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## POLICY FRAMEWORK AND LEGAL ENVIRONMENT FOR MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

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### ABSTRACT

NASH is The Mongolian people have developed a unique nomadic civilization characterized by distinctive cultural practices, artistic traditions, customs, and a rich historical and cultural heritage. Preserving and safeguarding this cultural heritage—created and transmitted over centuries—in its original form, under appropriate legal and institutional frameworks, is a responsibility Mongolia holds for its citizens and as a commitment to the international community. In the current era of globalization, the preservation and promotion of national cultural identity has become a vital foundation for the continuity and distinctiveness of any nation. It is therefore essential to harmonize national traditions with global cultural achievements through policies and legal frameworks that are culturally sensitive and strategically designed to ensure sustainable development. This necessitates improved coherence between state policy and legal mechanisms tailored to the specific characteristics of Mongolia's cultural heritage. Enhancing the policy and legal framework governing museums in alignment with broader social development is critical for preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Furthermore, it supports its integration into academic research, education, and tourism development, thereby playing a key role in fostering cultural continuity and national identity.

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## INTRODUCTION

The museum is defined as a non-profit cultural and scholarly institution that is responsible for the registration, collection, preservation, study, promotion, and dissemination of cultural assets. The operations of museums are closely interconnected with a country's cultural policies and legal frameworks. In Mongolia, the development of museum policy has been shaped by international conventions and national legislative regulations. There is an increasing need to establish a stable legal environment for the museum sector while introducing innovative, accessible products and services to the public. This study aims to examine in detail the policy and legal environment governing the development of museums in Mongolia.

## METHODS

This study employed document analysis, comparative research, expert interviews with workers, and an evaluation of the Choijin Lama Temple Museum.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

- I. Legal Environment of Museums During the Socialist Period (1921–1991)

The development of museum policy is primarily expressed through state policy and legal regulation for museums. A legal framework refers to the comprehensive system of activities that includes the formulation, enactment, consistent implementation, and enforcement of laws (S.Narangerel 2015, 664-665). A stable and coherent legal environment positively impacts the growth and competitiveness of the museum sector and serves as a key driver for its development. Ensuring such stability requires the improvement of legal regulations to reflect changing societal needs. It is therefore essential to revise, update, refine, and optimize the legal framework to ensure its relevance and effectiveness over time. This study examines the legal development of museums based on historical and contemporary legal perspectives in two distinct periods: the socialist era (1921–1991) and the democratic period (1992–2024).

With the emergence and development of the scientific sector in Mongolia, the foundation for the modern museum institution was laid. On November 19, 1921, the People's Government of Mongolia established the Institute of Scriptures and Manuscript, which marked the formal beginning of institutionalized museology in the country. According to the first article of the institute's founding charter, approved during the session of the People's Government on November 22, 1921, it was stated that:

"...the Institute shall serve as a repository of the world's scriptures and a museum where various rare and curious objects are collected and made accessible for public viewing and education."

In 1924, the Institute of Scriptures and Manuscripts enacted the Regulation for the Protection of Ancient Monuments, which formally established that all historical artifacts and monuments within the territory of Mongolia were to be considered state property. The regulation defined what constituted an “ancient monument” concerning national history and the Institute the authority to oversee and regulate archaeological excavations and research involving artifacts found both above and below ground. It stipulated that the Institute would issue permits, supervise excavations, and ensure proper scholarly conduct. Furthermore, any violations of this regulation were subject to legal prosecution under the relevant judicial provisions. These clauses reflected the principles of contemporary international archaeological law and ethics at the time. Between 1921 and the 1940s, the Mongolian government implemented a range of policies and decisions to strengthen the foundations of the museum sector. These included efforts to expand museum collections, improve preservation and storage practices, establish dedicated museum buildings, formalize staffing structures, and raise public awareness about the role and importance of museums. For instance, in 1941, the government designated 15 archaeological sites—including ancient city ruins and fortress remains—for first-level state protection. Additionally, 16 monuments such as inscribed stelae and temples were officially registered under state protection. In 1944, major architectural heritage sites, including Erdene Zuu and Amarbayasgalant monasteries, were entered under state protection, and restoration efforts were initiated.

From the 1940s to 1966, the museum sector in Mongolia underwent a period of expansion and institutional development. During this time, local study cabinets (regional ethnographic and historical research units) were established in various provinces, marking the beginning of specialized museums in different thematic areas. It was also during this period that the training of professional museum personnel was initiated. A significant milestone was the 1956 government resolution signed by Prime Minister Yu. Tsedenbal, which placed all museums under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture—a structure that remains in effect to this day (Kh.Mendsaikhan, M 6a S 2012, 17). In 1970, the Mongolian People's Republic adopted the Law on the Protection of Cultural Monuments to improve the preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage. This was the first specialized and independent legal act to regulate specific relations concerning the classification, protection, utilization, research, promotion, transmission, and legal accountability of historical and cultural monuments. From this period onward, the protection, scholarly study, public dissemination, and restoration of historical and cultural heritage became institutionalized within the public policy. In 1973, the Restoration Department for Historical and Cultural Monuments was established under the Ministry of Culture of the Mongolian People's Republic. In 1975, by a resolution of the Council of Ministers, this department was merged with the Architectural Design Group for Historical Monuments and reorganized into the Restoration and Research Bureau for Historical and Cultural Monuments. Subsequently, in 1976, the organization was restructured again under the Construction and Architecture Commission as the Restoration Agency for Historical and Cultural Monuments. From that point onward, the restoration of historical and architectural monuments was carried out systematically in public planning. The agency was tasked with developing architectural and restoration design projects for major heritage sites. Among the over 40 monuments restored were:

- The building of Sukhbaatar’s headquarters in Altanbulag,
- The military headquarters of the Western Road campaign in Bulgan province,
- The residence of General Khatanbaatar Magsarjav,
- The Erdene Zuu monastery complex in Kharkhorin,
- The Zaya Monastery complex in Arkhangai province,
- The Amarbayasgalant Monastery complex in Selenge province,
- And several key heritage sites in Ulaanbaatar, including the Chojjin Lama Temple Museum, the Bogd Khan Palace Museum, and the Gandantegchinlen Monastery (National

Program for the Protection and Restoration of Immovable Historical and Cultural Heritage 1998).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, as Mongolia transitioned to a market economy, significant socioeconomic changes affected the livelihoods of its population. As a result, numerous challenges emerged in cultural heritage preservation. Individuals began selling heirloom historical and cultural artifacts as sources of income, engaging in the illegal export of cultural objects, and reproducing rare manuscripts and heritage items without authorization. Additional violations included unauthorized filming, duplication, and excavation of burial sites and tombs (ancient stone structures). These developments posed serious threats to the protection of Mongolia’s cultural heritage and created a pressing need to strengthen legal frameworks. The emerging social conditions thus became a driving force behind efforts to intensify the safeguarding, investigation, academic study, and professional restoration of historical and cultural monuments. Since the 1990s, Mongolia has joined the global community and embraced openness to the international world, which created favorable conditions for actively participating in international treaties and conventions. For example, Mongolia acceded to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, adopted under the auspices of UNESCO. By joining this convention, Mongolia has expressed its recognition and commitment to the principles and objectives of the agreement and has consistently supported its implementation.

Mongolia’s accession to international conventions has signified its active participation and assumption of responsibility for cultural heritage and laid a solid foundation for strengthening the national legal framework. Researchers have noted that this involvement has positively influenced the refinement of domestic laws, policies, and programs related to cultural heritage preservation. Furthermore, by joining these conventions, Mongolia has gained the opportunity to nominate its historical and cultural monuments for inclusion on the World Heritage List and to receive international expert support and funding for their conservation, protection, and restoration from global organizations. By the 1990s, the government had begun to pay attention to museum activities, establishing governing bodies and creating a legal framework to support the sector. Specialized and branch museums were established at both central and regional levels, with the state recognizing museums as an important domain of science and cultural enlightenment within national policy. Efforts were made to support professional methodologies, collection enrichment, research, policy development, and operational activities. However, this period was also marked by social transformations, a crisis in national ideology, conflicting attitudes toward historical and cultural monuments, economic decline, and other challenges that caused a crisis in the museum sector, similar to other social fields. Despite these difficulties, Mongolian museums gained opportunities to engage with the international community and to adopt new directions and methodologies.

**Museum Policy and Legal Framework During the Democratic era (1992–2024):** Following the transition from the socialist system to a democratic governance structure in the 1990s, Mongolia adopted its fourth and current Constitution on January 13, 1992, through the People’s Great Khural of the Mongolian People’s Republic, establishing itself as a parliamentary republic. The new Constitution declares: *“The people of Mongolia shall strengthen and consolidate the independence and sovereignty of the state, uphold human rights, freedoms, justice, and national unity, cherish and preserve the traditions of statehood, history, and culture, respect the achievements of human civilization, and make it a paramount goal to build a humane and civic democratic society in their homeland”* (State Information Bulletin 1992, 1).

This constitutional foundation served as a basis for reforming the legal ideology. Moreover, it affirms that: *“The intellectual and cultural life of the people is a fundamental pillar for the existence of the constitutional system and a guarantee of sovereignty”* (B.Chimed 2008, 65). Accordingly, the relationship and activities of museums

have been strengthened and regulated by the Constitution and relevant legislation.

The Constitution of Mongolia explicitly states: *"The historical and cultural monuments, science, and intellectual heritage of the Mongolian people are under the protection of the state."* (State Information Bulletin 1992, 3). The National Security Concept of Mongolia (1994) emphasizes the policy to: *"Survey, protect, collect, repatriate, and restore the cultural and civilizational heritage of Mongolia, and prevent the illegal export of historical and cultural valuables abroad."* (State Information Bulletin 1992, 798). The Foreign Policy Concept of Mongolia (1994) underlines international cooperation to:

*"Restore, protect, and make accessible to the public the historical, cultural, and natural heritage and valuables of Mongolia, in collaboration with Asian countries sharing common historical, religious, and cultural heritage, as well as interested foreign countries, UNESCO, and other relevant international organizations."* (State Information Bulletin 1992, 812).

The State Cultural Policy of Mongolia (1996) declares:

*"The historical and cultural monuments and collections from ancient times to the present are regarded as national treasures and are to be protected by the state."* (State Information Bulletin 1992, 385).

The implementation of these principles includes measures such as:

- *Supporting organizations, enterprises, and citizens in creating cultural values, researching, preserving, and protecting historical and cultural monuments in all aspects,*
- *Organizing efforts to repatriate Mongolian historical and cultural valuables illegally taken abroad.*

Thus, the state policy clearly defines fundamental directions for protecting historical and cultural monuments, restoring rare natural formations and valuable features, and increasing public accessibility, while fostering cooperation with international organizations such as UNESCO and interested countries.

In 1994, the Law on Protection of Historical and Cultural Heritage was enacted, which provided a detailed scientific, artistic, and legal definition of the concept of historical and cultural heritage. This law regulated all relations related to the identification, registration, classification, archaeological excavation, promotion, preservation, protection, restoration, ownership, possession, use, and export of such heritage. Within the implementation of this law, the existing "Museum Exhibit Restoration Workshop" was expanded, and the Cultural Heritage Center under the Ministry of Culture was newly established. This center was entrusted with the restoration of museum exhibits for developing a unified national registry and information database of historical and cultural heritage. In 2001, the law was further refined by incorporating provisions to regulate the protection, transmission, development, research, and promotion of intangible cultural heritage, resulting in a more detailed Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. Moreover, various other Mongolian laws—including the Civil and Criminal Codes, Customs Law, Law on Specially Protected Areas, Law on the Heritage Fund, Law on Culture, and Law on the State Official Language—have been amended or developed to regulate previously unaddressed relations concerning the protection, utilization, and enforcement against violations related to historical and cultural heritage.

In 2017, an Expert Council for Monitoring and Analyzing the Restoration Works of Architectural Monuments was established under the National Center for Cultural Heritage.

By the Minister of Culture's Order No. A/61 dated April 26, 2021, the following were approved: the composition and working procedures of the Professional Council (Annex 1), the composition of the

Professional Council responsible for providing professional and methodological guidance on the restoration of tangible cultural heritage (Annex 2), and the working procedures of the Professional Council to provide professional and methodological guidance on the restoration of tangible cultural heritage (Annex 3). These developments have brought significant changes and improvements in this field.

According to Article 13, Clause 13.1.2 of the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the Government is responsible for "approving and implementing the National Program for the Protection of Cultural Heritage." In line with this mandate, the Government approved the "Program for the Protection of Tangible Cultural Heritage" through Resolution No. 238 in 2014; however, this program does not cover all types and forms of cultural heritage, excluding historic and cultural monuments. The Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage has undergone 31 amendments across its 13 articles. Among these amendments, provisions directly related to the restoration of cultural heritage buildings include: "the full authority of administrative organizations," "the registration of cultural heritage," "the rights and responsibilities of owners and possessors of tangible cultural heritage," and "state incentives for citizens, businesses, and organizations actively engaged in the restoration of cultural heritage." These clauses address the organization's need to restore tangible cultural heritage and operational activities (D.Otgonsuren 2019, 18). For the first time, Mongolia enacted the "Law on Museums," consisting of 20 articles and 71 provisions, which came into effect on January 29, 2021. The enactment of this law established a legal framework specifically regulating the operation of museums. It expanded the scope of activities to the registration, collection, preservation, protection, research, promotion, and dissemination of cultural valuables. Consequently, the quality and accessibility of museum services have improved, safety measures have been ensured, and opportunities for increasing the social and economic benefits of the museums have been created. This has set favorable conditions for advancing the development of museums to a new level and provided a foundation for the sustainable development of museums and social guarantees for museum staff. For example, the law stipulates that employees with direct access to museum exhibits are entitled to a bonus equivalent to one year's base salary every eight years. It also grants free admission for children under the age of 16 to museums and establishes a legal framework for compensation for private museums.

The Law on Museums plays a crucial role in supporting the development and growth of the museum sector and overcoming existing challenges and difficulties. It is expected to make a valuable contribution to advancing museum operations by international standards, and the protection and dissemination of cultural heritage in the future. According to the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the Government of Mongolia approved several regulations in 2022 to strengthen the management and protection of cultural heritage. These include Government Resolution No. 269, which establishes the "Procedure for Reviewing and Deciding on the Nomination of Movable Historical and Cultural Monuments to the Category of Unique Valuable Monuments," and Resolution No. 291, which governs the "Procedure for Reviewing and Deciding on the Nomination of Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments to the National Protection Category." Government Resolution No. 389 approves the "Procedure for Registering Tangible Intangible Cultural Heritage in the National Representative and Urgent Protection Lists." Moreover, under the order No. 238 of the Member of the Government Responsible for Cultural Affairs in 2022, several supplementary procedures were approved, including the "Procedure for Reviewing and Deciding on the Nomination of Movable Historical and Cultural Monuments to the Valuable Monument Category," and the "Procedure for Reviewing and Deciding on the Nomination of Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments to the Provincial and Capital Protection Categories." In line with the Law on Museums, Government Resolution No. 268 (2022) approved the "Procedure for Providing Monetary Incentives to Officials Directly Handling Museum Exhibits." Furthermore, the Member of the Government

Responsible for Cultural Affairs enacted several model regulations, such as the “Model Rules for Museum Collections Councils” (the Minister of Culture's Order No.A/301 2021), the “Procedure for the Movement of Exhibits into and out of Museum Collections” (Order No.A/174 2022), and the “Model Regulations for the Operation of Museum Public Councils” (Order No.A/210 2022), thereby enhancing the coherence and coordination between museum policies and their legal frameworks.

In alignment with the Law on Museums, amendments have been made to related legislation, including the Law on Licensing, the Law on State Fees, the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the Law on Science and Technology, the Law on Disaster Protection, the Law on Violations, and the Law on Resolution of Violations. Additionally, special licenses to operate museum activities have been issued to 12 state-owned and 24 local museums, ensuring compliance with the legal framework. The importance and role of culture and cultural heritage in human development is reflected in the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which recognizes culture and cultural heritage as critical factors. Over the past two decades, significant changes have occurred in the condition of the cultural heritage. As a result of extensive research and efforts by global scholars, UNESCO conventions, declarations, and documents besides contemporary theories and principles regarding cultural heritage have been adopted and are being implemented. UNESCO conventions on cultural diversity and intangible cultural heritage, along with key documents that define the essence, meaning, and value of cultural heritage and cultural assets, represent major international policies and legal frameworks guiding cultural heritage protection. Globally, the traditional view that considered only tangible cultural heritage, such as cultural monuments and artifacts, as cultural heritage—and focused attention and protection solely on these—has gradually shifted, embracing a broader understanding of cultural heritage.

To protect and promote cultural heritage, the Government of Mongolia has approved and implemented national programs such as “Preservation, Protection, and Restoration of Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments” (1999–2005) and “Digitization and Preservation of National Cultural Heritage Information” (2005–2008). Between 2005 and 2021, the Government of Mongolia implemented several national programs to protect, restore, promote, and disseminate tangible and intangible cultural heritage. These programs are implemented in the digitization of the National Cultural Heritage Information System, to protect and restore immovable historical and cultural monuments, safeguarding tangible cultural heritage, protecting intangible cultural heritage, and conserving the Stone Age cultural heritage. The digitization of cultural heritage information played a crucial role in compiling comprehensive data on cultural heritage, improving the national unified registry and information system, and enhancing research, documentation, and security of cultural assets. The national unified registry and information system of cultural heritage contains records of 267 unique historical and cultural monuments, and also approximately 6,000 movable and 400 immovable cultural heritage items documented with detailed descriptions, photographs, and video recordings from the capital city and 20 provincial museums. However, about 70% of these records come from local museum collections, and only the unique and invaluable historical and cultural monuments held by nationally significant museums, such as the State Museum, Erdenes Fund, National Library, Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, and the Archaeological Institute, are included. Other cultural heritage items remain largely unregistered in the national unified system.

The state’s cultural policy, along with key legal documents such as the Law on Culture, the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, and the National Program for the Preservation, Protection, and Restoration of Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments, comprehensively regulate the preservation, protection, restoration, research, promotion, and utilization of cultural heritage. The legal environment governing the operations, development policies, and planning of the museum sector in Mongolia is established by

fundamental legal instruments including the Constitution of Mongolia (1992), the Law on Culture (2021), the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (2014), the Law on Museums (2021), the Law on Innovation (2012), the Law on Intellectual Property (2020), the Law on Science and Technology (2021), the Law on Copyright (2021), the Law on Supporting Cultural and Creative Industries (2024), the National Security Concept (2010), the long-term development strategy “Vision-2050” of Mongolia, the State Priority Program on Supporting Cultural and Creative Industries (2022–2027), and the Measures to Support the Activities of Cultural and Creative Industries (2022–2030). Together with these key legal documents, standards, regulations, and rules for museums form the comprehensive legal framework supporting the sustainable development and functioning of the museum sector in Mongolia. Here is a formal academic English translation of your text on Mongolia’s engagement with international cultural heritage conventions and documents: Upon reviewing international treaties, conventions, and relevant documents, UNESCO has developed more than ten key instruments related to culture and cultural heritage. Among these, Mongolia has ratified several important conventions, including:

- The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;
- The 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property;
- The 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage;
- The 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage;
- The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;
- The 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

By acceding to these conventions, Mongolia has elevated the preservation, protection, and security of culture and cultural heritage to a state policy priority, thereby increasing its obligations and responsibilities under international law. Moreover, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) has developed various legal instruments including its internal regulations, the International Museum Statutes, and the Code of Ethics. Through its 34 specialized committees, ICOM has established a wide range of standards, guidelines, and rules, which museums worldwide actively implement in their operations. On May 13, 2020, the Government of Mongolia approved the country’s long-term development policy, “Vision 2050,” through Resolution No. 52. This strategic document outlines Mongolia’s ambition to become one of the leading countries in Asia by 2050 in terms of social development, economic growth, and the quality of life of its citizens. The core mission of this vision is defined as: “To honor and uphold our national roots, traditions, and cultural heritage; to cherish our unified national values; to support the progressive achievements of humanity; to protect and preserve the earth and pristine nature; to build a peaceful and humane society; to strengthen democratic governance and the rule of law; to develop a self-sustaining economy that is equitably and widely accessible to every household and citizen; and to foster a healthy, educated, patriotic, adaptable, intellectual, and creative population.”

The “Vision 2050” long-term development policy document was approved with 9 main goals, 50 specific objectives, and a three-phase implementation plan. Within this program, 64 activities under 5 cultural heritage protection goals are planned to be implemented by 2050. Efforts are ongoing to ensure the effective execution of these activities. Mongolia enacted the Law on Innovation in 2012, which has undergone all 11 amendments and consists of 7 chapters and 30 articles. The law does not contain provisions related to cultural communications, nor have such provisions been introduced in any of the amendments. Although the Law on Innovation does not specifically address cultural issues, the Law on Supporting Creative Cultural Industries has played a crucial role in establishing a legal

framework for the cultural sector to create favorable conditions for its further development. The Law on Supporting Cultural and Creative Industries, consisting of 6 chapters and 29 articles, was enacted on May 16, 2024. The law aims to enhance the competitiveness of cultural and creative industries and increase their contribution to national economic growth. This legislation establishes a legal framework in the cultural sector with the following key objectives:

1. **Supporting Cultural and Creative Industries and Promoting Innovation:** The law seeks to foster the development of the cultural sector by encouraging innovation in this field. As a result, it improves the quality and accessibility of cultural products and services and creates opportunities for entering new markets.
2. **Protecting and Promoting Cultural Heritage:** The law supports innovative methods and technologies to protect and disseminate cultural heritage. For example, the application of digital technologies for the registration, preservation, promotion, and increased accessibility of cultural heritage has been actively encouraged.
3. **Strengthening the Capacity of Cultural Sector Professionals:** The law aims to build the capacity of human resources in the cultural sector by providing opportunities for acquiring new knowledge and skills. This enhancement of professional capabilities enables the successful implementation of innovation in the field.
4. **Increasing Funding for the Cultural Sector:** the law intends to increase the economic returns of the cultural sector by supporting innovation and creative industries. It facilitates attracting investment and diversifying funding sources for cultural activities.
5. **Expanding International Cooperation:** The law promotes the expansion of international collaboration, enabling the exchange of experiences and best practices in innovation and cultural and creative industries. It also supports joint projects and programs, thereby facilitating the introduction of advanced international technologies and methodologies into the cultural sector.

Through these measures, the law positively influences the development of the cultural sector by creating a favorable environment for innovation and strengthening its economic and international standing. Based on the above factors, the Law on Innovation and the Law on Supporting Cultural and Creative Industries positively impact the legal framework of the cultural sector and play a critical role in enhancing the development and competitiveness of the museum. Moving forward, it is necessary to strengthen the implementation of these laws and improve their coherence and coordination. Furthermore, the widespread introduction and development of innovation and creative industries within the cultural sector are key points and extend economic development.

## CONCLUSION

The legal development of museums in Mongolia can be divided into two historical and contemporary periods: the socialist system era and the democratic system era. The legal framework for museums during the socialist period covers the establishment of the "Library" or "Scripture Repository" by the People's Government of Mongolia in 1921 until the adoption of the current Constitution in 1992. During this time, public policy for museums primarily focused on issues of the collection, preservation, and protection of cultural heritage. Significant decisions were made and implemented to establish museums with their buildings, develop professional institutions, and build human resource capacity. The democratic era of museum policy and legal environment spans from 1992 to now.

Following the Democratic Revolution in 1990, various forms of ownership emerged in the cultural and artistic sectors, fostering free competition. The legal framework for museums evolved in line with social development, becoming more sophisticated. Detailed regulations and policies were developed covering the scientific, artistic, and legal aspects of historical and cultural heritage, including their identification, registration, classification, archaeological excavation, promotion, preservation, restoration, ownership, utilization, and cross-border activities. Museum development policies and legal frameworks have evolved in the socio-economic conditions and changes at that time. Nonetheless, it can be considered that public policy supporting and developing museums has remained relatively stable. In 2021, Mongolia adopted its first standalone Law on Museums, marking an important step for the sector's development. However, certain necessary rules, regulations, and standards to ensure the effective implementation of the law have yet to be adopted or fully enforced, which continues to pose challenges to museum operations. Therefore, there is an ongoing need to improve and modernize the policy and legal environment of the museum sector to align with contemporary requirements. In particular, keeping pace with rapid technological advances, and defining clear policies and legal regulations regarding digital museum services has become a pressing issue. The transition to digital formats for museum operations, including digital preservation and dissemination of collections to the public, is increasingly important in the digital era. However, insufficient legal regulation in this area currently hinders the development of digital services within museums.

Accordingly, in improving the policy and legal framework for the museum sector, the following issues should be prioritized:

- Developing and approving the necessary rules, regulations, and standards to ensure the implementation of the Law on Museums.
- Defining policies for digital museum services and establishing the corresponding legal regulations.
- Including regulations related to the digital registration, preservation, and protection of museum collections within the museum framework.
- Developing and implementing policies to integrate information technology and software solutions into museum operations.
- Establishing and implementing policies for continuous professional development and retraining of museum staff to enhance their skills.

Addressing these issues will improve the policy and legal environment in the museum field, creating sustainable conditions for its future development.

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