



ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF STRASBOURG  
**DES RENCONTRES  
GRANDEUR NATURE**  
REOPENING ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

MUSÉES DE LA VILLE DE STRASBOURG

Jardin des sciences

Université de Strasbourg

PRESS  
KIT

---

## **PRESS CONTACTS**

### **Museums of the City of Strasbourg**

Julie BARTH  
[julie.bARTH@strasbourg.eu](mailto:julie.bARTH@strasbourg.eu)  
+33 (0)3 68 98 74 78

### **City of Strasbourg / Press Office**

Adèle AUGE  
[adele.auge@strasbourg.eu](mailto:adele.auge@strasbourg.eu)  
+33 (0)3 68 98 87 83

### **Jardin des sciences of the University of Strasbourg**

Nina POLLARD  
[n.pollard@unistra.fr](mailto:n.pollard@unistra.fr)  
+33 (0)3 68 85 04 90

### **University of Strasbourg**

Muriel AUBENEAU  
[muriel.aubeneau@unistra.fr](mailto:muriel.aubeneau@unistra.fr)  
+33 (0)6 80 52 01 82

### **National and international press contact**

**Anne Samson Communications**  
Morgane BARRAUD  
[morgane@annesamson.com](mailto:morgane@annesamson.com)  
+ 33 (0)1 40 36 84 34

Clara COUSTILLAC  
[clara@annesamson.com](mailto:clara@annesamson.com)  
+ 33 (0)1 40 36 84 35

---

**T**oday marks the reopening of the Strasbourg Zoological Museum, a place where knowledge, science and art converge. Much more than just an exhibition space, the museum weaves connections across disciplines and generations, offering everyone a gateway to understanding the living world.

Located in a vibrant cultural district, alongside the planetarium, the Botanical Garden and the university's remarkable collections, the museum is rooted in the historic heart of the city, reinforcing the attractiveness of Strasbourg, European capital of knowledge, democracy and discovery.

Open to all — schoolchildren, students, locals as well as visitors from France and abroad — this museum invites you to explore biodiversity and reflect on today's major societal and environmental challenges. It offers insights and perspectives for the future as we face climate challenges and strive for sustainable development.

This momentum has been made possible thanks to the support of the French State, whose financial commitment has been decisive in bringing this project to life, with additional backing from local authorities and the European Union. Together, we affirm our commitment to research, culture and dialogue between science and society.

May this inauguration signal the start of a fascinating journey, during which each visit holds the promise of discoveries and wonder.

Welcome to a space where science dialogues with art, and where every discovery becomes a source of inspiration.

**Jacques Witkowski,**  
Prefect of the Grand Est region, Prefect of the Eastern defence and security zone,  
Prefect of the Bas-Rhin

**F**ollowing six years of closure, and intensive work behind the scenes, the City of Strasbourg's residents will soon be able to resume their visits to this exceptional museum, so dear to their hearts.

Visitors will once again be able to enjoy the unique atmosphere and extensive heritage collections, revitalised through an ambitious restoration campaign.

What awaits them, however, it is a transformed museum, with a fully reimagined exhibition trail where scientific mediation plays a central role. This new layout reflects the shared ambition of the City and the University to make the Zoological Museum a true museum for society that directly engages with today's issues and challenges. It encourages us to question our place within the living world, and the role we can play in it, by offering people of all ages essential tool to understand and act.

In a context where scientists are constantly alerting us to the state of our planet, the impact of our lifestyles and the urgent need to take action, and where they are silenced for doing so in the name of a populist and reactionary ideology, it is clearer than ever that this link between science and society is a necessity.

I am thrilled that the people of Strasbourg can once again make this place of knowledge and learning their own, and I am confident that this reimagined museum will live up to their expectations.

**Jeanne Barseghian,**  
Mayor of Strasbourg

**I**t was the University of Strasbourg's response to the French State's *Opération Campus* call for projects, aimed at funding the renovation of university campuses, that marked the beginning of a fifteen-year journey with the City of Strasbourg and the shared adventure of the Zoological Museum.

A pioneer among French and European universities in promoting scientific culture for all, it was only natural that we should include the renovation of the Zoological Museum in our application.

The project gave rise to the creation of the Jardin des sciences (Sciences Garden), a cultural district within the historic campus. Alongside the Planetarium, the Zoological Museum is a key feature of this multi-site location which promotes dialogue between science and society. While the university was the contracting authority for the work, this renovation was carried out jointly with the City of Strasbourg, responsible for the preservation of the collections and ensuring the operation of the museum with the university. Both parties shared responsibility for drafting the roadmaps and then the scientific and cultural project.

By maintaining the focus on the collections, the common desire was to evolve towards a museum of society rooted in the major environmental challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to open it up to the world of ongoing research to contribute to the dialogue between science and society. The aim was also to improve accessibility, both in terms of physical spaces and content, and creating an inclusive environment. Current events reveal that these choices align with fundamental issues, addressing both the rise of populism and the pursuit of improved social cohesion based on principles of sustainability and sharing.

**Frédérique Berrod,**  
President of the University of Strasbourg

# Summary

---

## **1. The renovated Strasbourg Zoological Museum**

- 1.1. Scientific and cultural project: reintroducing science into society
- 1.2. Collections of the renovated museum
- 1.3. Public participation

## **2. A renewed offering for all audiences**

- 2.1. Exhibition trail
- 2.2. Semi-permanent exhibitions
- 2.3. Inaugural temporary exhibition
- 2.4. Visitor engagement tools
- 2.5. Greater accessibility to spaces and content

## **3. The construction site**

- 3.1. One project, multiple skills
- 3.2. Teams rallied for the reopening

## **4. Key figures**

## **5. History of the Strasbourg Zoological Museum**

## **6. Project stakeholders**

- 6.1. Museums of the City of Strasbourg
- 6.2. Jardin des sciences of the University of Strasbourg
- 6.3. Project governance

## **7. Institutional partners of the Zoological Museum**

## **8. Patrons of the Zoological Museum**

## **9. A season in the Museums of the City of Strasbourg**

- 9.1. Vincent Munier at the Fine Arts Museum
- 9.2. L'état sauvage (The Wild State) at the MAMCS

## **10. Near the Zoological Museum: the Jardin des sciences cultural district**

- 10.1. The Planetarium of the Jardin des sciences
- 10.2. The Botanical Garden
- 10.3. Museums and university collections
- 10.4. The historic campus

## **11. Practical information**

## **12. Press contacts**

---

# 1. THE RENOVATED ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF STRASBOURG

## 1. SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL PROJECT: REINTRODUCING SCIENCE INTO SOCIETY

The renovated Zoological Museum stands at the crossroads of science and society museums. The aim is to offer a comprehensive redefinition of the institution, enabling the museum to reaffirm its role in preserving and enriching heritage collections, in addition to becoming a centre for scientific mediation open to major societal issues and promoting close interaction between the public and research stakeholders.

This new approach was also embodied in the introduction of a participatory approach aimed at involving citizens in defining future exhibitions and events. Their involvement in the renovation project, jointly led by the City and the University of Strasbourg, has enabled the Zoological Museum to establish itself as a forum, open to scientific news and the city.

Today, the museum's scientific foundations and commitment to democratising scientific culture make it a more relevant resource than ever for addressing civic and environmental concerns.

## 2. COLLECTIONS OF THE RENOVATED MUSEUM

The collections of the Zoological Museum offer an overview of global biodiversity since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The museum holds more than 1,200,000 specimens in various forms, including taxidermy, dried or alcohol-preserved alcohol groups and osteological preparations.

These collections stand out for their comprehensiveness, making them a point of reference at both the national and international levels. As such, the collections include over 10,000 mammals and 18,000 birds, 5,000 reptiles, 200,000 molluscs, 900,000 insects and countless other invertebrates, from all continents and oceans.

They also include particularly valuable specimens from species that are difficult to observe, such as the coelacanth, or species that are now extinct, such as the thylacine and the great auk.

Some represent types – reference specimens for the description of their species – or are associated with leading scientific figures, such as Jean Hermann (1738-1800), Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) or Georges Cuvier (1769-1832).



These natural history collections are complemented by a rich collection of ancient books and educational models reflecting the diverse means of knowledge transmission over time. Among them are *The Natural History of Birds* by Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon, with its 1,008 hand-painted plates, as well as the papier-mâché models by Doctor Auzoux, and those made of glass by Léopold and Rudolf Blaschka. The latter date back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and constitute a masterful collection unique in France, now on display in its entirety in the renovated museum.

#### **The place of the collections in the renovated museum**

1,800 specimens have each found their place in the new visitor trail. This substantial figure reflects a strong desire to contribute to the clarity of the scientific discourse promoted by the institution, while showcasing as many collections as possible.

Selected pieces include some of the museum's historic and iconic specimens, as well as species never displayed before, drawn from the museum's reserves or newly preserved for the reopening. The aim is also to ensure their rotation for conservation purposes.

The entire collection of specimens on display in the museum has been the subject of a large-scale restoration campaign, so that visitors may enjoy them at their best light!

### **3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A preliminary survey was launched in 2022 as part of the museum renovation project, targeting several hundred people from the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg area, the Bas-Rhin department and the rest of France. This initiative aimed to identify the expectations and perceptions of potential visitors to the museum upon its reopening, and to meet their expectations by gathering feedback from a representative sample. The survey reaffirmed the role of the Zoological Museum as a place for socialising and intergenerational transmission for members of



the public, and also highlighted their attachment to its identity and its heritage character.

Two new working phases, supported by specialised service providers (Métis and Artizest), made it possible to engage the renovated museum in a participatory approach, and involve its audiences in defining a cultural offering accessible to all. This approach echoes the "Pact for Local Democracy" launched by the municipality in 2020, and is supported by the Department of Citizen Participation. It also aligns with the participatory science policy promoted by the University of Strasbourg.

The task forces established were able to develop a methodology for sustaining public engagement with the museum, and selected the options of an ideas wall and "crash test" meetings to regularly evaluate the proposals designed by the teams. This agile operation is complemented by an entirely renewed educational offering and a cultural programme that emphasises on opportunities for intergenerational exchanges.

# 2. A RENEWED OFFERING FOR ALL AUDIENCES



## 2.1 EXHIBITION TRAIL

The new visitor trail extends over three floors and is structured around permanent, semi-permanent and temporary exhibition spaces, each offering improved accessibility.

The permanent trail starts in the **Biodiversity Hall**, located above the museum's lobby, taking visitors on a journey through the diversity of the world's ecozones. It continues with a series of sections devoted to the discovery of the animal world, placing particular emphasis on the importance of collections for understanding the animal world and passing on scientific knowledge.

The history of the **Jean Hermann's natural history cabinet**, which formed the basis of the museum's collections, provides a starting point for exploring the observation and classification of living organisms, from the establishment of naturalist disciplines and the introduction of the Linnaean classification in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the recent contributions of cladistics.

The current classification is illustrated by the reconstruction of the **Bird Gallery**, where 600 specimens allow visitors to compare the different orders of the class Aves with carnivores and molluscs. Visitors will later have the opportunity to learn about the diversity of metazoans, and appreciate the sheer variety of organisms found on our planet.

Building on this cycle, visitors will gain greater awareness of just how useful zoological collections are for **research and education**. Specimens featured in recent scientific studies are on display, along with others representing extinct or endangered species, emphasising the importance of museums as repositories of data essential to documenting environmental history. **Seven "totems" rooms** devoted to key pieces from the museum's collections enrich the permanent trail. The species they showcase and their collection history highlight the complex interrelationships between humans and non-humans, and the historical importance of living beings in human societies, as a food or economic resource, a subject of study and fascination, and a source of guardian figures for global cultural unconsciousness:

**- The walrus and elephant seals:** over 4 meters long, these two impressive creatures are frequently confused with each other; yet they inhabit two opposite polar oceans. Their new exhibition room explores the ecology of both species, and highlights the millennia-long importance of the walrus as an essential resource for subsistence among Arctic populations, represented by rare Inuit hunting artefacts from Greenland.

**- The blaschka models:** marvels of Eastern European glass craftsmanship from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, this unique set of fragile models in France is a veritable technical triumph. It is a testament to the interconnectedness of the arts and sciences in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the efforts of museums and universities to introduce their visitors and students to marine organisms, often difficult to preserve. The 58 models of the Zoological Museum are displayed in their entirety for the first time ever.

**- The Asian elephant:** a species of major importance in Asian societies, the Asian elephant is an iconic animal, facing significant environmental pressures, and subject to human exploitation. The specimen on display in this room – a young female – is one of the few large mammals in the Zoological Museum to have survived the 1944 aerial bombings.

**- The wolf:** a species associated with myth and rejection for centuries, the wolf remains a topic of debate in European societies today, especially since its reintroduction. This room focuses on the wide genetic variety (some forty subspecies, wild or domestic) of the *Canis lupus* species, the complexity of its social behaviours and the history of its relationship with humans, providing a voice to the different players involved.

**- The crocodile:** measuring nearly 4.5 meters in length, this Nile crocodile is one of the museum's star exhibits, belonging to a species which was already of great importance to ancient Mediterranean civilizations. In this room, it is displayed alongside other species from the crocodilian order. These species are often threatened by poaching and suffer the consequences of human impact on their natural habitats.

**- The coelacanth:** scientifically described for the first time in 1938, the African coelacanth constitutes one of the major zoological discoveries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This large nocturnal fish is indeed similar to the fish known only from

fossils, of which it retains certain characteristics. This totem room sheds light on its (inaccurate) nickname of "living fossil", and details the media coverage that surrounded its discovery, eventually leading it to becoming the national animal of the Comoros.

**- The gorilla:** gorillas are the largest existing hominids, and have long been associated with a negative image due to inaccurate scientific representations and cultural productions portraying them as aggressive. This totem room highlights their rich social behaviours and morphological specificities compared to humans, while stressing the vulnerability of both species to poaching and pathogens.

## 2.2 SEMI-PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS

The renovated museum also hosts three semi-permanent thematic exhibitions designed to be regularly renewed on a rotating basis, helping maintain a strong connection with evolving knowledge and current environmental issues.

These three thematic exhibitions include:

- A first space devoted to **ecosystems of the Upper Rhine**, which highlights the region's rich biodiversity. A large animated "cyclorama" brought to life by digital projections showcases the diversity of these environments and their inhabitants throughout the seasons. Visitors are invited to immerse themselves among the characteristic species of the Rhine basin and, using interactive devices, explore the impact of human activity and river development in the evolution of these ecosystems.

The gradual channelling of the Rhine has indeed significantly altered how alluvial plains function, and the living conditions of their inhabitants. In a second room, these ecosystem changes are put into perspective through documents highlighting the variety of ecological, economic and cultural





challenges in the Rhine region, and the importance of civic engagement in ensuring concerted land use planning that respects natural environments.

- A second space explores **Sagami Bay (Japan)**, a favourite area of study of Ludwig Döderlein (1855-1936), curator of the museum from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Serving as a counterpart to the local Upper Rhine ecosystem, this section invites visitors to discover the different biotopes of the bay – from the coastline to the seabed – and the species inhabiting them, even in the greatest depths. Although studying the ocean floor requires advanced technical resources, it has led to the discovery of species that have adapted to these hostile living conditions, and to better understand how the our planet works. Sagami Bay remains a centre for oceanographic research to this day, and is a prime example of the need for concerted efforts for the protection of marine environments in the face of global climate change.

- The last space, named "**Nature in the laboratory**", is devoted to mosquitoes and bees. This section draws the link between the study of living organisms and the health and social issues arising from increased contact between humans and wildlife. It highlights contemporary research, particularly the role of the Institute of Parasitology and Tropical Pathology, as well as the Institute of Molecular and Cellular Biology in the study of insects and immune responses. This research, awarded a Nobel Prize in Medicine in 2011, is presented here alongside the work of INRAE (the French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment) on pollinators. It demonstrates the importance of addressing issues related to the challenges of coexisting with other living beings, and of positioning the museum as a bridge between science and society. Visitors are thus led to familiarise themselves with the experimental approach, and learn about the laboratory techniques used to study these species.

**Oral presentation rooms**, designed to host workshops and meetings with researchers, are distributed across the museum's four thematic exhibition areas. They contribute to ensuring the museum is a forum for debate and a place where the general public can engage with scientific issues.

## 2.3 INAUGURAL TEMPORARY EXHIBITION: “BIODIVERCITY. URBAN ANIMALS”

### FROM SEPT 19, 2025 TO DEC 31, 2026

Now a centre to learn about wildlife from around the world, the renovated Zoological Museum is dedicating its first temporary exhibition, BiodiverCity, to urban animals. Designed as a stroll set to the rhythm of drawings by naturalist illustrator Valentine Plessy, the exhibition questions the ways in which human and non-human city dwellers coexist in an era of environmental crises.

Does a city constitute an ecosystem just like any other? While approximately 80% of the French population now reside in urban units, these places often continue to be perceived in the collective imagination as spaces devoid of nature. Yet, animal species of all sizes and origins live alongside humans on a daily basis. By focusing on this nearby biodiversity, the exhibition reaffirms the need for us to think about the continuity of our relationships with living beings, beyond mere feelings. Visitors are invited to discover some thirty species in five environments that are typical of the Strasbourg area, including the street, sewers, park, cathedral and urban wasteland. These five biotopes reflect issues shared by cities everywhere, such as wildlife encroaching on buildings, waste management in public spaces and maintaining ecological continuity in the face of property development pressure.



Some of the species presented, such as the stork or the bee, symbolise efforts undertaken to protect wildlife; others, such as the Florida tortoise or the rat, reflect the imbalances resulting from human activity. They are all associated with subjective values and representations.

By bringing these back into play, BiodiverCity highlights the role of the city as a laboratory space where relationships with others are negotiated on a daily basis. In doing so, it establishes animals as protagonists in their own right.

Valentine Plessy is a naturalist illustrator who lives in Strasbourg. She has contributed to numerous books and films celebrating animal diversity since the beginning of her career. Showcasing her work as part of the exhibition furthers the Museum's bond with local naturalist artists and reaffirms the importance of drawing and in situ observation in discovering and understanding the living.

The scenography was entrusted to students from HEAR (the School of Art of the Rhine), as part of hands-on study project.

This partnership further strengthens the ties between the two institutions.

**Curatorship:** Simon Malivoire de Camas, curator and project manager at the Zoological Museum of Strasbourg, Samuel Cordier, curator and director of the Zoological Museum of Strasbourg. Scientific council: Adine Hector, head of the Territorial Ecology department, Marie-Laure Desigaux, Urban animals project manager, City and Eurometropolis of Strasbourg.

## 2.4 VISITOR ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

The renovated museum also places greater emphasis on spaces and resources for scientific outreach. Throughout the visit, several dozen interactive and audiovisual installations convey information and concepts in an entertaining way, turning the museum into a convivial space that engages young visitors.

An entire room – *Le nid* (The Nest) – is dedicated to welcoming young visitors (0-6 years old) and their families. This space, away from the

exhibitions, allows children and their relatives to relax in an immersive atmosphere created by an artistic installation by illustrator Mona Leu-Leu and enhanced by sound design.

## 2.5 GREATER ACCESSIBILITY TO SPACES AND CONTENT

The renovation project greatly improved accessibility to all areas of the museum and its educational content. The signage and organisation of the museum layout allow for well-designed vertical and horizontal circulation, clear wayfinding and easily readable spaces, all designed to accommodate the needs of different disabilities. All reception area and exhibition furniture were designed with people with reduced mobility in mind. Particular attention was paid to the distribution of information and graphic charters, complemented by maps and content in relief with Braille texts.



# 3. THE CONSTRUCTION SITE

## 3.1 ONE PROJECT, MULTIPLE SKILLS

Located in the heart of Strasbourg's university district, the Zoological Museum is now part of the UNESCO "World Heritage Site", which was expanded in 2017. Its reopening contributes to establishing the Neustadt district as a cultural hub that strengthens the appeal of both the City and the University, and acts as a link between the French and German history of Strasbourg.

The renovation of the neo-Renaissance style building that has housed the museum since 1893 is part of the State's *Opération Campus* and the university project to create a museum hub, alongside the Planetarium and the Museums of Mineralogy and Palaeontology. This work, project-managed by the University, involved upgrading safety and accessibility to current standards, improving energy performance and the layout of the interior spaces, thereby increasing the exhibition space from 1,200 to 2,000 square metres, with an additional 600 square metres dedicated to visitor reception areas as well as entirely redesigned logistics and technical spaces.

The architectural project, designed by **FREAKS Architecture**, emphasises the façade and the building's opening, which draws visitors into a large reception hall with an open-plan layout uninterrupted over three floors. This space, dedicated to the diversity of living organisms, is the centrepiece of the renovated museum. It also adds a theatrical dimension to the visitor experience, granting access to the first rooms of the exhibition trail, which runs from top to bottom, via a staircase.

The renovation project has enhanced the spirit of the venue and improved the clarity of the spaces, transforming it into an accessible environment, conducive to interaction and encounters. The historical elements (façades, staircases, parquet floors, frescoes) of the building have been preserved.

The scenography of the project was entrusted to the **Ducks Scéno** studio.

Their approach aimed to spark curiosity and wonder visitors through the use of visual and sound installations drawing on a variety of styles with a strong emphasis on imagination, in a spirit inspired by contemporary art and design. Each space along the newly designed visitor trail is unique, giving each one its own identity. This visual diversity, along with the attention paid to providing an immersive experience, helps create a rhythm throughout the visit.

## 3.2 TEAMS RALLIED FOR THE REOPENING

The architectural and scenographic renovation results from several years of planning by the teams of the City Museums and the Jardin des Sciences of the University of Strasbourg, with support from the university's Directorate of Real Estate Heritage, as well as specialised service contractors in architecture, construction, exhibition design and cultural venue operation. To define exhibition contents, the teams also rely on scientific

advisory committees formed for the project and each exhibition space based on specific selected themes. This renovation also benefited from the scientific and technical support of the following French State services, which were actively involved in this project: DRAC (Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs); the Security, Safety and Audit Inspection Mission (MISSA) of the Inspectorate, Research and Innovation Department of the Ministry of Culture; the Museums of France Department (SMF) of the Ministry of Culture; and the Research and Restoration Centre of the Museums of France (C2RMF).

Altogether, over 100 people were involved in designing and implementing the project and defining the content displayed in the museum.



# 4. KEY FIGURES

**2000 m<sup>2</sup>**

of exhibition space.

**800 m<sup>2</sup>**

of ancillary spaces: reception, libraries, educational workshops, children's room, picnic area, cloakrooms, shop.

**1,800 m<sup>2</sup>**

of workspace for teams and students including an archaeozoology laboratory, specimen preparation rooms, office spaces, lecture and practicum rooms for the Faculty of Life Sciences.

**1,200,000**

specimens relocated to the Study and Conservation Centre of the Museums of the City of Strasbourg to complete the collections project during the renovation work.

**700,000 €**

to restore the museum's collections for the reopening

**1,800  
specimens on  
display in the  
renovated museum.**

## AGENDA

**September 2019:** closure of the Zoological Museum.

**May to October 2021:** relocation of the collections in the Study and Conservation Centre.

**Autumn 2021:** beginning of renovation work on the building.

**March 2022:** beginning of the restoration of the collections.

**December 2023:** reception of the first display cases.

**April 2024:** delivery of the building.

**September 2024:** return of the collections exhibited on Boulevard de la Victoire.

**December 2024:** assembly and suspension of the whale in the hall.

**March 2025:** beginning of the installation of the specimens in the bird gallery.

**September 19, 2025:** opening of the Zoological Museum

## BUDGET

<b>The main funders of the project are</b>	
French State - Opération Campus	8,770,000€
City of Strasbourg	3,634,000€
FEDER	1,975,000€
Eurometropolis of Strasbourg – Opération Campus	1,500,000€
French State – National Fund for Spatial Planning and Development	1,200,000€
French State – France 2030 (IDEX, OPUS)	370,000€
Patrons	372,000€
Three-year contract, Strasbourg European Capital (French State, Grand Est Region, European Collectivity of Alsace, Eurometropolis and City of Strasbourg)	315,000€
French State – RDCA	200,000€
Unistra equity funds	120,000€
Grand Est Region	100,000€

**Total budget:** 18,556,000€ (including taxes)

## ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET:

- Annual overall budget: 2,309,815€
- Estimated revenue: 340,900€
- City of Strasbourg: operating cost net of revenue: 1,573,550€
- University of Strasbourg: operating costs: 395,365€

# 5. HISTORY OF THE STRASBOURG ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM



The museum's collections offer a fascinating journey through history, reflecting the City and the University of Strasbourg's longstanding interest in natural sciences since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Zoological Museum traces its origins to the natural history cabinet of physician and naturalist Jean Hermann (1738-1800), who began assembling collections in Strasbourg from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century for research and teaching purposes.

Hermann maintained extensive correspondence with the greatest European naturalists of his time. His extensive network allowed him to assemble collections from every continents in Strasbourg. Upon his death, he left behind countless zoological and mineralogical specimens, along with fossils and a herbarium containing 17,000 plates. Today, these items rank among the most valuable in the Zoological Museum.

Hermann's cabinet was actually acquired by the City of Strasbourg in 1804, and became the core of the collections of the municipal natural history museum. Expanding steadily throughout the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this museum moved several times before becoming part of the Faculty of Sciences of the Academy on rue des frères. Following the German annexation in 1871, the zoology collections were separated from the mineralogy and botany collections during a restructuring of the University based on the Berlin disciplinary model. The museum moved to its current premises at the Institute of Zoology during that time.

The physical and intellectual proximity of museums and scientists served as a key driver for the growth of the collections throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and contributed to generating new knowledge and passing it on. Even though the building was spared during the two world wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, part of the collections which were stored in another building were lost during bombing raids in 1943.

Today, the museum's collections serve as a scientific memory of the living world and a resource for raising awareness of environmental issues among future generations.



# 6. PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

The uniqueness of the Zoological Museum stems from its – historic – affiliation at the intersection of municipal and university institutions.

## 6.1 MUSEUMS OF THE CITY OF STRASBOURG

The Zoological Museum of Strasbourg, which holds the official title of *Musée de France*, operates under the direct authority of the City of Strasbourg and is part of its network of municipal museums. As such, it benefits from the wealth and proximity of the ten other museums operated by the City, as well as from the lively cultural programme this brings.

Being part of this network demonstrates the municipality's long-standing commitment to its scientific and natural heritage, the latest evidence of which being this renovation project. The network's combined teams – communication, publishing, collections cataloguing, works management, educational department, budget management and human resources – have all been involved in the renovation project alongside the museum team.

The renovation of the Zoological Museum, undertaken in collaboration with the University of Strasbourg, is one of the major projects led by the Museums of the City of Strasbourg. It aims to strengthen the museum's position as a key player in the City's environmental education initiatives, in partnership with other relevant community services.

## 6.2 JARDIN DES SCIENCES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF STRASBOURG

Recognising its responsibilities and societal impact as a creator and conveyer of knowledge, the University of Strasbourg has long fostered strong connections with the wider community, notably through the knowledge cultural mediation efforts supported by the Jardin des sciences.

The renovation of the Zoological Museum forms part of the creation of a new cultural district in the heart of the historic campus managed by the Jardin des sciences of the University of Strasbourg.

This district, inaugurated alongside the new planetarium, brings together several outstanding heritage complexes, museum facilities, and gardens.

## 6.3 MUSEUM GOVERNANCE

To support the renovation of the museum, a new agreement has been signed between the City and the University strengthening ties between the directorate of museums, museum staff, and setting out a new governance model. The goal is not only to harness the wealth of resources and expertise of all parties involved for the benefit of the renovated museum, but also to strengthen connections with research across diverse fields of knowledge, including humanities and social sciences. These connections are central to the museum's new scientific and cultural project.

# 7. ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

- European Union - ERDF funds
- French State:
  - Ministry of Culture - DRAC Grand Est
  - Ministry of Higher Education and Research
  - Prefecture of the Grand Est region - Prefecture of Bas-Rhin
- European Collectivity of Alsace
- City and Eurometropolis of Strasbourg
- University of Strasbourg

# 8. PATRONS OF THE ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM

The project would not have been possible without the exceptional participation of patrons, whose generosity helped fund the restoration of some specimens on display, as well as improvements to the quality of the display cases used in part of the permanent exhibition, all aimed at ensuring optimal conservation and presentation conditions for the museum's collections.

## Mutest

Mutest, a local mutual insurance company based in Strasbourg, in the heart of Alsace, is governed by the provisions of Book II of the French Mutual Insurance Code. With close to 80 years of experience, it provides health benefits and pension solutions tailored to individual and collective needs, especially for businesses, self-employed workers and civil servants.

Renowned for its mutualist values such as solidarity and mutual aid, its commitment goes far beyond simple health coverage as it works daily to promote collective well-being and improve the quality of life of its policyholders. This spirit of solidarity is particularly evident in the support Mutest affords to local initiatives. And so, Mutest is thus proud and honoured to support the City and the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg through sponsorship projects aimed at enriching the social and cultural fabric of the community. These initiatives include flagship programmes, such as the refurbishment of a zoological collection to bring it to museum standards, the *Bus-Santé* (Health Bus) and the Espasport. This partnership further reinforces the ties between the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg and Mutest while reaffirming its clear commitment to improving the well-being of its policyholders.

## Stradim

Since being founded in 1990, Stradim has focused its vision of the property development and construction business on the homes of tomorrow, which it positions at the heart of its real estate project. Stradim delivers quality yet affordable projects that comply with all the latest standards, blend seamlessly into urban surroundings and contribute to societal and ecological issues, especially by developing a number of housing units for social housing providers. Stradim is committed to expanding its local initiatives beyond its core business, and has been actively engaged in sponsorship and patronage policies for many years. Committed to supporting local stakeholders, Stradim supports numerous sporting and cultural projects, and is a member of the *Club des Mécènes* (Patrons' Club) which supports initiatives launched by the Eurometropolis and the City of Strasbourg. The Zoological Museum made a lasting impression on our school field trips to this impressive place filled with a jumble of stuffed animals, ranging from the most majestic to rows of tiny pinned insects, all covered in a layer of dust and with creaky floorboards. We just had to get involved by donating to the renovation and improvement of its collections!

## Strasbourg Électricité Réseaux

With a strong focus on the future, Strasbourg Électricité Réseaux, a wholly owned subsidiary of Électricité de Strasbourg, puts its professionalism and the commitment of its staff at the service of its customers daily (24/7). Strasbourg Électricité Réseaux is committed to working closely with its partners to address current and future energy challenges amid a context marked by issues that are not only local, but also national and international. We firmly believe that future energy systems and distribution networks must be built on a smart blend of innovative technologies and expertise, which Strasbourg Électricité Réseaux has been implementing for several years, with

a strong focus on high standards and performance.

We ensure the safe fulfilment of our public service missions and the quality of our power supply to our customers by providing innovative solutions tailored to the requirements of a rapidly evolving energy sector. Strasbourg Électricité Réseaux, an independent subsidiary of the ES Group, is committed to being a leading distributor for the energy transition, thereby contributing to illuminating new horizons for energy in Alsace.

## Würth France

Art and culture form an integral part of the corporate culture of the Würth Group. This group's strong cultural commitment primarily focuses on visual arts, as evidenced by a collection of more than 20,000 works spanning over 500 years of art history, also extending to music, literature and performing arts.

Würth France, the group's French subsidiary, is fully committed to the dissemination of culture to the widest possible audience through the Würth Museum in Erstein, as well as supporting other institutions and initiatives.

It is in this spirit that the Würth Museum engaged in a partnership with the Strasbourg Zoological Museum, exhibiting specimens from its collections as part of the Bestia exhibition. Animals in the Würth Collection in 2021/2022 during the renovation of the Strasbourg Zoological Museum. It was only natural for Würth France to support the restoration of the whale skeleton, now installed in the entrance hall of the Strasbourg Zoological Museum following its renovation.

# 9. A SEASON IN THE MUSEUMS OF THE CITY OF STRASBOURG

## 9.1 EXHIBITION “ENLIGHTENING THE LIVING. OBSERVING ART AND NATURE WITH VINCENT MUNIER”

**Strasbourg Fine Arts Museum**  
From November 7, 2025  
to April 27, 2026

In conjunction with the reopening of the Zoological Museum, a new exhibition at the Fine Arts Museum invites visitors to take the time to observe — whether it is a museum artwork or the direct observation of nature — through the photographs of Vincent Munier.

This exhibition draws parallels between works from the collections of several museums in the City of Strasbourg representing animals and nature, and the contemporary photographic work of Vincent Munier, who through his art and technique captures the immediacy of a fleeting encounter with an animal, which once captured on film also acquires the status of artwork.

Now, more than ever, art and nature both deserve to be observed, contemplated, and protected. Visitors are encouraged to sit down and take the time to observe, contemplate and dream. And since people often seek to disconnect by communing with nature, the museum brought the natural world into its exhibition spaces. The ability to "know how to look" is essential to "know how to protect".

After all, isn't the quest of a museum visitor akin to that of the wildlife photographer? In its own way, isn't a museum a kind of reserve, or refuge?

**Curatorship:** Céline Marcle and Dominique Jacquot, conservation of the Fine Arts Museum



## 9.2 EXHIBITION “L’ÉTAT SAUVAGE. L’ANIMAL DANS LES COLLECTIONS DU MAMCS ET DU MUSÉE ZOOLOGIQUE” (THE WILD STATE. ANIMALS IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE MAMCS AND THE ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM)

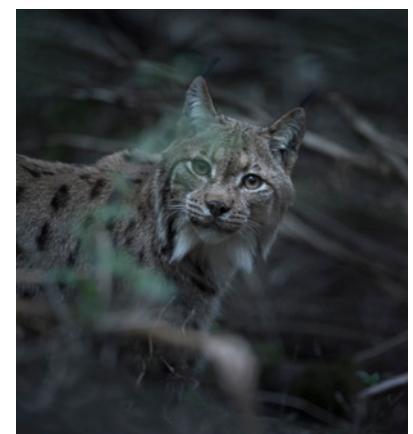
**Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Strasbourg**  
From January 23 to October 18, 2026.

To mark the reopening of the Zoological Museum, the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MAMCS) brings together specimens from natural history collections alongside its own artworks that bear witness to a special bond with the living world.



The exhibition is intended not only as an immersion into the imaginary world of wild nature's representations but also as a plea for biodiversity. What is wild brings us back to a fierce, untamed and different nature, but one that is all the closer to human beings as it is part of the whole that conditions our future today. An endless source of inspiration for artists, the animal world has fuelled creativity since the dawn of time, starting with the earliest Palaeolithic rock paintings of game animals. It reveals the ambiguous relationship of humans and other species, caught between fascination, opposition and dependence, despite the evolving way we perceive the living world over time. For, long relegated to the status of objects, whether decorative or utilitarian, animals are increasingly coming to the fore as the focus shifts from humans to the entire ecosystem. This awareness is reflected in the concerns of artists, privileged witnesses of the wealth of biodiversity. Considerations surrounding animality thus illustrate this rediscovered closeness.

**Curatorship:** Samuel Cordier, curator of the Zoological Museum, Coralie Pissis, conservation officer at the MAMCS



# 10. AROUND THE ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM: THE CULTURAL DISTRICT OF THE JARDIN DES SCIENCES

In the **Neustadt district**, in the heart of the **historic Campus**, the Jardin des sciences of the University of Strasbourg is a veritable **cultural area where a Planetarium, museums and gardens coexist**. The Jardin des sciences fosters curiosity and knowledge sharing with all audiences, through a rich cultural programme of events, meetings, exhibitions, festivals, and more.

## 10.1 THE PLANETARIUM OF THE JARDINS DES SCIENCES

Succeeding the original Planetarium build in 1982, and eagerly expected for several years, the new Planetarium of the Jardin des sciences opened its doors to the public on 1 July 2023. Its gleaming truncated dome architecture recalls building as instruments and catches the gaze day and night. Featuring an immersive layout and a digital projection, this performance hall sits 134 people beneath a 15-metre diameter hemispherical projection dome, raising awareness of astronomy and space among audiences of all ages.

## 10.2 THE BOTANICAL GARDEN

The Botanical Garden offers the general public a chance to discover over 5,500 of plant species set in 3.5 hectares of verdant grounds.

## 10.3 THE UNIVERSITY'S MUSEUMS

The Museums of Seismology, Mineralogy and Palaeontology collections are veritable treasures hidden within the University. For over 140 years, they have supported the development of scientific research, the production of knowledge and its dissemination to the broadest audiences possible. The buildings that house them, in the Institute of Geology and the former seismological station, are currently

undergoing renovation and will soon reopen to the public. The mineralogy and palaeontology collections share a common history with those of the Zoological Museum, as they all belonged to the former natural history cabinet of Jean Hermann. They were exhibited at the Natural History Museum in Strasbourg from 1825 onwards.

authorities for the new imperial university in the aftermath of the annexation of 1871, which served as a model for the scientific and spatial organisation of various disciplinary institutes throughout Europe and beyond.

## 10.4 THE HISTORIC CAMPUS

The historic campus is a remarkable architectural ensemble of the Neustadt, an urban district built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2017. Today, it remains a faithful representation of the ambitious educational and scientific programme devised by the German



# 11. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

## • Contact

+33 (0)3 68 98 50 00  
[musees@strasbourg.eu](mailto:musees@strasbourg.eu)  
[www.musees.strasbourg.eu](http://www.musees.strasbourg.eu)  
Museums of the City of Strasbourg  
67076 Strasbourg Cedex

## • Coming to the Zoological Museum

29 boulevard de la Victoire -  
Strasbourg  
Tram: lines C, E, F > "Université"  
stop  
Bus: lines 10, 30 stop "Gallia"; lines  
L1, 2 stop "Observatoire"

## • Museum accessibility

All areas of the museum are now accessible to people with reduced mobility, courtesy of resurfaced flooring, newly installed lifts, accessible toilets and PRM ramps. All content is available in French, English and German. Tactile features and Braille devices are also available along the visitor trail to assist visually impaired visitors.

## • Opening days and times

Open from Tuesday to Sunday  
(closed on Monday):  
Weekdays: 10am-1pm and 2pm-6pm  
Weekends: 10am-6pm

## • Rates

9€ (full price), 4.5€ (reduced price)

# 12. PRESS CONTACTS

## • Museums of the City of Strasbourg

Julie BARTH  
[julie.bARTH@strasbourg.eu](mailto:julie.bARTH@strasbourg.eu)  
+33 (0)3 68 98 74 78

## • City of Strasbourg / Press Office

Adèle AUGE  
[adele.auge@strasbourg.eu](mailto:adele.auge@strasbourg.eu)  
+33 (0)3 68 98 87 83

## • Jardin des sciences of the University of Strasbourg

Nina POLLARD  
[n.pollard@unistra.fr](mailto:n.pollard@unistra.fr)  
+33 (0)3 68 85 04 90

## • University of Strasbourg

Muriel AUBENEAU  
[muriel.aubeneau@unistra.fr](mailto:muriel.aubeneau@unistra.fr)  
+33 (0)6 80 52 01 82

## • National and international press contact

Anne Samson Communications  
Morgane BARRAUD  
[morgane@annesamson.com](mailto:morgane@annesamson.com)  
+ 33 (0)1 40 36 84 34  
Clara COUSTILLAC  
[clara@annesamson.com](mailto:clara@annesamson.com)  
+ 33 (0)1 40 36 84 35

Cover: Alpine marmot (*Marmota marmota*), Zoological Museum, Strasbourg. Photo: Nis & For

p.5: Restitution of the participatory initiative, 2025. Photo: Laetitia Piccarreta

Collections of the Zoological Museum. Photo: Museums of Strasbourg, Mathieu Bertola

p.6: Collections of the Zoological Museum. Photo: Museums of Strasbourg, Mathieu Bertola

Restoration workshop, Strasbourg Museums. Photo: Museums of Strasbourg, Mathieu Bertola

Restitution of the participatory initiative, 2025. Photo: Laetitia Piccarreta

p. 7: View of the permanent exhibition *À la découverte du monde animal* (Discovering the Animal World) © Oneblock.city for Ducks Scéno / Freaks

p. 8 and 9: View of the semi-permanent exhibition *À la découverte des écosystèmes du Rhin supérieur* (Discovering the ecosystems of the Upper Rhine) © Oneblock.city for Ducks Scéno / Freaks

View of the semi-permanent exhibition *La Baie de Sagami comme laboratoire à ciel ouvert* (Sagami Bay, an open-air laboratory) © Oneblock.city for Ducks Scéno / Freaks

p. 10: View of the semi-permanent exhibition *De la nature au laboratoire* (From Nature to the Lab) © Oneblock.city for Ducks Scéno / Freaks

p. 11: installation of the whale skeleton, Zoological Museum. Photo: Mathieu Bertola

p. 13: The Zoological Museum at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Museums of Strasbourg

View of the museum hall at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Photo: Museums of Strasbourg

p. 16: Eurasian lynx, Jura. Photo: Vincent Munier

Arctic wolf, Ellesmere Island (Nunavut, Canada). Photo: Vincent Munier

Rembrandt Bugatti, *My Antelopes*, 1909, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Strasbourg. Photo: Museums of Strasbourg, Nicolas Fussler

p. 17: Paleontology "Ichthyosaur fossil, paleontology collections, Jardin des sciences / EOST". Photo: Jds Unistra

Alsascience: "Workshop on mineralogy collections, Jardin des sciences/ EOST". Photo: Jds Unistra



FINANCED  
AS PART OF  
OPÉRATION CAMPUS



WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE PARTNERS OF THE TRIENNIAL CONTRACT, STRASBOURG EUROPEAN CAPITAL



MEDIA PARTNERSHIP

