

Support for the Tourist Industry Now Becomes Digital Museum

The pandemic has brought about a quiet period for most museums. At the Nordic Bible Museum, however, the time has been used well - and today the museum is opening its brand new digital museum, supported by Innovation Norway (Innovasjon Norge).

- Funds were announced for the tourism industry to apply for during lockdown, to support businesses to adjust. At that time, we considered it the perfect timing to realize our plans that we had been contemplating for a while - to offer parts of our Bible collection digitally, says executive director at the Nordic Bible Museum, Rune Arnhoff.

He is very pleased with the digitalization and looks forward to showcasing it to both new and old visitors.

- The result has turned out so well that it is an experience in itself, but of course, it is also a taste of the real world museum, Arnhoff explains.

The Nordic Bible Museum in Oslo, which is the only one of its kind in the Nordic region with a collection of over 5,000 Bibles, has used the COVID-19 pandemic period to digitize parts of its collection. As a result, visitors from all over the world can now take a virtual tour on their own screens. Through webinars and various events organized by the museum, it has been shown that the vast collection is also of great interest to many culture and history enthusiasts beyond the country's borders.

The physical museum is fortunately open again, but it is still the case that many cannot travel, or must travel less. Considering this, a digital 360-degree tour is a great way to present both the collection and how our museum in Oslo is portrayed, says the museum's director.

Support from Innovation Norway

The pandemic has brought museums to a standstill. However, the new reality has also provided extra incentives to explore new opportunities in dissemination. Innovation Norway announced restructuring funds aimed at the tourism industry without government support, and the Nordic Bible Museum was awarded support along with the Nobel Peace Center. It is these funds that have now made it possible for the Bible Museum in Kvadraturen in Oslo to offer a 360-degree digital museum.

The subsidy aims to promote restructuring and the use of digital solutions to strengthen businesses, as well as Norway's competitiveness as a travel destination in the long term. This includes creating good experiences. Therefore, it is pleasing to see that important experience providers such as museums have used their time effectively to develop new digital offerings to

reach both new and old target groups, says Audun Pettersen, Head of Tourism Development at Innovation Norway.

The digitization of the Nordic Bible Museum is also a form of internationalization. The museum is not only the only one of its kind in the Nordic countries, but also the largest in Europe, with the potential to attract more visitors to Oslo as a tourist destination. The aim of digitizing the museum is therefore both to follow up on the great response seen outside the country when webinars have been arranged, and also to contribute to attracting old and potentially new visitors from all corners of the world to the museum and Oslo.

- We have partnered with a digitization provider who has both experience and a generally good understanding of museum communication. They have been a good sparring partner and provided good advice along the way, including on the presentation of the objects. Soon, there will also be a phase 2 of digitization with new, exciting content, concludes Rune Arnhoff.