

Pillar 3: Interpretation - Needs Assessment

To what extent does the museum have its major interpretive themes identified, and is delivering exhibits and programs that foster opportunities for critical thinking, dialogue, and social action?

Email:

Name of museum:

1. Does the museum have inclusive interpretive offerings?

As part of your analysis, some questions to consider are...

- *Are multiple voices and perspectives presented?*
- *Does interpretation represent suppressed histories? Is interpretation re-examined to identify if stories have been missed or misrepresented? Is the museum working with equity-deserving groups?*
- *Does interpretation address current and historical issues that are important to the community?*
- *Are there community-produced interpretive offerings, does the museum provide space for local groups to display/present materials, or does the museum support groups in their own interpretation work?*

Please note: *It is not necessary to answer each of the above prompts individually, rather to consider their relevance when formulating a response to the question above.*

- Yes, we have them, and they are meeting our needs as is.
- Yes, we have them, but they require work. ANSM could help us improve them by providing training on...
- No, we don't have them. ANSM could help us by providing training on...
- No, we don't have them, and don't need them because...

Comments:

2. Does the museum have accessible interpretive offerings?

As part of your analysis, some questions to consider are...

- *Physical accessibility:*
 - *Do physical barriers create trip hazards or accessibility pitfalls?*
 - *Are pathways at least 1.5 metres wide and easily navigated by those using mobility devices, visitors with strollers, and those with vision impairments?*
 - *Is seating provided throughout the public part of the museum?*
- *Exhibit text and labels:*
 - *Is text well-maintained and of uniform design?*
 - *Is text easily readable from a seated position?*
 - *Does text include minimal use of script, italic, and serif fonts?*
 - *Is text layered (title, subtitles, text and labels), using appropriate language and reading levels, and an appropriate length?*
- *Available alternative opportunities:*
 - *Are there opportunities for low-light or low-sensory experiences?*
 - *Are there replicas or objects available for touch?*
 - *Are there off-site interpretive offerings?*
- *Is interpretation available in more than one language, especially languages reflective of the stories told?*
- *Does the museum use accessibility software or apps?*

Please note: *It is not necessary to answer each of the above prompts individually, rather to consider their relevance when formulating a response to the question above.*

- Yes, we have them, and they are meeting our needs as is.
- Yes, we have them, but they require work. ANSM could help us improve them by providing training on...
- No, we don't have them. ANSM could help us by providing training on...
- No, we don't have them, and don't need them because...

Comments:

3. Does the museum have interactive interpretive offerings?

As part of your analysis, some questions to consider are...

- *Are opportunities to act included, or is action encouraged?*
- *Is a range of programming offered to address needs of selected audiences?*
- *Are school programs curriculum-based? Do they provide access to museum collections, include online resources, workshops, or presentations off-site and/or at schools, and provide professional development for teachers?*
- *Are programs developed with community input, especially in relation to equity-deserving groups?*
- *Does interpretation help meet audience mental health needs, such as creating feelings of engagement, shared experiences (e.g., family time, social, etc.), and/or time for reflection?*
- *Do programs provide skills that visitors can use (e.g., teaching sustainable living via historic skills, questioning racism today based on historic standards, etc.)?*

Please note: *It is not necessary to answer each of the above prompts individually, rather to consider their relevance when formulating a response to the question above.*

- Yes, we have them, and they are meeting our needs as is.
- Yes, we have them, but they require work. ANSM could help us improve them by providing training on...
- No, we don't have them. ANSM could help us by providing training on...
- No, we don't have them, and don't need them because...

Comments:

4. Consider methods used to evaluate interpretation.

As part of your analysis, some questions to consider are...

- *Does the museum use informal evaluation methods (e.g., visitor feedback, museum worker observations, guestbook comments, online comments, etc.)?*
- *Does the museum conduct formal evaluations (e.g., debriefs, focus/pilot groups, surveys, content expert review, tracking online engagement, etc.)?*
- *Do community partners and co-creators provide feedback, whether informally or formally?*

Please note: *It is not necessary to answer each of the above prompts individually, rather to consider their relevance when formulating a response to the question above.*

- Yes, we use them, and they are meeting our needs as is.
- Yes, we use them, but they require work. ANSM could help us improve them by providing training on...
- No, we don't use them. ANSM could help us by providing training on...
- No, we don't use them, and don't need to because...

Comments:

5. Consider how interpretation is addressing community needs.

As part of your analysis, some questions to consider are...

- *Are there hands-on activities, family/group activities, multisensory elements (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste), and places for visitors to share their perspectives?*
- *Are soundscapes, narration, and other audiovisual tools used? Can people self-select whether to engage with these?*
- *Have technological elements been tested and proven to work with assistive technologies?*
- *Can changes easily be made to reflect current or new scholarship?*
- *Are museum workers who are offering these programs receiving training on working with visitors?*

Please note: *It is not necessary to answer each of the above prompts individually, rather to consider their relevance when formulating a response to the question above.*

- Our interpretation is addressing community needs as is.
- Our interpretation is addressing community needs, but requires work. ANSM could help us improve by providing training on...
- Our interpretation is not addressing community needs. ANSM could help us by providing training on...
- Our interpretation is not addressing community needs, and doesn't need to because...

Comments:

6. Does the museum consider the environmental impact of interpretive offerings?

As part of your analysis, some questions to consider are...

- *Are offerings developed in a sustainable manner so that elements can be reused?*
- *Are programs developed so that they do not produce additional waste?*
- *Do programs encourage participants to reflect and engage in climate action initiatives?*

Please note: *It is not necessary to answer each of the above prompts individually, rather to consider their relevance when formulating a response to the question above.*

- Yes, we consider the environmental impact of interpretive offerings, and our methods are meeting our needs as is.
- Yes, we consider the environmental impact of interpretive offerings, but our methods require work. ANSM could help us improve by providing training on...
- No, we don't consider the environmental impact of interpretive offerings. ANSM could help us by providing training on...
- No, we don't consider the environmental impact of interpretive offerings, and don't need to because...

Comments:

7. What is the museum's top interpretation-related goal in the next four years? (i.e., inclusivity, accessibility, interactivity, evaluation, sustainability, etc.)