

Cities, Museums and Soft Power



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"Soft power" emerged as a concept in the late twentieth century to describe international relations based not on military or economic strength, but on influence. While the resources of "hard power" are tangible—force and finance—soft power resources include ideas, knowledge, values, and culture, as well as the ability to persuade. This volume discusses soft power from the vantage point of museums and demonstrates how they are quietly changing the world.

With contributions by thirteen experts from ten countries, Cities, Museums and Soft Power reveals the world's 80,000 museums to be sleeping giants. Two major characteristics of soft power—the rise of cities and the role of civil society—are pushing museums from the margins toward the center as these institutions serve as education hubs, employers, magnets for creative industries, and engines of economic development. Meanwhile, the growth of technological networks and connectivity has enabled this soft power to spread even farther and deeper across the Internet and groups of people. Whether cozy and local or internationally renowned, museums possess a cultural strength that extends far beyond their walls.



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