

Abstract Submission for

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**New Developments in the Digital Museum World**

*Digitizing Culture: Legal and Ethical Dimensions in Indian and International Museums*

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**Abstract**

India's museums vividly represent its rich heritage, preserving extensive artefacts and material remains that reflect a complex history of trade and cultural exchange. With rapid climate changes and global challenges, preserving these invaluable items is crucial. Digitisation and virtual exhibitions have emerged as vital tools, offering both preservation and expanded global access, while platforms like Google Arts and Culture enhance global awareness and education through digitised collections.

Yet the shift to digital formats presents challenges, particularly regarding ownership, intellectual property, and legal issues. This study examines the integration of digital and digitized artworks in Indian museums, specifically the National Museum in Delhi and the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) in Mumbai, comparing these practices with international institutions like the British Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Van Gogh Museum, etc. It explores the legal aspects of art digitisation, focusing on intellectual property rights, copyright, and ownership of digital reproductions, as well as the ethical and legal implications of virtual museums, including data privacy and access equity. The study reveals how Indian museums are adapting to digital transitions compared to their international peers, highlighting the need for international collaboration and underscoring the potential of digital platforms to democratise access to cultural heritage, offering a roadmap for enhancing the digital presence and outreach of Indian museums.