

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Why is the Jewish Museum of Switzerland moving?

In 2017, the Jewish Museum of Switzerland temporarily rented a space at Petersgraben 31 for select special exhibitions. Public interest in the exhibitions was high, and the topics were well-received and much-discussed, locally and internationally («The Diary. How Otto Frank Brought Anne's voice from Basel to the World,» 2018-2019, and «Passports, Profiteers, Police. A Swiss War Secret,» 2019-2020). The Jewish Museum of Switzerland would like to continue showing temporary events and initiating public discussions. The spacious rooms at Vesalgasse 5 are ideal, as they can encompass both temporary and permanent exhibitions as well as space for workshops and events, the archive and the library, storage and offices.

2. Where is the Jewish Museum of Switzerland moving to?

The new location of the Jewish Museum of Switzerland will be at the Vesalgasse 5 in the heart of Basel, not far from the Kollegiengebäude of the University of Basel and in the vicinity of the Spalenter. The site was home to the first Jewish cemetery on the territory of present-day Switzerland in the Middle Ages. Jewish gravestones from the 13th and 14th centuries were found in 1937, when the Kollegienhaus was first constructed. Today they are on display in the museum courtyard at Kornhausgasse 8.

3. Is it possible to visit the new house?

Visitors can catch a glimpse of the future home of the Jewish Museum on select dates and visit the pop-up installation «Literally Jewish. A Lexicological History» on the ground floor of Vesalgasse 5. The installation shows excerpts of definitions of the word «Jewish,» «Jew» or «Juif» from encyclopaedias of the past four hundred years.

4. Will the Jewish Museum of Switzerland remain open?

The permanent exhibition will remain open to visitors at Kornhausgasse 8, and the program of events, including the European Day of Jewish Culture (organized by the Jewish Museum of Switzerland), will continue to take place.

5. How much will the renovation and relocation of the Jewish Museum of Switzerland cost?

Ten million francs have been budgeted for renovation and relocation, exhibition and event programming until 2034. A further ten million francs are to be raised after the museum re-opens to serve as capital for generating income to cover the museum's operating costs. The museum seeks the support of Swiss Jews and non-Jews as well as institutions and foundations from Switzerland and abroad. In addition to the annual contribution of the Canton of Basel-Stadt, the museum is supported by foundations and private individuals.

6. Where will the Jewish Museum's collection be preserved?

The new house at Vesalgasse 5 will offer sufficient space and professional storage conditions for its collection of important artifacts of Swiss-Jewish history.

7. *Who is already a supporter of the Jewish Museum of Switzerland?*

A team of experts along with notable patrons from politics, business and culture support the Jewish Museum's relocation plans.

8. *Who renovating the building?*

Diener & Diener Architects have been planning the renovation of the house since 2022. The scenography for the exhibition is in the hands of Samuel Strässle and Tanya Eberle of Studio Streberle in collaboration with the team of the Jewish Museum of Switzerland.

9. *Who are the owners of the house?*

The house owners Anna-Tina Weber-Tramèr and Ursina Baumgartner-Tramèr are looking forward to the Jewish Museum of Switzerland moving in: «As owners, we were interested in the house being used for cultural purposes. In this sense, the Jewish Museum of Switzerland is a fitting tenant, and we are happy to know that important exhibitions and interesting events will take place at Vesalgasse 5.»