledges, and Futures

*A conference for everyone shaping the future of
science & technology museums around the globe*

Science and technology museums are active forces in public life, shaping how communities understand and engage with science, technology, and the world around them. Today, these institutions stand at the intersection of complex and intertwined societal challenges, including misinformation and disinformation, planetary crises, artificial intelligence, armed conflicts, and polarisation. At a time like this, the world urgently needs spaces that can cultivate shared hope and support the imagining of better futures for both humans and non-humans across the globe.

Against this backdrop, how can we rethink science and technology museums as **spaces of hope** – institutions that connect communities, diverse knowledges, and future-oriented imaginaries?

The **53rd CIMUSET Conference, 28 September – 2 October 2026**, brings together museum professionals, researchers, educators, designers, policy-makers, and partners to collectively explore how science and technology museums can respond to these challenges. The conference invites contributions that reflect the complexity of our current moment and the diverse roles museums can play within it.



Key themes and questions explored during the conference include:

- ❖ bold and experimental approaches to storytelling around science and technology
- ❖ collections as engines for curiosity, research, and societal reflection on contemporary challenges
- ❖ rethinking visitor experiences as participatory processes, shifting from passive consumption to co-creation and critical reflection
- ❖ working with Indigenous and First Nations voices and knowledge systems
- ❖ non-formal learning that sparks dialogue, imagination, and action
- ❖ sustainable, future-oriented practices that transform institutional cultures
- ❖ outreach initiatives, pop-ups, mobile exhibitions, and playful public interventions
- ❖ collaboration with local neighbourhoods, schools, grassroots organisations, and industries
- ❖ activating parks, streets, and unexpected spaces as sites for science engagement
- ❖ science and technology museums as civic, democratic, or activist platforms
- ❖ global knowledge exchange and cross-regional partnerships

The CIMUSET Conference is for those who want to experiment, rethink, and expand what science and technology museums can be: civic spaces, learning environments, cultural actors, scientific storytellers, co-creators of new visions, and platforms for democratic dialogue.

Expect inspiring talks, engaging discussions, hands-on workshops, new collaborations, and a truly global conversation about the future of our field.



Formats

We invite submissions that respond to the overarching theme of the conference and reflect the diversity of practices, perspectives, and contexts within science and technology museums. Contributions may be submitted in one of the following formats:

Individual presentations

Short presentations sharing research, professional practice, case studies, or work in progress relevant to science and technology museums. Presentations will be organised into sessions that bring together diverse perspectives rather than a single thematic focus. Each presentation will be **10 minutes long**, followed by time for discussion.

Panels

You may submit an abstract in response to one of the three curated panels described below. Panels are designed to foster dialogue across research, curatorial practice, education, and policy. Each panel will consist of three **10-minute presentations**, followed by **30 minutes of moderated discussion** with the audience.

Workshops

Proposals for **interactive, practice-oriented workshops lasting 1.5 hours**, inviting participants to engage in dialogue, experimentation, and collective exploration. Workshops are encouraged to foreground participation, collaboration, and the sharing of methods, tools, or approaches relevant to science and technology museums.



Panel 1: The World Inside — Expertise, Collections & Meaning-Making

What new futures are taking shape inside our museums? How can we activate expertise, collections, and interpretive practices to create deeper and more relevant connections with society?

This panel explores the beating heart of science and technology museums and how internal practices shape public understanding, participation, and trust.

Panel 2: The World Outside — Public Space, Community & Collaboration

What becomes possible when science and technology museums reach beyond their walls?

This panel explores how science and technology museums engage with the world –meeting people where they are and building bridges across difference, knowledges, geography, and lived experience.

Panel 3: Decolonisation and Recognition — Awareness and Practice

How can science and technology museums challenge singular and dominant narratives about science and technology? How can they acknowledge, value, and engage with scientific and technological practices beyond Western and Eurocentric worldviews?

This panel aims to critically examine how science and technology museums can question established narratives and foreground plural forms of knowledge, including those of Indigenous and First Nations peoples, through both awareness and concrete institutional practice.



Why Participate ?

- ❖ Because this is a moment of transformation.
- ❖ Because science and technology museums are becoming more porous, collaborative, and socially engaged.
- ❖ Because science and technology shape every aspect of contemporary life, and science and technology museums can help people navigate it with confidence, creativity, and care.
- ❖ Because you get to connect with colleagues from all over the world.

And because the most compelling ideas in our field emerge when different worlds and perspectives meet.

How to Submit ?

- ❖ Abstracts should be between 250 and 300 words.
- ❖ Submissions must be received by midnight (12:00AM, CET) on 13 March 2026.
- ❖ Late entries will not be considered.
- ❖ All submissions will be vetted by a scientific committee.
- ❖ Submitters will be notified, via email, by the scientific committee regarding the acceptance or rejection of their abstract by 1 April 2026.
- ❖ No individual may present more than one paper.
- ❖ Co-authors and co-presenters must be defined when submitting your abstract.
- ❖ The official languages of the conference are English and Spanish.
- ❖ Submissions must be in English.
- ❖ All submissions should be sent to: secretary cimuset
secretary.cimuset@icom.museum



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