Qatar National Museum was opened on 23 June, 1975. Originally, its facilities included a 100 seat - Qatar’s auditorium and a library. The library’s collection of books was donated by local people and visiting VIPs. The museum enclosed the palace previously occupied by Qatar’s former emir, Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani. A lagoon was also created to provide a venue for showcasing traditional dhows and pearling equipment.

In 1980, the Museum was awarded the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. The royal palace which the museum was built around was refurbished in 2015 in preparation for the opening of the new museum.

The new library which will open in April 2019 will contain a library of over 30,000 books with four collections: Rare Books; Special Qatari Heritage Collection, Antique Gastronomy Collection and Object Handling plus the reading room.