MUSEUMS & RACE

Strategies for Surfacing Truth and Fostering Reconciliation for Racial Equity

#TruthBeforeReconciliation   #MuseumsandRace

Presenters

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Guidelines for Participation

Be Here/Present:

- Practice Radical Candor
- Have Fun
- Listen Deeply
- Express Appreciation

This is a space to take risks—respectfully.

Embodiment:

Use your head, heart AND gut—make space to learn something new and challenge and unlearn existing paradigms.

MUSEUMS & RACE

Agenda

► What is Museums & Race? How did we get here?

► 2020-2022 In Review

► Strategies for Institutional Changemaking: Liberating Structures

► From Talk to Action & Accountability: The Museums & Race Report Card

► Implementing and Evaluating the Report Card

► Q & A with Session Facilitators

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A Paradigm on Addressing Responsibility

► Oppression

► Privilege

► Intersectionality

► Accountability

How and Why Museums & Race Exists

Museums practitioners gathered initially in 2015

A volunteer sustained effort led by a steering committee

Our work continues and grows due to constant interrogations of the field

Lack of museum response post-Ferguson seen as a systemic omission

Collaboratively create programming, tools, and resources for the field

We seek to dismantle white supremacy in the museum field

What do we want?

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► Not back to "normal"

► Not just statements

► Not just programs or exhibits

► Systemic change

► Governance, Funding, Representation, Responsiveness, Resources, Transparency
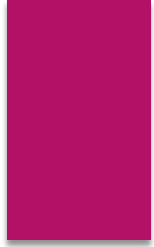
Let's Get Grounded

To get everyone in the right headspace, let's ground ourselves!

Find something to write with and on, and as slowly as you can, draw a spiral for 1 minute.

Ready… GO!

Do You think the Museum Field is **Making Progress** on Racial Equity?

Arrange yourself across the room according to your answer:

Absolutely! ←————————————→ **Nope!**

TRIZ Activity

> *Liberating Structures start with something so simple and essential as not to seem worth doing and end with something so powerful and profound that it hardly seems possible.*

This website offers an alternative way to approach and design how people work together. It provides a menu of thirty-three Liberating Structures to replace or complement conventional practices.

Liberating Structures used routinely make it possible to build the kind of organization that everybody wants. They are designed to include everyone in shaping next steps.

A liberating repertoire of 33 methods

For more information & LS exercises, visit: https://www.liberating structures.com

TRIZ Activity

What if. . .

you could make progress in your museum, organization, etc., by completely getting rid of the things that are holding you back?

ENTER: Creative destruction!

WHY? In order to innovate, or for new things to emerge and grow (and ultimately succeed), we have to be willing to destroy or get rid of things that hold us back

TRIZ: translated from Russian, "Theory of Inventive Problem Solving"

TRIZ Activity

CHOOSE YOUR PEOPLE:

SCRIBE: Records your group's responses

TIMEKEEPER: Keeps the group on task during the allotted time

FACILITATOR: Ensures the group participates, asks questions, keeps everyone on topic

Triz Activity

QUESTION 1:

What's the worst thing that could happen to the museum field, with regard to racial equity moving forward?

ACTIVITY:

Make a list of all you can do to achieve the worst result imaginable - yes, **THE WORST**!

First jot down your own thoughts (2 min). Then as a group, discuss and synthesize everything you all came up with (6 min).

After you've made your list, walk around the room and take a look at what others have shared (5 min).

TRIZ Activity

WORST-CASE SCENARIOS ACROSS THE BOARD:

Do nothing / violence (extremes)

Similar fears – museums will become tools of white supremacy for erasuse

Things already happening in museums

Not doing enough currently – museums can counteract white supremacy but not doing enough

Young people / People of Color abandoning museums / museum field altogether

Triz Activity

QUESTION 2:

Go down the list and ask:
Is there anything our museums are currently doing that resembles what's on the worst case scenario list?

(Answer in a way that's most salient for you with regards to your role or specific context)

ACTIVITY:

Share one thing your group found the most surprising (or troubling, relatable, etc.) among any of the responses (from your group or others).

Discuss first, and then record your group's responses (5 min). Then choose one person to share out (5 min).

Triz Activity

QUESTION 3:

What are steps needed to prevent the behaviors or actions you identified from happening or continuing to happen?

ACTIVITY:

Discuss amongst yourselves and then be prepared to share out.

Write down some responses on your own (2 min). Then discuss among your group and compare notes. Record 1-3 ideas or solutions your group feels excited about or supportive of (5 min).

Choose one person to share out (5 min).
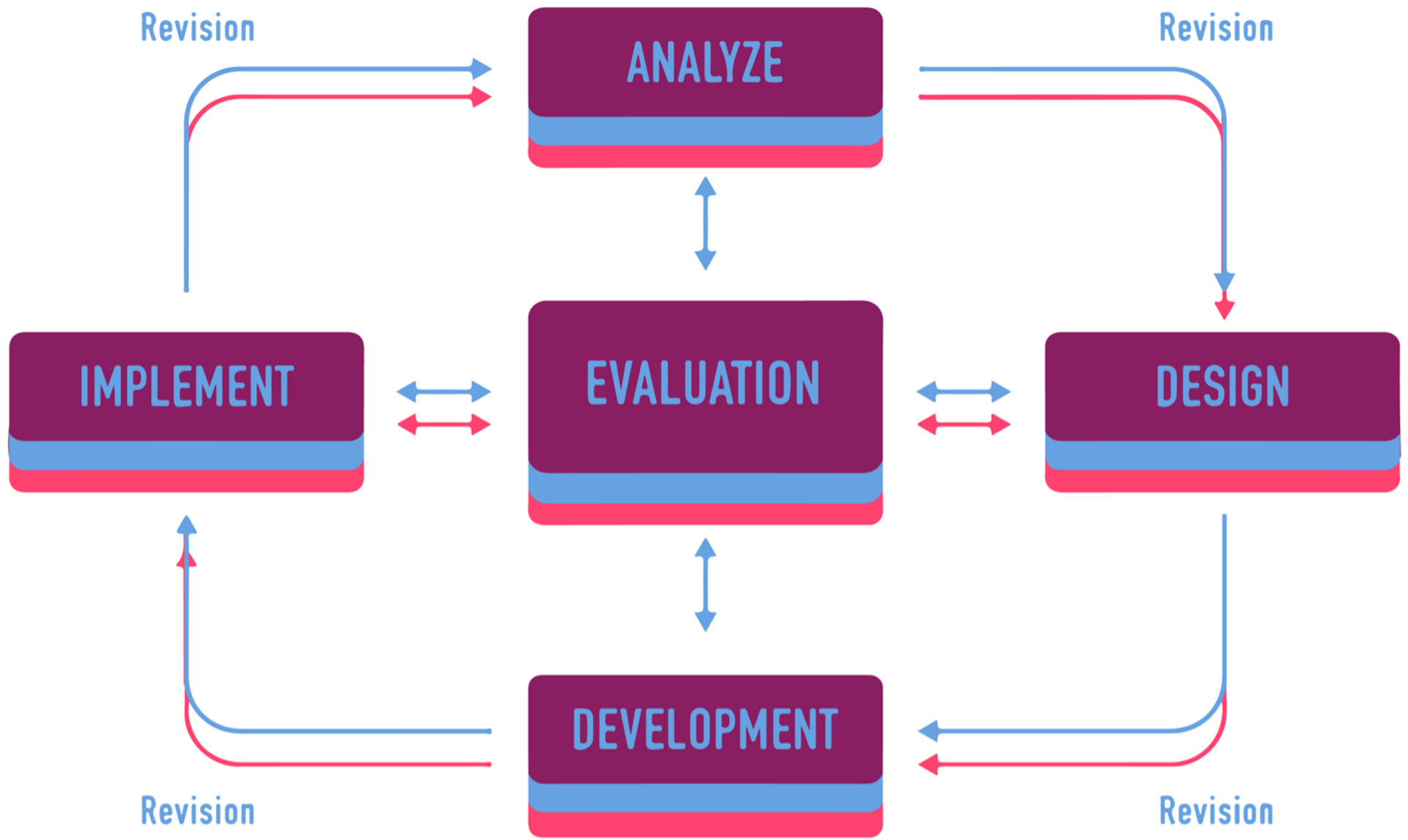
Museums & Race Report Card

SCAN ME!

Scan QR code to access a PDF of the Report Card

MUSEUMS & RACE

MUSEUM REPORT CARD

	PAST YEAR	NEW GOAL
GOVERNANCE What policy changes will directly impact the museum experience? How will the impact be felt by guests, staff, and board? What resources are needed to act?		
FUNDING Who is responsible for sustained funding obstacles? What systemic changes need to happen to sustain funding for the greater good?		
REPRESENTATION Are we creating space (literal and figurative) for people who are impacted by issues of race/ethnicity? Do we ask AND support bringing their' whole selves to work?		
RESPONSIVENESS How often do we engage in conversation or action around race, diversity, inclusion, or representation? Is it sustained or reactive?		
RESOURCES Who has access to decision-making and influence in board decisions? Do we engage those with the most experience solving issues?		
TRANSPARENCY How do we communicate issues directly related to race in the workplace? To whom do we talk to? What actions are we willing to take beyond just talk?		

What is the GOAL?

How do we hold ourselves accountable to collaborative work?

Initial Report Card Implementation

1. Conference Space & Convening
2. M&R Report Card v.1
3. M&R Report Card v.2
4. Virtual Conference
5. M&R Report Card v.3 + Rubric

More Conference Sessions

So how do you use it?

Report Card

MUSEUM REPORT CARD

MUSEUMS & RACE

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MATURITY MODEL

F   indifferent, unaware, organization embodies privilege

C-D   wants 'diverse' audiences but no substantial change to board/staff/exhibitions/programming

C-B   assesses biases; finds community partners; has inclusion policies

A   proactive to what's communicated; diverse work culture & leadership; understand self-care & burnout

Rubric

	F NO EFFORT/DENIAL	D - C EMERGING	C - B DEVELOPING	A TRANSFORMING
GOVERNANCE	• Board does not engage in DEAI efforts. • Board has members with problematic professional/financial affiliations. • Board members are selected based on financial giving capacity only. • The strategic plan does not include advancing DEAI as a primary focus.	• Board has identified and named "diversity issues" but has yet to allocate budget, resources, or training to support deepening knowledge. • Some short- and long-term DEAI-related goals have been identified but have not been formalized into the official strategic plan.	• Training and supports are put into place for staff AND Board development as an ongoing experience. Board is comfortable naming their gaps and seek staff input and area experts for additional clarity. • A DEAI strategic plan has been created that is separate from the organization's official strategic plan.	• Board members have a variety of ways to contribute to the organization. • Board recognizes DEAI as an essential strategy for the organization. • The strategic plan has been updated to include advancing DEAI, and formal policies have been developed and/or implemented.
FUNDING	• No funding has been allocated to support this work.	• DEAI activities are supported primarily by short-term grants and/or soft money.	• DEAI activities are helped partially with a permanent line in the administration budget.	• DEAI activities are supported primarily with operational funding and are a permanent line item in the administration budget.
REPRESENTATION	• Your organization does not reflect the demographics of your community and does not respond to your constituents' needs.	• Your organization acknowledges the importance of having staff and a board that reflects your community and aspires to support their needs but has not put much effort into making those changes.	• Your organization understands and has done the research to understand your community's diversity and is actively working towards becoming a reflection of that community.	• Staff, leadership, and boards reflect community demographics and include community members. • Spaces, programs, activities, etc., are diverse in makeup and inclusive in content.
RESPONSIVENESS	• Your organization does not develop and implement programming (including exhibits, public programs, events, etc.) that respond to your community's needs.	• Your organization occasionally develops and implements short-term programming that responds to the needs of your community, such as during Black History Month.	• Your organization has established relationships with the community and regularly develops and implements programming that responds to the needs of your community.	• Your organization prioritizes working with your community collaboratively on an ongoing basis to develop calendars and budgets reflective of the community's needs and regularly co-creates and implements relevant programming.
RESOURCES	• Your organization does not devote resources to support employees or the community at large.	• Your organization devotes resources in response to problematic incidents but does not offer consistent support.	• Your organization sporadically invests in providing resources to staff and the community that supports personal and professional development.	• Your organization offers consistent support for staff and community members to access resources needed for professional and personal growth and has a workflow in place to address rapid responses.
TRANSPARENCY	• Your organization sees no value in having transparency in decision-making and the related processes with staff and community partners.	• Your organization understands the value of transparency in decision making, has identified areas for growth, and has prioritized ways to be more transparent but is not consistent with the approach.	• Your organization understands the value of transparency and is implementing plans for increasing transparency with staff and community partners. The organization has created channels for feedback and is responsive to that feedback.	• Your organization has codified decision-making processes and channels for feedback from staff and community partners where appropriate. Staff and community members feel well informed about the organization's decisions that directly and indirectly impact them and the pathways leading to those decisions.
ACCOUNTABILITY	• There is no organizational-wide effort underway to account for DEAI activities or to measure success and impact.	• An action plan for assessment has been created, but no measurable objectives or metrics have been included.	• An action plan with metrics has been created, but implementation is sporadic, and assessments are not used to recalibrate and update DEAI efforts.	• An action plan with metrics has been created, and an ongoing systematic effort is in place to implement the assessment and to evaluate and recalibrate DEAI efforts.

Example: Where does your museum fall with regards to responsiveness?

► Responsiveness: Are conversations, actions, programs responding to the needs of the community sustained or reactive?

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Action Steps Framework

MUSEUMS & RACE MUSEUM REPORT CARD

ACTION STEPS AND FRAMEWORK

STEP 1
Use the M&R Report Card to assess where your organization stands today. We encourage you to have a few colleagues respond to it individually and then use the questions in the back, along with the M&R Report Card Rubric, to engage in a conversation to help determine a grade for your organization that is comprehensive of everyone's perspective.

STEP 2
Based on your organization's grade and using the M&R Report Card Rubric, establish three goals you would like to accomplish this year to move your organization to the next tier.

STEP 3
Look at those goals and establish a timeline and benchmarks to be met in three, six, and nine months.

STEP 4
Assess who you are, the allies and conspirators creating the change, and discuss if enough people are participating in the systemic transformation. Are there people left behind or reluctant to participate? If so, ask yourselves what barriers prevent participation and authentic involvement. Allies and conspirators may include external partners such as community members.

STEP 5
Regularly check your organization's progress against the established three, six, and nine-month benchmarks. After a year, assess how well you met your goals and assign the organization a new grade. Was there improvement? This work requires honest reflection, and we recognize that you and your peers might not have met every benchmark, but the critical part of this journey is to keep asking the tough questions, lean into the uncomfortableness, and value Truth.

Moving Forward

MUSEUMS & RACE MUSEUM REPORT CARD

STAY CONNECTED

We encourage you to keep asking questions in your institution and of your personal practice. This guide is intended as a starting place: our goal is to sustain systematic transformation.

AGENCY AND RECIPROCITY

In this space, we recognize that we are each empowered individual professionals capable of acting in ways that recognize and seek to dismantle harmful and racist practices at our institutions.

OPEN-ENDEDNESS

We are asking each of you to help create a new paradigm. And to that end, our process is deliberately open-ended, encouraging your continued exploration beyond our time together.

DO YOU HAVE SUSTAINED RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALLIES & PARTNERS?

What evidence is there that you engage the larger community in your decision-making?

Reviewing your social media & outreach: can you easily find examples of challenging the everyday discourse?

Help Us Continue to Evaluate

► What thoughts or suggestions do you have for us about the report card?

► What would you like to see?

► What should be changed?

SCAN ME

Scan QR code w/your phone if you'd like to give us feedback later.

Q&A

Ask us anything!

What are you curious about?

What's resonating?

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