

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (HMSG) Revitalize Building and Plaza - FAQ

HMSG is a contributing resource to the National Mall Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and this project is subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

What is Section 106?

Section 106 is the portion of the National Historic Preservation Act that requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their projects on historic properties and to provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. Section 106 requires Federal agencies to consider the effects on the undertaking on historic properties in consultation with historic preservation stakeholders and the public.

The Smithsonian Institution will conduct a series of public Section 106 consultation meetings as the design of the project progresses.

What is the history of the museum?

HMSG opened to the public in 1974 as the national museum of modern and contemporary art to house the collection of Joseph H. Hirshhorn. Designed by the architect Gordon Bunshaft, or Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the HMSG is unique among the Smithsonian Institution's buildings for its campus configuration and seamless integration of art and architecture. Now in its fifth decade, the Hirshhorn is a leading voice for contemporary art and culture and provides a national platform for the art and artists of our time.

The Hirshhorn Museum building is round and elevated on four piers, set within an enclosed Plaza that is used as an outdoor gallery space. To the north of the Museum and Plaza is the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden. The building and walls are built of exposed granite aggregate concrete.

How will this impact HMSG?

The Hirshhorn Museum and its Plaza will close to the public during construction, expected to begin in 2028. This project is timed to begin after the completion of construction of the Sculpture Garden Revitalization to maintain the Hirshhorn's presence on the National Mall.

How do I participate?

Any interested member of the public is welcome to participate in the Section 106 consultation meetings or other public meetings. Please submit comments or questions to preservation@si.edu.