



Press release

Reception of the general public

July 6, 2016

The Pyramid Project (2014–2016)

Improving Visitor Reception



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The Musée du Louvre is wrapping up its “Pyramid Project,” major renovations of its reception areas started in June 2014 to improve the visitor experience.

Inaugurated in 1989, I.M. Pei’s Pyramid was originally designed to receive 4.5 million visitors. Twenty five years later, annual museum attendance has nearly reached the 10-million mark. Insufficient capacity resulted in considerable inconvenience, such as long lines and noise pollution, and made it difficult for visitors to find their bearings.

As part of a wider effort to promote the Louvre’s collections, the Pyramid Project is the first phase of a large-scale project aiming to put the visitor back at the center of the museum and its permanent collections.

The entrances and reception areas under the Pyramid have been reorganized, moving logistical functions such as ticket sales, cloakrooms, and restrooms to the Pyramid’s outermost perimeter in order to enhance the visitor experience. With this project, conceived by museum staff and the architectural firm Search, the iconic Hall Napoléon is reverting back to its original function as a visit planning area, regaining its grandeur and serenity without losing its architectural integrity.

Total investment amounts to 53.5 million euros, financed without subsidies. The Louvre has used contributions related to its participation in the Louvre Abu Dhabi project (interests from endowment fund, loan counterparty). The reception areas under the Pyramid have been redesigned with the support of Kinoshita Group, DS Automobiles, and Natixis, and also with the support of Toto.

The Pyramid Project aimed at improving the spatial organization and the management of visitor flows both inside and outside the Pyramid. The museum has remained open to the public for the duration of its renovations.

Access control at the Pyramid entrance has been doubled in order to increase visitor flows and decrease waiting time outside. Access control at the Richelieu and Carrousel entrances has also been reconfigured to improve visitor flows.

Information for the public—formerly provided at an undersized and somewhat concealed circular information desk—is now available at two covered information desks built into large, easily identifiable soundproof pillars. The installation of sound-absorbing partitions has reduced heat and noise pollution from the lobby, significantly improving visitor reception and working conditions for employees in the lobby.

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KINOSHITA GROUP



DS AUTOMOBILES

NATIXIS

The project also benefited from the support of TOTO.

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Doubled access control at the belvedere (rendering)
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Passage Richelieu (rendering) © Agence Search



Information desks set in the two trihedrons (rendering)
© Agence Search



Ticket office in the sheltered space of the former bookstore (rendering) © Agence Search



Hall Napoléon without its information desk (rendering) © Agence Search

Signage has also been redesigned to make information clearer and more accessible. A video display in the middle of the lobby enables visitors to find their bearings within the Louvre. Banners at the entrances of all three wings clearly identify areas to explore and masterpieces from the permanent collections.

Ticketing, formerly divided between ticket windows and self-service machines on the outermost perimeter of the Hall Napoléon, has now a single dedicated area on the ground floor of the former bookstore. The area's ceiling has been lowered in order to absorb noise, and the ticket office is now clearly signposted under the Pyramid. Visitors may also purchase tickets for the museum's ongoing cultural events, in particular for those taking place in the Auditorium, as well as acquire memberships, and rent audio guides.

Cloakrooms and luggage rooms, grouped together in a single area, offer self-service lockers designed to store clothes, umbrellas, and small luggage, giving visitors more autonomy.

The reception area for groups and individual activities will be significantly enlarged and equipped with a sufficient number of cloakrooms and restrooms by 2017.

Retail spaces ("Réunion des Musées Nationaux" bookstore/gift shop, postcard shop, children's bookstore), formerly scattered in different locations, have been grouped on either side of the Allée du Grand Louvre.

Visitors may download the **new mobile App**, "My Visit to the Louvre," for free. Inside the museum, a geolocation system helps visitors find their way around and locate all the spots indicated on the map: artworks, collections, and services. Tickets to the museum are also available for online purchase via the App

Schedule:

Late 2014: Beginning of renovations

1st half 2015: Opening of new locker area. Pop-up bookstore set up in Cour Napoléon (early January).

2nd half 2015: Finalization of access control for Richelieu entrance. Delivery of 11 toilets.

1st half 2016: Reorganization of access control for Pyramid entrance. Delivery of 24 toilets. Opening of new bookstore in Allée du Grand Louvre.

July 5, 2016: Inauguration by President François Hollande

2nd half 2016–2017: Refurbishment and enlargement of group reception area to create a visitor reception area spread across two floors.

Surface area affected by project: approximately 7,000 m²