

# Athens Institute

Working Paper No. 2025-2776-21

1 September 2025

## **The Museum has come to your Doorstep: A Pop-up Toy Museum Design and Educational Practices**

Ayşem Yanar  
Ceren Güneröz

Working papers are published by the Athens Institute to stimulate discussion on various issues. These papers are primarily based on presentations made by the authors at various academic events organized by the Athens Institute. All published working papers undergo an initial peer review aimed at disseminating and improving the ideas expressed in each work. Authors welcome comments.

This paper should be cited as follows:

Yanar, Ayşem, Güneröz, Ceren (2025) The Museum has come to your Doorstep: A Pop-up Toy Museum Design and Educational Practices Published by the Athens Institute: Working Paper No. 2025-2776-21, 1 September 2025. Pages 1-19

No.: 2025-2776-21

Date: 1 September 2025

DOI:

ISSN: 2241-2891

Previous Working Papers available at: [www.atiner.gr/papers.htm](http://www.atiner.gr/papers.htm)

*This series began in 2012 and was known as the Conference Paper Series until 2024. In 2025, the series was renamed and is now called the Working Paper Series.*

Athens Institute ([www.atiner.gr](http://www.atiner.gr))

2025

## **The Museum has come to your Doorstep: A Pop-up Toy Museum Design and Educational Practices**

*By Ayşem Yanar<sup>±</sup> & Ceren Güneröz\**

*International Council of Museums' (ICOM) definition emphasizing education, inclusivity, and community engagement as core and new potential museum functions. A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing. Museum education refers to the process of facilitating learning experiences within a museum setting. Pop-up exhibitions are part of contemporary museum education. They have become an exciting and innovative way to bring art and culture directly to audiences in unexpected locations. Unlike traditional exhibitions held in established galleries or museums, pop-up exhibitions are temporary and often take place in unconventional spaces, such as vacant storefronts, outdoor venues, or even public transport. This spontaneity not only creates a sense of surprise and excitement but also allows for a more direct connection between the art and the community. One of the major advantages of pop-up exhibitions is their accessibility. They can reach a broader, more diverse audience, as they do not require the traditional barriers of formal entry fees or expectations. They can be targeted to specific groups or even introduce art to people who might not typically engage with it. Moreover, pop-up exhibitions often allow artists to showcase their work in a more flexible, experimental setting, which can spark creative collaborations and new forms of expression. From an organizational perspective, pop-up exhibitions are cost-effective, as they usually do not require long-term commitments to venues or extensive infrastructure. This flexibility makes them an attractive option for both emerging artists and established institutions looking to experiment with new formats. The Ankara Toy Museum, located within Ankara University, offers its rich collection of traditional and contemporary toys to a wider audience through online exhibitions on the museum's website, social media platforms, and virtual museum applications. This approach allows more visitors to engage with and explore the museum's collection. The Minimuseum project, launched in 2024 with the aim of physically bringing the museum's collection to visitors who cannot access the museum, has been completed, and the pilot pop-up museum exhibition has been opened. The pilot study was conducted with 30 students (aged 9-11) who visited the museum galleries within the Ankara Toy Museum. The students were included in guided tours and educational activities as part of the trial. After the pilot application, the final adjustments were made to the Minimuseum, and it was implemented in the pre-museum stages as part of the museum education program with a total of 50 students from two schools in*

---

<sup>±</sup>Associate Professor, Ankara University Faculty of Fine Arts Department of Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Properties, Ankara, Türkiye.

\*Head of Department, Museology, Ankara University & Center for the Research on Child Culture (CRCC), Türkiye

*Ankara. The aim of this study is to determine the impact of the pop-up exhibition, following the development process of the Minimuseum, on the museum awareness and museum education perception of children in the 9-11 age group. In line with this objective, the results of the pop-up exhibition education, conducted with a total of 80 students in the 9-11 age group in Ankara, are shared in this study.*

**Keywords:** *museum education, pop-up exhibition, lifelong learning, sustainability, participation.*

## **Introduction**

Museums play a vital role in shaping and implementing cultural policy at both national and local levels. As institutions dedicated to the preservation, interpretation, and dissemination of cultural heritage, museums serve not only as repositories of the past but also as dynamic spaces for contemporary dialogue, education, and social cohesion. In recent decades, cultural policies have increasingly recognized museums as key actors in promoting cultural diversity, fostering community engagement, and contributing to sustainable development. Through exhibitions, educational programs, and public events, museums actively participate in the cultural life of society. They help define national identity, support cultural tourism, and promote inclusive narratives that reflect the plurality of modern societies. Cultural policy frameworks often allocate funding and support mechanisms to museums to ensure access to culture for all citizens, especially marginalized or underrepresented groups. This aligns with broader goals such as social justice, intercultural dialogue, and lifelong learning. Moreover, in times of crisis—whether economic, social, or environmental—museums have proven to be resilient institutions that adapt their roles and strategies. Digitalization, for example, has allowed museums to reach wider audiences and maintain cultural participation even during periods of physical closure, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

In essence, museums are no longer viewed solely as passive guardians of objects. They are active agents in cultural policymaking, contributing to the development of democratic values, civic responsibility, and cultural awareness. As such, governments and cultural institutions increasingly collaborate to integrate museums into comprehensive policy agendas. By doing so, they acknowledge the museum's potential not just to preserve heritage, but to inspire future generations, promote equity, and respond to the cultural needs of rapidly evolving communities.

International Council of Museums's (ICOM) latest definition emphasizing education, inclusivity, and community engagement as core and new potential museum functions. A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.

Museums play a crucial role in cultural preservation, education, and social engagement. However, their full potential can only be realized when they are

accessible to all visitors, regardless of physical ability, sensory impairments, or cognitive differences. Accessibility in museums is not merely about compliance with legal requirements but about fostering inclusivity, ensuring equal participation, and removing barriers to cultural engagement. As contemporary museology shifts towards a more visitor-centered approach, accessibility has become a core consideration in exhibition design, programming, and institutional policies (Black, 2012).

Museum accessibility encompasses physical, sensory, cognitive, and digital access. Physical access focuses on ensuring that exhibition spaces, entrances, pathways, and restrooms are designed to accommodate visitors with mobility impairments (Neves, 2018). This includes ramps, elevators, tactile floor markings, and seating areas, which facilitate ease of movement within museum spaces (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Sensory accessibility is another critical aspect, particularly for visitors with visual or auditory impairments. The integration of audio descriptions, tactile models, sign language interpretation, and hearing loops enables more inclusive experiences (Hayhoe, 2013). Museums such as the Louvre and the Smithsonian Institution have pioneered programs that include multi-sensory experiences, such as touch tours and verbal imaging techniques, allowing visitors to engage with artifacts beyond visual observation (McGinnis, 2020). Cognitive accessibility involves adapting museum experiences for individuals with neurodivergent conditions such as autism or learning disabilities. This can be achieved through clear signage, quiet spaces, sensory-friendly hours, and simplified exhibition texts (Bitgood, 2013). Institutions such as the British Museum and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) have implemented inclusive programs tailored to neurodiverse audiences, ensuring their participation in cultural learning (Falk & Dierking, 2016). Digital accessibility is increasingly vital in expanding museum outreach. Websites, mobile applications, and virtual tours must adhere to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to ensure usability for individuals with disabilities (Lazar et al., 2017). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote and hybrid museum experiences, making accessibility a critical factor in digital content creation (Kelly, 2021).

Despite progress, museums continue to face structural, financial, and institutional barriers to achieving full accessibility. Retrofitting historic buildings to meet modern accessibility standards can be costly, while a lack of institutional awareness often results in accessibility being treated as an afterthought rather than a core principle (Sandell, 2010). Additionally, insufficient training for museum staff on inclusive practices can hinder the effectiveness of accessibility initiatives (Munley, 2013). To overcome these challenges, museums must adopt a holistic approach to accessibility, integrating inclusive design principles from the outset. Partnerships with disability advocacy groups, investment in staff training, and the development of sustainable funding models for accessibility improvements can contribute to more equitable museum experiences (Lord & Lord, 2012). Moreover, universal design principles, which emphasize creating environments usable by all people without the need for adaptation, should be embedded in future museum planning (Story et al., 1998).

Museum Educational activities are also solutions for the museum accessibility for both visitors and audience. For example, museum loan boxes have become an essential tool for enhancing accessibility by extending museum experiences beyond institutional walls. These curated educational kits, containing artifacts, replicas, documents, and interactive materials, allow diverse audiences—including schools, care homes, community centers, and individuals with limited mobility—to engage with museum collections in non-traditional settings. As museums strive to broaden access, promote lifelong learning, and support inclusion, loan boxes serve as an effective medium for overcoming geographical, physical, and cognitive barriers to cultural participation (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007).

One of the primary advantages of museum loan boxes is their ability to extend museum engagement to those who may not be able to visit in person. Schools, for instance, use these resources to integrate hands-on historical and cultural learning into curricula, allowing students to interact with artifacts in the classroom (Hawkey, 2004). Loan boxes also support multisensory engagement, providing tactile experiences for visually impaired individuals and interactive elements for neurodivergent learners (Dodd & Sandell, 2001). This aligns with universal design principles, which advocate for inclusive, adaptable educational tools (Story et al., 1998).

Despite their potential, museum loan boxes present certain logistical challenges. Conservation concerns, such as the handling of fragile artifacts, necessitate the inclusion of high-quality replicas instead of original objects (Knell, 2019). Additionally, ensuring cultural sensitivity and contextual accuracy in loan box materials requires careful curation to avoid misrepresentation or bias (Lynch, 2011). Funding and resource allocation also remain challenges, particularly for smaller museums with limited budgets for outreach initiatives (Black, 2012). To maximize their impact, museums must prioritize sustainability and accessibility in the design of loan box programs. This includes providing digital supplements, such as virtual guides and instructional videos, to accompany physical materials, as well as adapting content for diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Kelly, 2021).

Beyond educational institutions, museum loan boxes contribute to community outreach and social inclusion. Care homes and hospitals utilize them to stimulate memory and cognitive engagement among elderly individuals, particularly those with dementia (Falk & Dierking, 2016). Similarly, marginalized groups who may experience cultural exclusion, such as refugees and low-income families, benefit from the accessibility of loan box programs, which help bridge social and economic disparities in cultural participation (Sandell, 2002).

Pop-up exhibitions have emerged as an innovative and dynamic model in contemporary exhibition practices, providing museums, galleries, and independent curators with a flexible, cost-effective, and audience-driven approach to cultural display. Unlike permanent exhibitions, pop-up exhibitions are temporary, often site-specific, and designed to engage audiences in new and unexpected ways. They serve as an effective strategy for reaching diverse audiences, experimenting with curatorial practices, and revitalizing underutilized spaces. As the museum field evolves, pop-up exhibitions are increasingly recognized for their potential to democratize access to culture and foster interdisciplinary collaborations.

### *Characteristics and Advantages of Pop-Up Exhibitions*

Pop-up exhibitions are defined by their temporary nature, adaptability, and engagement-driven approach. They are frequently organized in non-traditional spaces, such as vacant storefronts, public squares, and unconventional indoor or outdoor venues, creating accessibility beyond traditional museum settings (Bishop, 2013). The transient nature of these exhibitions allows curators to explore experimental themes and test new technologies without the financial burden associated with long-term exhibitions (Sterry & Beaumont, 2006).

One of the most significant advantages of pop-up exhibitions is their ability to engage diverse audiences. These exhibitions often attract visitors who may not typically visit traditional museums, thereby broadening cultural participation (Simon, 2010). The accessibility of pop-up exhibitions also enables community involvement, as they can incorporate participatory elements such as workshops, artist talks, and interactive installations, making cultural experiences more inclusive and dynamic (Pekarik et al., 2014). Moreover, pop-up exhibitions contribute to urban regeneration and placemaking by transforming abandoned or underutilized spaces into cultural hubs (Evans, 2015). This practice aligns with broader trends in cultural heritage management, where museums and galleries seek to decentralize cultural experiences and bring art and heritage to the public sphere rather than expecting visitors to seek out static, institutionalized spaces (Black, 2012).

Despite their advantages, pop-up exhibitions pose certain challenges. One key issue is sustainability, as temporary projects often lack long-term funding and institutional support (Graham, Mason, & Nayling, 2013). Additionally, logistical challenges such as securing venues, managing conservation risks for artifacts, and ensuring adequate visitor engagement within a limited timeframe require strategic planning (Lord & Lord, 2012). Another challenge relates to institutional recognition and scholarly validation. While pop-up exhibitions serve as effective platforms for experimental curation, they are sometimes viewed as lacking the academic rigor and historical depth associated with traditional museum exhibitions (MacLeod, 2018). Nevertheless, institutions are increasingly integrating pop-up formats into their programming to enhance visitor engagement and address changing expectations in museology.

### *Ankara Toy Museum, Education and Pop-Up Exhibition Design*

Toy museums serve as unique cultural institutions that preserve and exhibit historical and contemporary toys, offering valuable insights into childhood, social history, and artistic craftsmanship. These museums go beyond mere nostalgia, providing a platform for the study of play, education, and material culture. As societies recognize the importance of toys in shaping cultural identity and historical memory, toy museums play an increasingly vital role in both academic research and public engagement (Frost, 2012).

Toys reflect historical and cultural changes, serving as tangible evidence of technological advancements, educational trends, and shifting societal values. Museums such as the Victoria and Albert Museum of Childhood (UK) and the

Ankara Toy Museum (Turkey) curate collections that showcase traditional and modern toys, offering insights into craftsmanship, production methods, and play patterns across different time periods (Karadeniz, 2019). These collections allow researchers and visitors to explore the evolution of childhood, consumer culture, and gender roles through toys (Cross, 2009). Additionally, toy museums contribute to cultural preservation by safeguarding handmade and locally crafted toys that may otherwise be lost due to industrial production. In many cases, traditional toys embody regional storytelling, mythology, and folk craftsmanship, making them valuable artifacts of intangible cultural heritage (Smith, 2017).

Beyond cultural preservation, toy museums play a significant role in education. Many institutions incorporate interactive exhibits, play-based learning, and educational workshops to engage children and adults alike (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007). Hands-on activities encourage experiential learning, allowing visitors to explore the mechanics, materials, and historical contexts of toys (Jenkins, 2020). Furthermore, toy museums facilitate intergenerational learning, as grandparents, parents, and children can share experiences and perspectives on toys from different eras. This engagement fosters critical thinking, creativity, and cross-generational storytelling, reinforcing the social and emotional value of play (Sutton-Smith, 1997).

The Ankara University Toy Museum has been visited by 75,000 people since its establishment in 1990. The museum works with the mission of "being a childfriendly (family-friendly) museum that focuses on the history of toys and children's culture, offers programs and activities for learning by doing and living, and aims to produce for and with children". In this context, the museum has determined its vision as follows: "Investigation of children's culture with the history of play and toys in Turkey and development of resources required for museumification through contemporary context, and to ensure the sustainability of these resources." The museum prioritizes audience studies in the process of finding or creating these resources and carries out audience development activities within the scope of museum education (Artar et al., 2021).

Aiming to use the principles and methods of museum education effectively, the museum's education is planned and implemented under seven headings:

- Guided museum tours and lectures (different age and interest groups).
- Structured (thematic) educational studies at preschool and primary school level.
- Teacher's training activities for Museum Education.
- Training for Museum Education Master of the Arts students.
- Visits of interest groups (adults).
- Working areas for researchers.
- Visits of researchers (conferences, seminars, congress etc.)
- Training for volunteers in a museum.
- Maker workshops for students and teachers.

In 2023, the Ankara Toy Museum launched the Minimuseum project, a traveling exhibition unit. In addition to this initiative, the AR Toy Box mobile

application was developed, a 12-month museum education calendar was prepared, and museum highlights were narrated with audio descriptions for both education and the accessibility.

Museums use augmented reality to enrich exhibits by overlaying digital content onto physical artefacts. This technology engages audiences, making learning more dynamic and accessible while enhancing the storytelling and contextual understanding of the exhibits. AR is a transformative technology that overlays digital information—images, text, or sounds—onto the physical world, enriching our perception of our surroundings. There are many possibilities for using AR in museums. The most straightforward way is to add explanations of pieces. This means visitors will get more information when they view exhibitions using AR. The museum mobile applications are used for initially enhanced visitor experiences. Mobile apps can provide interactive and personalized experiences. Visitors can access detailed information about exhibits, watch videos, listen to audio guides, and engage with interactive features that enrich their understanding of the displays. The apps can make museums more accessible by providing content in multiple languages, offering features for visitors with disabilities (like text-to-speech or sign language videos), and enabling remote access to museum content. In 2024 a museum education program was prepared including AR technology, based on the collection of the Toy Museum, and practiced with children aged 10-12 within the scope of the 4th Grade Social Studies course "Culture and Heritage" unit. The museum education program addressed how mobile application can be adapted to museum education, their impact on participants' approaches and attitudes towards the museum, and how they can be linked to the learning outcomes of the Social Studies course. The aim of this programme is developing a digitally accessible mobile museum application for Ankara Toy Museum for enhanced visitor experiences. Museum developed this app to provide interactive and personalized experiences. The app can make museums more accessible by providing content in Turkish and English languages and enabling remote access to museum content via museum highlights (Yanar and Güneröz, 2024).

As an educational tool "MINIMUSEUM: ANKARA TOY MUSEUM'S MOBILE AND POP-UP MUSEUM UNIT " is to provide primary school students aged 7-12, who do not have access or have limited access to the museum, the opportunity to encounter the Ankara Toy Museum collection in a school setting. The project also aims to engage these students in museum education activities, which are prepared using real objects from the collection and are aligned with the educational curriculum. In line with this main objective, the following sub-goals are targeted:

- 1 To design and prototype a mobile mini-museum that includes ten toys from the Ankara Toy Museum collection, which hold significant importance in the history of Turkish Traditional toys.
- 2 To use the designed and produced mini-museum in schools located in Ankara, particularly in those that have limited or no access to the museum, within the scope of Life Sciences, Social Studies, and Visual Arts classes.

- 3 To produce the designed and developed mini-museum based on feedback and suggestions after its implementation with primary school students aged 7-12 and primary and secondary school teachers in schools located in Ankara that have limited or no access to the museum.

Minimuseum aims to bring the toy museum to children and young people who have no or limited access to the Ankara Toy Museum. While doing so, it is intended to present both promotional and educational activities together. Therefore, original objects will be displayed within a specially designed cabinet, digital elements will be included in the cabinet, and educational activities will be conducted using this cabinet. Minimuseum is a design product. There are no similar examples in Turkey. The examples abroad are designs equipped with different themes and technological devices. The Minimuseum designed by the Ankara Toy Museum will feature a collection unique to the Ankara Toy Museum and include the stories of the toys in the collection. The Minimuseum prototype reflects both traditional museum approaches and contemporary museum-digital museum approaches. When examining the museum content, it will be observed that the museum includes a selection of original toys from the Ankara Toy Museum, supported by digital elements and narratives. Minimuseum is including following samples:

1. A mobile and portable cabinet for Minimuseum, and the content listed below will be placed inside the cabinet.
2. A selection from the Ankara Toy Museum collection, including Traditional Toys.
3. Written and visual materials (illustrations, photos) prepared about the toy selection.
4. QR codes containing inventory information related to the toy selection (option for detailed information).
5. Videos providing information about the toy selection (interviews with collectors, videos on how the toys were made and played with, etc.).
6. A hologram design related to a prominent example from the toy selection (e.g., a hologram showing the spinning motion of a traditional top from the Traditional Toy group).
7. Surface sections, microscopic images, and touchable samples of examples from the toy selection (e.g., microscopic images and material samples for a wooden toy) (replica samples).
8. A touchscreen game related to an example from the toy selection.
9. Educational materials prepared for different age groups, consisting of examples from the toy selection (these educational materials include take-home items like model samples, coloring pages, question-and-answer sheets, etc.).
10. Toybox AR Mobile museum application of Ankara Toy Museum (Güneröz and Yanar, 2024).

When designing the mobile mini-museum module, several important aspects should be considered to ensure its effectiveness and usability. Portability is a key factor, requiring the module to be lightweight, foldable, and easy to transport. Suitable carrying bags or wheeled systems should be incorporated to facilitate mobility across different locations. Additionally, user-friendly design is essential, allowing both students and teachers to interact easily with the module. This can be achieved by integrating interactive elements, informative panels, and user guides. To enhance engagement, the exhibit should feature visual and auditory elements, including colorful graphics, videos, and audio narrations that capture visitors' attention. Educational content must be well-structured and aligned with the museum's educational activity packages, catering to different age groups and learning levels. Ensuring accessibility for all users, including individuals with disabilities, is another crucial consideration, promoting an inclusive experience. For long-term usability, durability is important, requiring materials resistant to various environmental conditions such as weather, wear and tear, and external impacts. A feedback mechanism should be established to allow users to share their experiences and suggestions, aiding in the continuous improvement of the module. Additionally, incorporating social and cultural content related to local history, culture, or scientific themes will help visitors connect with their surroundings in a meaningful way. Finally, encouraging interaction and participation through interactive features will create a more immersive and enriching learning experience for visitors.

**Photo 1 and 2.** *Minimuseum module*



Museum developed a calendar for enriching learning experience for visitors. Calendars, one of the souvenir items offered to visitors in museum stores, are often notable for their aesthetics and functionality. These calendars, typically consisting of 12-month sections featuring artworks or visuals specific to the museum, are designed as desk or wall calendars and serve as cultural mementos for visitors. However, beyond being mere souvenirs, such calendars can also fulfill an educational function. In this context, the museum education calendar developed within the project not only meets aesthetic expectations with its design but also aims

to support the learning processes of children aged 5-8 through the information and activity suggestions it contains. The development process of the calendar began with the selection of 12 toys from the museum collection that stood out among the most captivating artifacts for visitors. These selected toys are historically and culturally significant examples and have been integrated into each month of the calendar. Designed to combine educational, cultural, and entertaining elements, the calendar features a different toy each month. Additionally, the calendar includes 21 distinct section titles. The sections and their contents are as follows:

"*Toy of the Month*" section aims to convey the historical, social, and cultural context of the selected toy. This section is included in all 12 months of the calendar.

"*Quote of the Month*" section presents an inspiring quote related to play and toy culture. This section is included in all 12 months of the calendar.

"*Riddles*" section contains questions related to the toy of the month that support children's cognitive development. This section is included in all 12 months of the calendar.

"*Did You Know?*" section contributes to the learning process by sharing an interesting fact about the toy. This section is included in all 12 months of the calendar.

"*Design and Play!*" section offers toy-making suggestions that children can design and play with, inspired by the toy of the month. This section is included in 7 months of the calendar.

"*Toy Conversations*" section includes questions designed to enhance children's imagination, creativity, and critical thinking skills. This section is included in 2 months of the calendar.

"*Design and Tell!*" section presents toy-making suggestions that children can create and then narrate a story about. This section is included in 3 months of the calendar.

"*Interesting Facts*" section shares intriguing information related to the toy of the month to capture children's attention and stimulate their curiosity. This section is included in 3 months of the calendar.

"*Toys in Art*" section introduces an artwork featuring the toy of the month, emphasizing the connection between toys and art. This section is included in 1 month of the calendar.

"*Spinning Fun*" section provides educational and entertaining information about the spinning top toy, allowing children to learn about this traditional toy. This section is included in 1 month of the calendar.

"*From Past to Present*" section explores the historical evolution of the toy of the month and its use in modern times. This section is included in 3 months of the calendar.

"*Think and Draw!*" section offers an opportunity for children to stimulate their creativity and imagination through thinking and artistic expression. This section is included in 2 months of the calendar.

"*How to Play?*" section explains how to use and play with the traditional ox-cart toy. This section is included in 1 month of the calendar.

"Research and Learn!" section includes questions designed to encourage children's curiosity and research skills about the toy of the month. This section is included in 4 months of the calendar.

Image 1 and 2. Museum Calendar



Based on ICOM's new museum definition, considering the functions of "accessibility" and "education" in contemporary museology, the development of an "Audio Museum" application has also been proposed to enhance the visiting experience of visually impaired visitors at the Ankara Toy Museum. It has been observed that museums enhance their visibility by highlighting and promoting standout and attention-grabbing artifacts from their collections (Fraser, 2001; Dudley, 2012; Latham, 2013; Bay et al., 2006). Audio description has been proposed with the idea that museum visitors should determine the highlighted objects of the museum, considering the target audience of the toy museum (children aged 5-12). Based on this idea, a survey has been prepared for preschool and primary school students visiting the museum.

Image 3. Museum Questionnaire form

OYUNCAK MÜZESİ

Yaşım: .....

Oyuncak Müzesi'nde en sevdiğim oyuncak: .....

Bu oyuncakı nerede gördüm: .....

Neden bu oyuncakı seçtim: .....

Eğer istersen oyuncakı bu alana çizebilirsin...

A total of 113 visitors participated in the survey, which identified approximately 30 prominent objects. While most of these objects were successfully located within the collection, some were excluded from the evaluation due to participants' young age, lack of literacy, or incomplete information. Among the most frequently highlighted objects in the survey were "dolls" from the museum's collection. Given the presence of multiple and diverse dolls in the collection, only the most distinctive examples were considered for analysis. According to the survey data, participants selected objects based on their personal appreciation and emotional attachment, as expressed through reasons such as "liking" or "loving" the object. Audio description was first introduced in the 1980s to assist visually impaired individuals in theater and later became widely used, particularly in the media. Over time, audio description studies have taken on an interdisciplinary dimension and have been applied across various sectors (Randaccio, 2018: 285). Audio description, or verbal description, can be defined as the verbal explanation of the visual components of an artwork or media product for the benefit of visually impaired individuals, particularly with the use of interactive technology. Audio description presents the visual product as a coherent and meaningful text, providing detailed descriptions of all elements. In museums, audio description is recognized as a crucial accessibility tool that enables visually impaired individuals to better understand and experience artworks and exhibitions (Hutchinson, 2019).

**Image 4. Museum Audio Description Sample**



Envanter Bilgisi:

Adı/Cinsi: Uzay Aracı – Uçan Daire

Env. No: 088

Çağı: 1961

Bulunduğu Yer: İstanbul

Ölçüsü: 15x5 cm

Geldiği Yıl: 1990

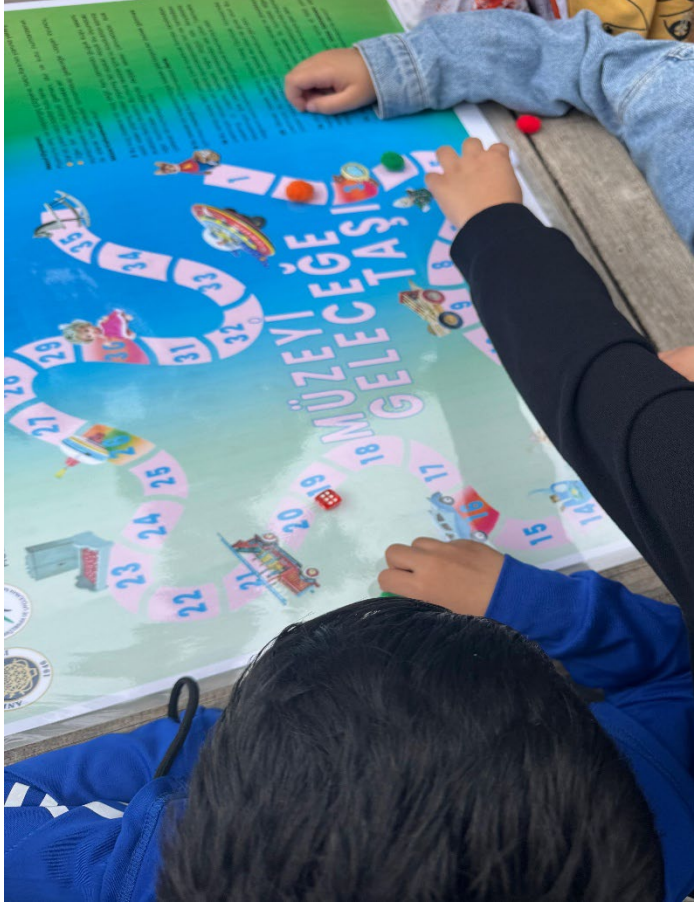
Geliş Şekli: Satın Alma

Müzedeki Yeri: Kültür Bakanlığı Kutu 6

Tanımı: Sarı-kırmızı-mavi renkli yuvarlak gövdesi, üzerinde U.D.012 ve NK yazan, şeffaf renkte pilot kabini, kırmızı pilot başlığı ve sarı pilot kıyafeti, iki mavi kuyruğunda beyaz yıldızlar, 2 büyük 1 küçük toplam 3 siyah plastik tekerleği olan, Nekur firması üretimi (Nevzat Kurt), teneke, hava taşıtı.

Ankara Toy Museum also developed a board game for the International Museum Day of 2025. Every year, on 18 May, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) organises International Museum Day (IMD), a global event highlighting the transformative role of museums in society. In 2025, IMD will explore “The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities”, focusing on how museums can navigate and contribute to a world undergoing profound social, technological, and environmental shifts.

**Image 5.** *Take the Museum to the Future Board Game*



The Minimuseum module was concluded with the feedbacks of participants. The MiniMuseum is a portable museum module developed by the Ankara University Toy Museum to make museum-based learning more accessible and engaging for young audiences. Designed as a mobile exhibition, the MiniMuseum features a curated selection of 20 historically and culturally significant toys from the museum's collection. It aims to bring the museum experience directly to children, particularly those who may not have the opportunity to visit a physical museum. The MiniMuseum travels to primary schools and shopping malls, offering interactive educational activities in non-traditional learning environments. Each visit includes a structured program consisting of a short introduction, exploration of the objects, hands-on activities, and reflection sessions. To assess learning outcomes, students complete a five-question pre-test and post-test designed

specifically for the module. The project also includes a specially prepared educational booklet that provides information about each toy, along with creative activities that support learning through play. The booklet is accompanied by a brochure introducing the MiniMuseum, as well as QR codes linking to the Ankara Toy Museum's official mobile app, allowing children and educators to explore additional content.

In addition to promoting cultural heritage and object-based learning, the MiniMuseum encourages curiosity, creativity, and dialogue among children. It contributes to inclusive education by reaching diverse communities and integrating museum education into everyday settings. By transforming museum content into a mobile format, the MiniMuseum demonstrates how innovative approaches can extend the social role of museums beyond their physical walls. The initiative is part of a broader effort to foster cultural appreciation and lifelong learning through accessible, playful, and participatory museum experiences. Museum plans to start educational activities with Minimuseum in summer season with free-choice visitors.

**Image 6.** *Minimuseum module*



## **Conclusion**

The implementation of the Minimuseum pop-up exhibition model has demonstrated the potential of temporary and mobile museum experiences in enhancing accessibility, engagement, and educational impact. By bringing a curated selection of toys from the Ankara Toy Museum to school environments, the project has successfully provided children aged 9-11 with a meaningful cultural and educational experience, addressing the barriers of physical distance and limited museum access. The findings of this study indicate that pop-up museum exhibitions can effectively stimulate children's curiosity about heritage, foster a deeper

connection with museum objects, and encourage participatory learning through interactive engagement.

One of the key insights from this research is the significance of object-based learning in shaping children's museum experiences. The selection of objects, particularly historically significant and emotionally resonant toys, played a crucial role in shaping the participants' perceptions and engagement levels. Survey results revealed that children's preferences were primarily influenced by aesthetic appeal, familiarity, and emotional connection to the objects. This suggests that future mobile museum designs should incorporate objects that evoke personal connections and allow for multisensory engagement to maximize their impact.

Additionally, this study highlights the importance of integrating digital technologies into mobile museum initiatives. The incorporation of augmented reality (AR) and interactive applications enriched the educational experience, making it more immersive and adaptable to different learning styles. These findings align with contemporary museological trends, emphasizing the role of technology-enhanced storytelling in fostering accessibility and engagement. Despite its successes, the Minimuseum model also presents certain challenges. Logistical concerns, such as object preservation, transportation, and sustainability, require further refinement to ensure the long-term feasibility of pop-up exhibitions. Moreover, while the project successfully reached a diverse group of students, future iterations should explore broader audience demographics, including families and intergenerational participants, to assess the wider impact of mobile museum education.

As pop-up exhibitions continue to evolve as an alternative museum model, further research is needed to explore their long-term educational effects, particularly in relation to lifelong learning, cultural memory, and digital accessibility. This study contributes to the growing discourse on inclusive museum education and underscores the need for innovative approaches that transcend traditional museum spaces, making heritage education more accessible and engaging for all.

## References

- Artar, M., Karadeniz, C., Ateş, H., & Doğan, B. (2021). A toy museum in education: Evaluation of Ankara university toy museum's training activities. *Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 7(1), 11-28.
- Bay, H., Fasel, B., Van Gool, L. (2006). Interactive Museum Guide: Fast and robust Recognition Of Museum Objects, in Proceedings Of The First International Workshop On Mobile Vision.
- Bishop, C. (2013). *Radical Museology: Or, What's Contemporary in Museums of Contemporary Art?* Koenig Books.
- Bitgood, S. (2013). *Engaging the Visitor: Designing Exhibits that Work*. Routledge.
- Black, G. (2012). *Transforming Museums in the Twenty-First Century*. Routledge.
- Cross, G. (2009). *Kids' Stuff: Toys and the Changing World of American Childhood*. Harvard University Press.
- Dudley, S. H. (Ed.). (2012). *Museum Objects*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Dodd, J., & Sandell, R. (2001). *Including Museums: Perspectives on Museums, Galleries and Social Inclusion*. Leicester University Press.

- Evans, G. (2015). "Museums, the Urban and the Fabric of Culture," *Museum & Society*, 13(2), 208-221.
- Falk, J. H., & Dierking, L. D. (2016). *The Museum Experience Revisited*. Routledge.
- Fraser, A. (2001). *Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk. A Companion to Cultural Studies*, 391-406.
- Frost, J. L. (2012). *A History of Children's Play and Play Environments: Toward a Contemporary Child-Saving Movement*. Routledge.
- Graham, B., Mason, R., & Nayling, N. (2013). *The Heritage Reader*. UK: Routledge.
- Güneröz, C.; Yanar, A. (2024). *Minimuseum: Ankara Toy Museum's Mobile and Pop-Up Museum Unit Design and Practices*. ICERI 2024 17th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation Conference Proceedings, pp:242-252.
- Hawkey, R. (2004). "Learning with Digital Technologies in Museums, Science Centres and Galleries," *Futurelab Report Series*, 9, 1-40.
- Hayhoe, S. (2013). *Blind Visitor Experiences at Art Museums: Understanding the Impact of Touch Tours and Verbal Imaging Techniques*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Hooper-Greenhill, E. (2007). *Museums and Education: Purpose, Pedagogy, Performance*. Routledge.
- Jenkins, H. (2020). "Play, Learning, and Interactive Museum Experiences," *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 63(4), 589-604.
- Karadeniz, C. (2019). *Toy Museums in Turkey: A Historical Perspective*. Ankara University Press.
- Kelly, L. (2021). "Digital Transformation in Museums: A New Era of Inclusive Engagement," *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 64(3), 255-268.
- Knell, S. (2019). *The Contemporary Museum: Shaping Museums for the Future*. Routledge.
- Lazar, J., Goldstein, D. F., & Taylor, A. (2017). *Ensuring Digital Accessibility Through Process and Policy*. Elsevier.
- Lord, B., & Lord, G. D. (2012). *The Manual of Museum Exhibitions*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Lynch, B. (2011). "Whose Cake is it Anyway? A Collaborative Investigation into Engagement and Participation in 12 Museums and Galleries in the UK," *Paul Hamlyn Foundation Report*, 1-82.
- MacLeod, S. (2018). *Museum Architecture: A New Biography*. Routledge.
- McGinnis, P. (2020). "Multi-Sensory Museum Experiences: Engaging Visitors Beyond Visual Perception," *Museum & Society*, 18(1), 87-103.
- Munley, M. E. (2013). "Access for All: Training Museum Staff in Inclusive Practices," *Journal of Museum Education*, 38(2), 135-149.
- Neves, J. (2018). "Inclusive Museum Spaces: Rethinking Accessibility and Visitor Engagement," *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 24(6), 510-525.
- Pekarik, A. J., Doering, Z. D., & Karns, D. A. (2014). "Exploring Satisfying Museum Experiences: A Study of Visitor Preferences and Expectations," *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 57(4), 435-446.
- Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (2011). *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*. Harvard Business Press.
- Rohn, W. (2017). *A Survey of the Cultural Policies of Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and Zagreb Regarding their Urban Peripheries*. *Athens Journal of Social Sciences* 4 (1): 25-48.
- Sandell, R. (2002). "Museums and the Combating of Social Inequality: Roles, Responsibilities, Resistance," *Museum & Society*, 1(1), 13-20.
- Sandell, R. (2010). *Museums, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference*. Routledge.
- Simon, N. (2010). *The Participatory Museum*. *Museum 2.0*.
- Smith, P. (2017). *Children, Culture, and Toys: A Study of Material Heritage*. Bloomsbury.
- Sutton-Smith, B. (1997). *The Ambiguity of Play*. Harvard University Press.

- Sterry, P., & Beaumont, E. (2006). "Beyond the Museum Walls: Creating and Evaluating Accessible and Inclusive Learning Spaces," *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 12(5), 430-447.
- Story, M. F., Mueller, J. L., & Mace, R. L. (1998). *The Universal Design File: Designing for People of All Ages and Abilities*. North Carolina State University Center for Universal Design.
- Yanar, A.; Güneröz, C. (2025). Toy Box Ar: Museum Education with Augmented Reality Experience at Ankara Toy Museum. *ICERI 2024 17th International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation Conference Proceedings*, pp:236-242.