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initiative



Kazakh women's history museums educate and empower women, providing an awareness-raising platform and tools for overcoming discrimination, said Women of Kazakhstan founder Dinara Assanova in an interview with *The Astana Times*.

"There are about 300 women's museums in the world – all of them are united by the desire to build a collective image of women's culture and history, which was never specifically collected, preserved or studied," she noted, adding Women of Kazakhstan joined the International Association of Women's Museums in 2018.

Museums allow visitors to place their identity within historical and cultural contexts, but have not always been socially and economically inclusive spaces. In integrating technology into the exhibitions, the organisation hopes to bring the museum to the people, rather than vice versa.

"There are no [other] virtual museums in Kazakhstan," she said. "When most of the archival material is online, it is easily accessible. One can always find material there to work on an article, post, abstract or research, so [physical] visits to archives and museums can be significantly reduced."

A paper on the initiative: [*Women's Museums in Kazakhstan: Prospects in the New Digital Age*](#) has been published in *Museum International*. The authors are Dina Assanova and Baurzhan Zhanguttin.

This paper provides an overview of the Women of Kazakhstan virtual museum project as a case study and explores its principal vectors, missions and strategic lines. It critically analyses the themes and evolution of existing women’s museums in Kazakhstan. The key digital methods revealed in the article may be applied to existing women's museums and future museum initiatives in Kazakhstan and Central Asia.


Dinara Assanova is Founder of the Women of Kazakhstan non-governmental organisation and virtual museum project. She has authored seven articles and holds a Master of Arts in History from Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Kazakhstan.

Baurzhan Zhanguitin is Professor and Head of the History of Kazakhstan Department in Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University. He holds a Doctorate in Historical Sciences, is author of two monographs, co-author of five monographs, four textbooks and more than 70 articles.

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