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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Pondicherry Textile Park**

**France Muséums is happy to share the success of its April 2022 mission to Pondicherry, India. An expert team led by France Museums CEO Hervé Barbaret and Coumar Ananda Pondicherry Textile Park Sponsor, kick-started a new type of hybrid cultural destination in India.**

France Muséums is committed to engage in the creation of the next generation museums in India: sustainable, ecosystem led, community-oriented, living and hybrid. The Pondicherry Textile Park project aims at repurposing an old textile mill, by preserving its architectural heritage and its urban forest, by activating the past textile traditions of India and creating the future of sustainable textile in the region.

The Textile Park is focused on the needs and realities of the local community. The project will help to revitalize one of India's traditional crafts as well as connecting with the global fashion industry, which requires in-depth transformation in order to embrace greener and more sustainable models. This reimagined museum concept in Pondicherry will be a landmark destination for cultural tourism, education, creation and co-innovation between large textile companies, start-ups, artisans and designers. France Museums is proud to be part of the advisory team involved in this exciting initiative that will further strengthen the cultural cooperation between France and India.

This large-scale project embodies an idea that France Muséums has been exploring for many years: Museums as living hybrid cultural destinations, showcasing less engaging more with the audience.

In line with France Muséums vision, the Pondicherry Textile Park aims to be a "hybrid" destination bringing together culture, sustainability, business and local communities. It will host multiple activities around the core museum project, including a design school, a business incubator, live craft workshops, innovation labs, textile decarbonization units, boutique hotels, food courts and shops.

The initiative began when Coumar Ananda and the Indian Embassy in France approached France Muséums to carry out a consultancy on shaping a Museum and a Lab for textiles.



The project was first promoted by Coumar Ananda and Hervé Barbaret, CEO of France Muséums, at the International Museum Construction Congress (IMCC) in Abu Dhabi in March 2022. This initial presentation was followed by an exploratory trip to India to meet with local authorities, the French Embassy in Delhi and the French Consulate in Pondicherry.

During the trip, project sponsor Coumar Ananda, France Muséums CEO Hervé Barbaret and France Muséums Project Development Manager Julie d'Enfert presented the project to N. Rangasamy, Chief Minister of the Government of Pondicherry, K. Lakshminarayanan, Minister for Public Works, Ashwani Kumar, I.A.S, Chief Secretary, and Dr. T. Arun I.A.S, Deputy Chief Secretary, as well as to Ashok Panda, Co-convenor of The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and Lise Talbot Barré, Consule Generale of France in Pondicherry and Chennai. We are thankful to the French Consule Generale in Pondichery who strongly supports the initiative and facilitated this first mission.

As an international museum consultancy, France Muséums designs and carries out world-class museum and heritage projects, and the Pondicherry Textile Park project embodies the ideas and values we cherish the most. Repurposing old mills, preserving their heritage and creating a space for public events, dialogue, culture, research, debate and education will create a sustainable ecosystem and a unique visitor experience for local and international audiences.

**Coumar Ananda, Pondicherry Textile Park Sponsor:** "We are glad to partner with France Muséums, an international museum consultancy that brought to life Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum. Their expertise both in traditional museum concepts and innovative cultural programming will help design a genuine cultural experience in India. Through this project we are aiming at responding to larger challenges in Pondicherry: creating new cultural avenues that are eco-friendly, creating more job opportunities and preserving the biodiversity and the industrial archeology"

This project will serve as a blueprint for the cultural destinations of tomorrow. The Textile Park initiative demonstrates that we can think outside the box for creating a broader experience and larger impact for the society. France Muséums is convinced that the Textile Park project will make a real difference and bring long-term benefits to the economy, tourism, culture and education for Pondicherry and its region.

**Hervé Barbaret, CEO of France Muséums:** "Museums and heritage sites are facing complex challenges. The concept of a "hybrid cultural destination" designed by France Muséums allows us to showcase premium scientific content with a cultural dimension and to offer an impactful visitor experience. As well as being a venue open to the public, the Textile Park is also a place of life for its community, a hub where ideas constantly circulate, a place for research, education and experimentation, a place to run sustainable businesses thanks to incubators, and a place where craft studios provide a home for creative activities and knowledge-sharing initiatives. This ecosystem comprising local artisans, designers, entrepreneurs, students and scientists will be open to all. France Muséums believes in the



cultural and tourist potential of Pondicherry and is eager to provide the necessary expertise for the Textile Park project."

## **ABOUT FRANCE MUSÉUMS**

As an international museum consultancy, France Muséums designs and carries out world class museum and heritage projects by drawing on its unique expertise and networks.

Our story began in 2007 with a groundbreaking collective venture: the creation of the first universal museum of the 21st century in the Arab world, the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Whether creating new cultural venues or transforming existing museums, our bespoke methodology and robust network of renowned French museums and international partners allow us to provide museums and heritage sites with state-of-the-art solutions.

Thanks to our multi-disciplinary team of 40 employees, each of our projects offers unique storytelling and a memorable visitor experience based on high-quality content and design at every stage. Our fully integrated approach allows us to develop highly successful cultural projects in an effective, process-driven and streamlined way.

From the concept development stage to the programming, design and production phases, we strive to offer high-quality 360° services based on our vision of art, storytelling, the visitor experience and sustainability.

Find out more on: [francemuseums.fr/en](https://francemuseums.fr/en)

## **CONTACTS**

### **Zélie Roche - INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS & CSR MANAGER**

zelie.roche@francemuseums.fr

M (UAE) +971 55 991 0235

### **Mélanie Viguier - COMMUNICATION AND EDITORIAL OFFICER**

Melanie.viguier@francemuseums.fr

M (FR) +33 6 11 26 57 97