International Audience Engagement (IAE) Network 2021

MUSEUM GUIDELINES

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT CHAMPIONS THE EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUDIENCES AND MUSEUMS TO SUSTAIN THEIR FUTURE.

ABOUT THE IAE NETWORK

The International Audience Engagement Network was established in 2018 as an initiative of an international steering group comprising audience engagement leaders based in museums worldwide. The Network was formed as a direct response to one of the biggest priorities facing museums and cultural institutions today – nurturing authentic, cohesive engagement with diverse audiences across many interactions with the museum in the twenty-first century.

Our purpose is to create a museum culture centered around audiences.

Our mission is to create a global network of museum leaders in audience engagement committed to advancing the public value of museums through supporting an authentic internal and external focus on the audience experience.

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT IN A CHANGING WORLD

Being relevant within our communities, building and sustaining strong brand and reputation, remaining economically viable and reflecting, or responding to, the world in which we live, are all priorities for museums.

Audience engagement is at the centre of these concerns, and possibilities. Successful, sustained and genuine audience engagement should be, and can be, a primary and measurable indicator of success for museums.

Museums exist to engage audiences. A museum's collections, exhibitions, programs, communications, staff, facilities and its very building are all created for audiences – for the community, for the public, for everyone. When a museum doesn't adequately or authentically serve its people, across all functions of the museum, meaningful engagement cannot occur. Disconnected audiences do not visit, donate, purchase, participate or reciprocate. That is, they do not recommend that others engage with us, nor do they speak positively of the museum, sometimes not speaking of it at all; the museum has no relevance or visibility in their world.

Rather than offering caution, this introduction functions to remind us of the fundamental and central role of people, both audiences and staff, to a museum's identity and role. People are at the heart of any museum's past, from the artists represented through to audiences, patrons, volunteers and staff, and people remain essential to the museum's future: its ongoing viability and success.

The information contained within this edition of the International Audience Engagement (IAE) Network guidelines seeks to help museum professionals to consider the 'end-to-end' audience experience and wellness as a core tenet of a person's engagement with a museum. This approach recognises that the audience experience does not begin at our front doors, but rather encompasses the opinions, perspectives, emotions, physical journeys, conversations, interactions, use of content and even types of experiences that our community members encounter before, during, after or even without a visit. Crucially, this approach also recognises not only that an individual's sense of wellbeing is an important part of their

museum experience, but that museums can actively contribute to the wellbeing of individuals and the community.

As we live in increasingly uncertain times, we seek to understand how museums are fundamental and essential contributors to the fabric and wellbeing of our communities. Whether we face crisis, unrest or uncertaintythere is both necessity and immense opportunity in turning to our audiences. Necessity in standing up and reaching out to offer moments of real connection and meaning creates change for the better, and being able to measure our impact means we can continue to ensure we are relevant.

The following IAE Network guidelines are a resource for museums interested in adopting a pro-audience, collaborative approach to internal planning that has the wellness of audiences and museum at the heart. These guidelines offer templates and tips for predicting and evaluating every potential point of engagement between audiences and a museum, and defining and measuring audience and museum wellness. They were developed by an extraordinary group of museum professionals, who gathered under the banner of the International Audience Engagement Network at National Gallery Singapore from 4 to 6 December 2019 with the guidance and support of Sonia Gupta, Managing Director - Growth & Innovation at Accenture, Singapore. We are deeply grateful to National Gallery Singapore for hosting such a dynamic meeting. Much in our world changed in 2020, adding to the urgency to also contextualise the work that museum-audience engagement contributes to the broader wellbeing of our society, which forms the introduction to the 2020 IAE Network guidelines.

Thank you,
The International Audience Engagement (IAE)
Network Steering Group

WELLNESS
AND THE
MUSEUM

WHAT IS WELLNESS?

The idea of considering wellness in our society in the broadest possible sense is perhaps more important today than ever before.

Wellness is based on the concept of expanding our collective understanding that success in life cannot be measured by one factor alone, such as in one's health, wealth or any other measurement, but rather a variety of factors that together constitute wellness.

In the 1970s, leading definitions of wellness emerged that identified up to seven different factors necessary for a balanced wellbeing. Today, wellness has become an increasingly researched field of practice across multiple industries and sectors that examines the fundamental dimensions that together contribute to an overall condition of 'good health'. Wellness in this context can apply to any entity, from the wellness of an individual, for example the physical and mental health and wellbeing of a student, employee or citizen, to that of an entire community, business or even a city or nation.

While the fundamental dimensions of wellness have for the most part remained consistent since wellness first emerged as an area of research and focus, most contemporaries working in this field cite a range of between six and eight individual wellness dimensions, which generally fall into the following categories:

There are variations, for example the David S. Rosenthal Center for Wellness and Health Promotion at Harvard University Health Services also includes financial and vocational wellness as dimensions, while the Australian Wellness Index (through Deakin University and Australian Unity) includes feeling safe and sense of achievement. As wellness becomes increasingly observed and studied for its core role in a healthy society, wellness frameworks will undoubtedly evolve and respond to an increasingly divisive and disruptive international landscape, which includes our education in and response to an ever-changing climate, racial, social and health events, as well as our understanding of the impact of societal issues such as loneliness. A critical factor of wellness remains, that it cannot exist or cannot be achieved without the sum of a range of factors.

SPIRITUAL

EMOTIONAL

MENTAL/INTELLECTUAL

SOCIAL/RELATIONAL

ENVIRONMENTAL

PHYSICAL

MUSEUMS AND WELLNESS HUBS: HOW CAN MUSEUMS CONTRIBUTE TO THE WELLBEING OF PEOPLE?

We might question: who is responsible for wellness in a society at an individual and collective level, and what role can museums play to provide valuable and meaningful contributions in the pursuit of wellness?

The IAE Network describes the role of audience engagement as to 'champion the emotional and social relationship between audiences and museums to sustain their future'.

We prioritise social and emotional relationships in the IAE definition of audience engagement because in defining the value that a dedicated focus on audience engagement provides a museum, and in turn the value that a museum brings to a community (and economy), the social and emotional benefits are both immediate and enduring.

Because many museums are public or civic institutions, there often exists an already mandated responsibility to the community. And as cultural institutions, this responsibility intrinsically aligns with the benefits that participation in the arts offers a community – such as learning, knowledge-building, creative thinking, drawing attention to complex or difficult concerns, sharing in community events or sentiments, and feelings of belonging and connection.

In terms of wellness, the civic responsibility and potential positive impact of museums on individuals means many museums are already in a position to facilitate the broadly accepted wellness dimensions – across social, emotional, spiritual and intellectual realms. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and preexisting, increasing concerns in the community around race and gender equality, climate, loneliness and mental health and wellbeing, means that museums also now have an active role to play in responding to and sustaining the various wellness needs of our communities. It is perhaps more important than ever that our physical and digital spaces are available for people in need.

When we expand the understanding of our potential positive impact on audiences, we must also expand our current understanding of how we seek to understand, recognise and engage with our audiences today. Our future depends on a new level of engagement with our audiences, where we recognise and accept the impact that our museums can have with our audiences and communities. To do this, we must recognise and consider the full dimensional range of our audiences to include their social, emotional, physical, intellectual, spiritual, environmental and physical wellbeing. With this, we can being to understand our audiences' relationships with museums completely and holistically.

INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT WELLNESS FRAMEWORK

Developed by the IAE Network, the International Audience Engagement Wellness Framework aligns with these six widely accepted dimensions of wellness. While these wellness dimensions are like tenets that work together to achieve general wellness for a person or collective entity, the dimensions of the International Audience Engagement Wellness Framework are designed to position the six world dimensions in a museum-specific context.

The framework may help guide museums to consider how their operations and services can influence wellness across multiple dimensions, but with special focus on the unique contribution that museums can make to this field.

The International Audience Engagement Wellness Framework is organised into two parts:

MUSEUM WELLNESS DIMENSIONS

Four considerations for internal planning and strategy in museums to support the wellness of museum audiences and staff.

AUDIENCE WELLNESS DIMENSIONS

The four key signs that your museum's audience is experiencing increased wellness across multiple dimensions as a result of your content, programming and overall experience. These are what we should consider as the essential needs of audiences as community members.

NB. 'Content' in this context means aspects of the museum such as exhibitions, displays, interpretive material and collection materials.

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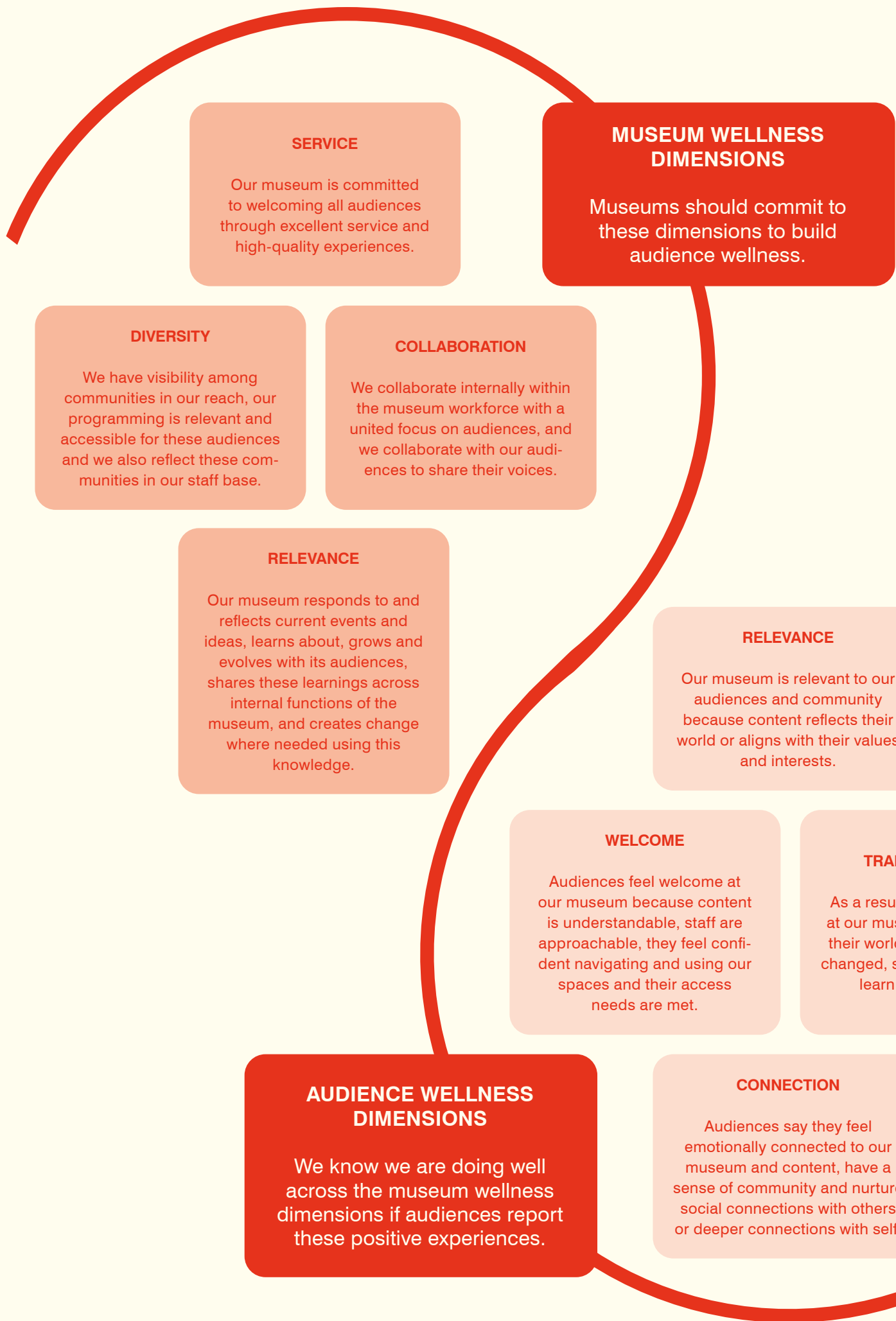
INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT WELLNESS FRAMEWORK

The four museum wellness dimensions are not arranged as a hierarchy, but work together to engender audience museum wellness. The four audience wellness dimensions each link to at least two of the six commonly accepted wellness dimensions.

SERVICE

Our museum is committed to welcoming all audiences through excellent service and high-quality experiences.

MUSEUM WELLNESS DIMENSIONS

Museums should commit to these dimensions to build audience wellness.

DIVERSITY

We have visibility among communities in our reach, our programming is relevant and accessible for these audiences and we also reflect these communities in our staff base.

COLLABORATION

We collaborate internally within the museum workforce with a united focus on audiences, and we collaborate with our audiences to share their voices.

RELEVANCE

Our museum responds to and reflects current events and ideas, learns about, grows and evolves with its audiences, shares these learnings across internal functions of the museum, and creates change where needed using this knowledge.

RELEVANCE

Our museum is relevant to our audiences and community because content reflects their world or aligns with their values and interests.

COMMUNITY WELLNESS

When museums facilitate experiences with positive, lasting impact for audiences, we contribute to the six accepted dimensions of wellness.

SOCIAL

Community, interactions, relationships, people

SPIRITUAL

Beliefs, meanings, purpose, values, ethics, peace, harmony

WELCOME

Audiences feel welcome at our museum because content is understandable, staff are approachable, they feel confident navigating and using our spaces and their access needs are met.

TRANSFORMATION

As a result of their experience at our museum, audiences say their world view is challenged, changed, stimulated or that they learn something new.

INTELLECTUAL

Learning, development, creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking

EMOTIONAL

Expression, empathy, connection

ENVIRONMENTAL

Welcoming and accessible spaces, building and exhibition design, navigation, wayfinding, accessibility

PHYSICAL

Public health and safety, hygiene, facilities and amenities

AUDIENCE WELLNESS DIMENSIONS

We know we are doing well across the museum wellness dimensions if audiences report these positive experiences.

CONNECTION

Audiences say they feel emotionally connected to our museum and content, have a sense of community and nurture social connections with others or deeper connections with self.

DEVELOPING MUSEUM WELLNESS

MUSEUM WELLNESS CHECKLIST

This checklist offers guiding questions for your journey toward developing museum wellness.

MUSEUM WELLNESS DIMENSIONS

DIVERSITY	COLLABORATION	SERVICE	RELEVANCE
We have visibility among communities in our reach, our programming is relevant and accessible for these audiences and we also reflect these communities in our staff base.	We collaborate internally within the museum workforce with a united focus on audiences, and we collaborate with our audiences to share their voices.	Our museum is committed to welcoming all audiences through excellent service and high-quality experiences.	Our museum responds to and reflects current events and ideas, learns about, grows and evolves with its audiences, shares these learnings across internal functions of the museum, and creates change where needed using this knowledge.

CHECKLIST FOR MUSEUMS

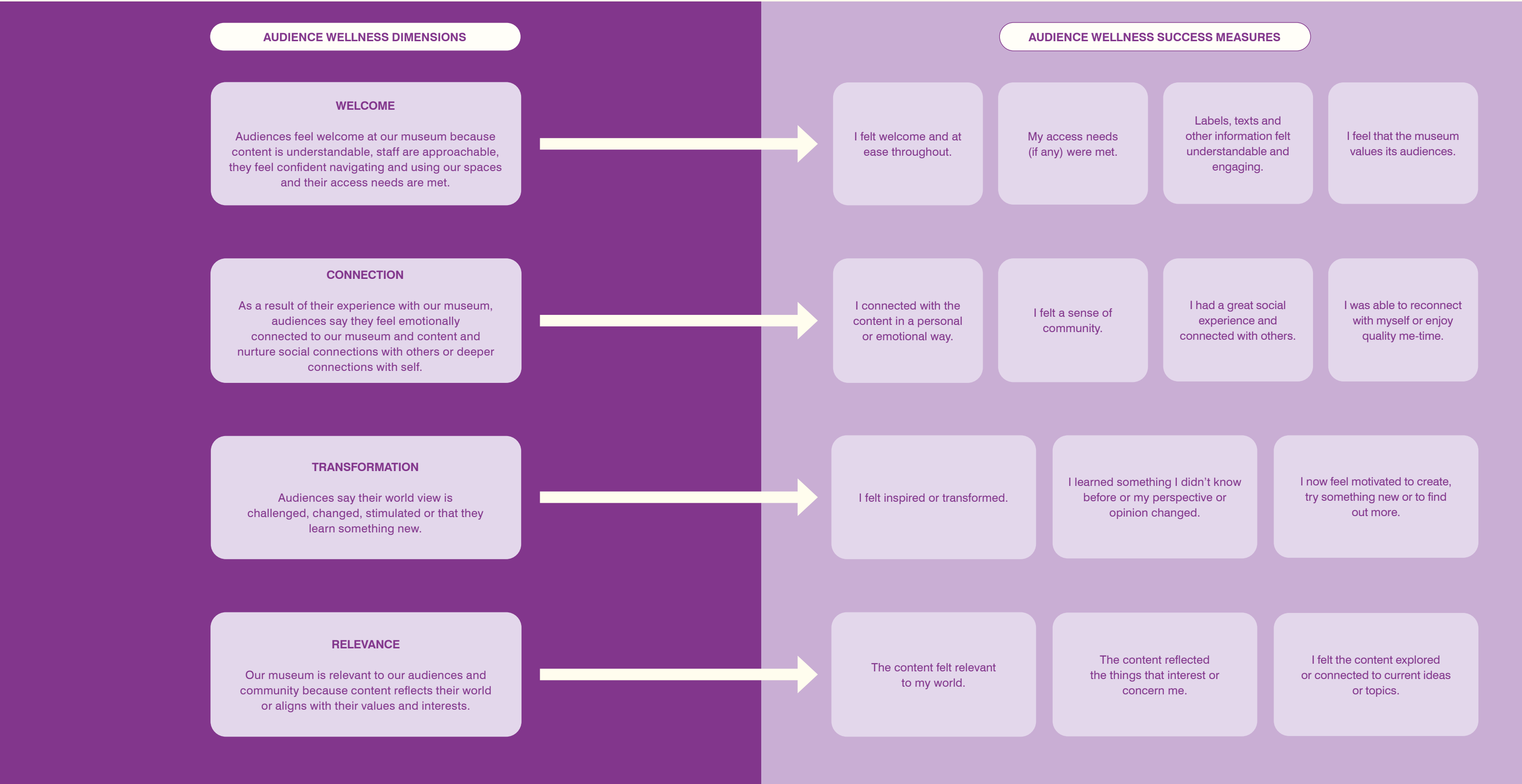| DIVERSITY	COLLABORATION	SERVICE	RELEVANCE
What can you do to increase diversity within your team/workforce and ensure your museum is flexible to shifting needs of its staff?	How can you initiate ways to encourage different teams in your museum to understand and value the contributions of different roles to a rewarding audience outcome?	Do your role statements for current and advertised positions state the audience as the priority in your museum?	What can you do to connect your collections and exhibitions with what is happening in the world right now?
Have you questioned why you want to engage a group, i.e. does your data show that a particular community group is under-represented in your audience and you'd like to increase their visitation?	Have you established cross-functional teams or working groups to collaboratively workshop new initiatives that improve the audience experience or develop richer ways for audiences to engage with your content?	How intuitive or easy-to-use is navigation and wayfinding in your museum?	Do you have visible, easy-to-use feedback channels in place that encourage audiences to have a say?
Are there new or significant portions of your community that you are not currently reaching?	Do you engage with communities and groups to develop or deliver projects, such as exhibitions, festivals, events or programs?	Does your museum rate good customer service as highly as other museum functions and outputs?	How can you harness audience feedback and data to create experiences that align with their interests, values or needs?
How can you identify barriers that a community face in accessing your museum or content? How can you actively address those barriers?	Do all teams in your museum know that the audience is as important as the collection?	What can you do to advocate for service as a critical factor in the success of your museum?	Have you considered how works in your collection might be perceived by audiences today with different cultural, racial or gender identities?
Are you presenting a diversity of perspectives in your content and seeking to address historic under-representation?	What can you do to bring different teams together to advocate for audiences and collaboratively identify opportunities to connect audiences with the collection?	Does your museum have standards of service that apply across all audience-facing teams so that everybody understands what constitutes excellent customer service and why it is important for the museum?	Do your labels and interpretive materials acknowledge the social and cultural circumstances in which works were made or depicted?
Research and standards of practice in the diversity and access space are constantly evolving, especially definitions and language. What methods can you use to stay up to date?	How might you enable your audiences to ask questions, contribute ideas or co-create experiences?	Do your museum staff ensure audiences feel welcome?	Does your museum make necessary changes to connect and welcome the relevant audience and organisations in your community?
		Are all of your museum spaces, such as entry, exit, thoroughfare and displays, inspiring and welcoming?	How can you integrate interactive elements into your museum, so that audiences have an opportunity to contribute to and actively participate in your museum?

MEASURING
AUDIENCE
WELLNESS

AUDIENCE WELLNESS: MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The IAE Network has developed the statements below to use as measures of audience wellness in your museum, against each of the audience wellness dimensions.

These statements can be incorporated into surveys or other evaluation methods. We recommend questions are offered with multiple choice or sliding scale responses.

See Appendix 1 for an example survey and ways to report on the data.

AUDIENCE WELLNESS DIMENSIONS

AUDIENCE WELLNESS SUCCESS MEASURES

WELCOME

Audiences feel welcome at our museum because content is understandable, staff are approachable, they feel confident navigating and using our spaces and their access needs are met.

- I felt welcome and at ease throughout.
- My access needs (if any) were met.
- Labels, texts and other information felt understandable and engaging.
- I feel that the museum values its audiences.

CONNECTION

As a result of their experience with our museum, audiences say they feel emotionally connected to our museum and content and nurture social connections with others or deeper connections with self.

- I connected with the content in a personal or emotional way.
- I felt a sense of community.
- I had a great social experience and connected with others.
- I was able to reconnect with myself or enjoy quality me-time.

TRANSFORMATION

Audiences say their world view is challenged, changed, stimulated or that they learn something new.

- I felt inspired or transformed.
- I learned something I didn't know before or my perspective or opinion changed.
- I now feel motivated to create, try something new or to find out more.

RELEVANCE

Our museum is relevant to our audiences and community because content reflects their world or aligns with their values and interests.

- The content felt relevant to my world.
- The content reflected the things that interest or concern me.
- I felt the content explored or connected to current ideas or topics.

AUDIENCE JOURNEYS AND EXPERIENCES

AUDIENCE JOURNEYS AND EXPERIENCES

When we move from a 'one size fits all' approach to how and why audiences engage with our museums, we can begin to provide personalised engagement for many different visitors.

The IAE Network has developed the Audience Experience Map (see following page) to assist museums to take the perspective of three different audiences: first-time visitor, repeat visitor and museum staff. Although there are many other audience variations, this map may be useful to support museums to assess the opportunities and challenges related to the interactions and touchpoints of different people.

The IAE Network has included museum staff as an audience group because staff use and navigate the same spaces as public audiences, but their experience of these spaces can be different to those of other audiences. Considering the experience of staff is important because a positive and inspired staff culture intrinsically lends itself to a more positive public audience experience.

As engagement occurs within and beyond the physical museum, we recommend considering the 'end-to-end' experience of the audience from the perspectives of before, during, after or even audiences engaging without a visit. Viewing each visit as a journey enables potential difficulties or opportunities to be identified in order to optimise the audience experience. In this way, we can increase satisfaction, deepen connection and encourage advocacy.

TIP: Using the templates in the appendices, journey maps can be developed for other stakeholder groups such as donors, members, families and community groups.

HOW TO MAP YOUR AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

This pre-filled template offers examples of many of the potential experiences that different audiences might encounter when visiting or thinking about visiting your museum, or engaging with the museum in other ways, such as through online content.

See Appendix 2 for templates for you to complete.

TIP: The first row below details some of the unique considerations of different audiences: first-time visitors, repeat visitors and staff.

The second row shows examples of some of the challenges in engaging and supporting these audiences.

The bottom row gives examples of opportunities and things to consider when seeking to more deeply engage audiences, or offer a consistently positive audience experience.

UNIQUE CONSIDERATIONS

FIRST-TIME VISITOR

How easy would it be for a new visitor to find your museum?

What first impressions are you giving the visitor?

Functional information (e.g. opening hours, how much time to allocate to a visit, what to expect) is as important as detailed or inspirational content.

REPEAT VISITOR

How can the second/repeat visit be as good as/better than the first one?

Balancing a sense of familiarity with something new/exciting? Can someone find what's new easily?

How do you treat a repeat visitor differently?

STAFF

How easily can new/prospective staff find about you/your opportunities?

Do you know what is your reputation as an employer?

Do you know why your staff like working at your museum?

What specific/tailored platforms are you using to communicate with your staff which treats them as part of the 'inner circle'?

What is your orientation/training program for staff? Do they get to learn about the museum as much as your visitors?

KEY CHALLENGES

No two visitors are the same – how do you be welcoming and inclusive toward diverse groups?

Distilling and tailoring information to different audiences – how do you personalise your marketing most cost effectively?

Can you identify a first-time visitor arriving at your museum?

Does the visitor expect you to know something about them? Do you?

How do you acknowledge and reward loyalty?

How do you continue to provide excellent customer service on repeat visits?

How much support is provided to staff to learn about your museum?

Are all of your staff united in the importance of the audience and their experience?

How do you impart the same sense of purpose across all staff to cultivate their passion?

Is the opportunity for career progression or diverse experience a challenge in your museum?

OPPORTUNITIES

Get the basics right – clear assistance points (onsite and offsite), language, iconography and wayfinding.

Don't forget the power of low tech – word-of-mouth is free but incredibly powerful.

Think about how to get the visitor thinking about coming back BEFORE they even leave the building.

Find out what they enjoyed and suggest something they might like the next time.

How can you encourage visitors to 'bring a friend'?

Use all content a museum typically has to entice them to come back BEFORE and AFTER they leave the building: reach out to visitors when they are not in the museum.

Do you know how much knowledge your visitors have (or want) and have ways to re-engage them so that each visit progressively builds their connection with the collection?

Build coalitions amongst internal stakeholders.

Adapt your external communications into an internal newsletter for staff.

Share audience research and feedback regularly with staff to give them an outside-in view.

Leverage the power of behind-the-scenes content; celebrate the unsung heroes in your museum by sharing what they do with broader staff.

LISTENING TO AND LEARNING FROM YOUR AUDIENCES

WHAT ARE AUDIENCE INSIGHTS AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

An audience-led approach to museum planning begins with creating pathways to better understand and respond to the interests, motivations and experiences of audiences.

This means listening to, and therefore learning from, audiences through their direct experience and feedback in addition to the many informal insights we gain through everyday work as museum professionals.

The information that a museum gathers directly from or about audiences is what we refer to as audience insights. Audience insights are important as they enable greater understanding of the experiences, motivations, values or other circumstances of people engaging with the museum and its programs and content.

They can also provide insight into some of the hidden barriers that may be preventing some audiences from engaging with the museum.

Audience insights also support museums when applying for grants, developing proposals or planning for new team structures or hiring practices. Critically, audience insights are invaluable for highlighting achievements and success.

Many museums may already collect audience insights, for example, information collected through ticket or retail sales, memberships, surveys, anecdotal feedback or visitor comments, even social media comments and engagement data. However, organising and using these insights in a way that informs strategic planning and supports your museum to undertake an audience-led approach across its different functions can be a challenge.

The IAE Network recommends that museums interested in using audience insights undertake an initial review and audit of any existing methods and examine current systems for communicating, escalating or implementing changes when information is made known.

WHAT ARE SOME TYPES OF AUDIENCE INSIGHT AND DATA?

- Data collected through ticket sales, retail/gift shop or food and beverage sales
- Membership or subscriber data
- Survey responses – program or exhibition surveys, exit surveys or interviews
- Anecdotal feedback to museum staff – verbally or email
- Formal visitor comments or complaints systems
- Social media comments and engagement
- Web and online content usage statistics
- Mystery shopping services – anonymous assessment of retail or catering service
- Research – focus groups or research engaged through specialist services

ASSESSING YOUR FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION CHANNELS

AUDIT

Audit and assess current methods for collecting audience insights or feedback. What information or insights do you collect and why? Where might you be already collecting insights but not using them? Consider feedback systems, surveys, anecdotal feedback.

UPDATE

Update the information across all your methods for gathering feedback and insights to ensure consistency and accuracy in information collection. For example, using standard questions across surveys for difference audience groups.

TRIAL

Trial any new or updated processes to capture feedback or insights to ensure they provide you the desired information. This also allows for changes to be made that will provide greater continuity.

SHARE

Share learnings gathered through insights – look for opportunities to share positive feedback or achievements, workshop challenges or opportunities discovered and enable teams to plan accordingly. For example, this might be a monthly cross-department meeting focused especially on visitor feedback.

A FIVE STEP GUIDE TO AUDIENCE INSIGHTS

How do you know your museum has had a real, positive, lasting or transformative effect on audiences, and what does successful audience engagement look like, beyond attendance numbers and ticket sales?

Being able to define successful audience engagement, especially within the definitions of wellness, is a crucial step towards articulating the enormous value of audience-led planning and decision-making. This is why gathering and learning from audience insights is so important – these insights can change the way we think about what audiences want, and help you to holistically define success.

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK AUDIT

The first step towards learning more about your audiences is to assess how you might already be capturing valuable information, any opportunities to gather new insights, as well looking at ways to streamline or improve exisiting processes.

Many museums already gather information about what audiences experience through systems such as surveys, ticket purchase information, social media messages and comments, or visitor comments.

Undertaking an audit of your museum's feedback channels is important because it can reveal a wealth of feedback or insights already being gathered but not being used. An audit can also highlight where you may need to make improvements to feedback systems, for example in the collection or organising of data, or the types of questions or prompts you might ask.

Another benefit of an audit of this kind is that it will often reveal blockages in communications, where feedback is being collected but not studied or used in planning.

AUDIENCE INSIGHT TOOLS:

The IAE Network recommends museums consider using these tools for gathering and learning from audience feedback and insights:

1. Audience feedback audit

2. Surveys

3. Empathy interviews

4. Professional services

5. Pathways to implement change

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN EVALUATING YOUR FEEDBACK AND INSIGHTS SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES:

- How do you receive feedback and insights?

- Where do you file feedback and insights?

- How do you analyse feedback and insights?

- How do you share feedback and insights with your team or staff in the museum?

- Are there any ways to assess trends or patterns across feedback and insights received?

- What do you do with feedback and insights? For example, how do you respond to or learn from an individual insight or item of feedback, and likewise, how might you consider using feedback and insights collected over a longer period?

SURVEYS

Short and focused surveys are a simple way to learn about audience response to an overall visit or engagement in a specific program.

Surveys can be used across museum-audience touchpoints such as programs, events, exhibitions, facilities, service or the entire museum visit.

They can also be used to seek detailed insights from museum experiences and engagement that occurs outside the museum, such as digital content, virtual exhibitions, or online events or activities.

As a first step, the IAE Network suggests you investigate where surveys may already be in use across different functions of your museum and review holistically so that you can standardise surveys with the same or similar questions. This enables you to compare audience responses across a range of touchpoints.

You may wish to review all questions for existing surveys – are you asking the right questions? Are responses telling you what you need to know? How can you develop the survey so that it can inform the way you plan?

Next, devise questions that reveal insights into audience expectations; their actual experience, how they felt, what they valued and what could be improved.

When considering what questions to include, ask yourself, what does success mean for this museum, program or experience? Then draft questions that can help you to define and report on this.

Surveys should be relatively short and easy for audiences to complete with multiple choice options and limited open-ended response options.

The Net Promotor Score (NPS) is a widely-used calculation for customer or audience loyalty based on the question, *would you recommend this to others?* It is easy to implement in surveys – many electronic survey platforms will calculate the score for you. Search Net Promotor Score on the internet for more details.

THE KIND OF FEEDBACK YOU MIGHT SEEK IN A SURVEY INCLUDE:

- Are you a first-time or returning visitor? (measures loyalty and expectation)

- Would you return/do this again? (measures satisfaction and loyalty)

- Net Promoter Score (measures satisfaction, brand reputation)

- Audience Wellness success measures (see pages 24–5)

EMPATHY INTERVIEWS

Empathy interviews are short, open-ended interviews (1–3 questions) that staff can undertake alone or in pairs with visitors in museum spaces, or even added as short surveys for digital content. Questions aim to understand why people have chosen to visit and their interactions or experiences. Empathy interviews are also valuable as they encourage staff to interact with and learn directly from visitors themselves, fostering empathy and an understanding of the real experience of people visiting.

The purpose of empathy interviews is to be short, conversational and relaxed – these are not intended to paint a full picture of audience engagement but instead, offer a spontaneous, on-the-spot insight into what audiences might be doing at any given moment.

Staff may find it more comfortable to do the interviews in pairs – one as the note taker or recorder and the other asking questions. Take handwritten notes or ask visitors if they are comfortable to record the interview on a device.

Questions should be open-ended – ask why and don't be shy about asking follow-up questions to dig a little deeper to understand your visitor's thoughts, expectations and experiences.

Empathy interviews should be undertaken regularly (e.g. weekly, monthly) and responses recorded and organised for later access.

For museums operating digitally, the questions can be integrated into short surveys depending on your platforms, or included in post-event follow-up communications.

Share responses with teams to discuss what you learned and break down assumptions around why and how audiences visit your museum.

EMPATHY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Why did you come to the museum today? / Why did you choose this digital experience?

- What have you done at the museum today? / What other online content have you tried with us?

- How did you find your experience?

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Professional services, such as mystery shopping programs or independent researchers are optional tools that can offer an additional layer to your other audience insight tools. They are a good investment if your museum has capacity to resource the costs. While they offer independent insights, they are not essential, however, and many other options are available using internal resources.

If you do choose to engage in a professional service, the IAE Network suggests you work closely with your chosen provider to develop the scope of any research including why you wish to undertake the research, what you hope to learn and anything that doesn't need to be covered in the scope of research.

You should also ask that you work together to develop questions and specific focus areas so that any reporting, outcomes or findings are relevant and useful.

Services such as mystery shopping are more beneficial if undertaken regularly (e.g. monthly), so that changes can be measured quickly.

Mystery shopping services should also aim to assess different audience experiences by employing diverse researchers, e.g. families, people with access needs, culturally diverse.

Mystery shopping is best utilised across the entire museum to ascertain the full experience an individual or group is likely to have.

Be mindful of your museum's privacy and intellectual property, especially when considering research partners, to ensure you retain the rights over any new programs or models of engagement developed.

TWO COMMON TYPES OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:

- **Mystery shopping**, also called secret shopping or mystery research, is a service conventionally used in retail or hospitality environments, in which independent customers anonymously 'shop' the business and provide a full report on their end-to-end experience, from customer service to quality of product and everything in between. It is valuable for museums because it can offer honest insights into how your institution is performing across multiple touchpoints, from entry and welcome experiences such as customer service, retail and catering, accessibility, exhibition design, program content and facilities.

- **Research** through an academic institution or specialist research company can offer the expertise and skills not always available within the museum's own workforce, to enable in-depth analysis of a segment of your audience, target audience, or specific program or project.

PATHWAYS TO SHARE AND IMPLEMENT CHANGE

Consider, if you have all of your audience insight and feedback systems in place, how can you use what you learn to generate change within your museum?

One of the simplest ways to begin the journey towards becoming a pro-audience museum is to always talk about the audience – to your teams, to your manager, to your colleagues. Learn how to position everything you do in the context of the audience and always consider how what you do, impacts what they experience.

Find ways to learn as much as you can about your museum's audiences, then seek ways to learn even more. When you can confidently talk about audiences you increase your capacity to initiate new projects or advocate for change.

Many museums are civic institutions. But if we take this idea even further, to think about how museums can function as dynamic, agile community hubs, then we start to think about how we can actively contribute to the wellbeing of individuals and community.

TIPS FOR CREATING CHANGE AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS:

- Share audience feedback and insights regularly with your team or working group in briefings or meetings.

- Develop and use your own knowledge of audiences to break down any assumptions within your museum around what audiences want.

- Initiate cross-functional working groups to discuss audience learnings, workshop challenges and bring good ideas to life.

- Find ways to champion the audience and audience-focused teams, for example in reports and presentations to senior and executive staff, or in smaller meetings.

- Encourage all staff to feel excited about and proud of their role in facilitating great audience experiences and find ways to articulate how their work relates to the audience.

APPENDICES

MEASURING AUDIENCE WELLNESS: EXAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE OPTIONS

This example shows how audience wellness in a museum can be measured using audience surveys. Here, some of the success measures defined on pages 24–5 have been incorporated into a sample survey, including the ways that audiences would respond to the questions. We also show how museums can use this data to report on audience wellness and use this data as a tool to advocate for new projects, initiatives, funding or change within the museum.

SAMPLE SURVEY

Please consider the following statements and tell us how strongly you agree through to disagree by selecting the response that most closely aligns with your experience.

Thinking about my experience with this program/exhibition/event:

I felt it was a welcoming experience throughout.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

I felt a sense of community.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

I felt inspired or transformed.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

The content felt relevant to me or the world today.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

YOU COULD REPORT ON YOUR RESULTS LIKE THIS:

Based on survey results:

70% felt welcomed throughout
88% felt a sense of community
80% felt inspired or transformed
90% felt the content was relevant to their world today

TIP: These statements can be adapted to encompass digital or online engagement, as all audience wellness dimensions are equally important when connecting with audiences digitally or printed or other content.

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE MAP:
FIRST-TIME VISITOR

Use this template to consider all of the potential experiences of a first-time visitor to your museum then fill out your findings and ideas in the blank spaces at the bottom. You can use the example template on the previous page to guide you.

TIP: Print out each template or type directly into the document.

JOURNEY

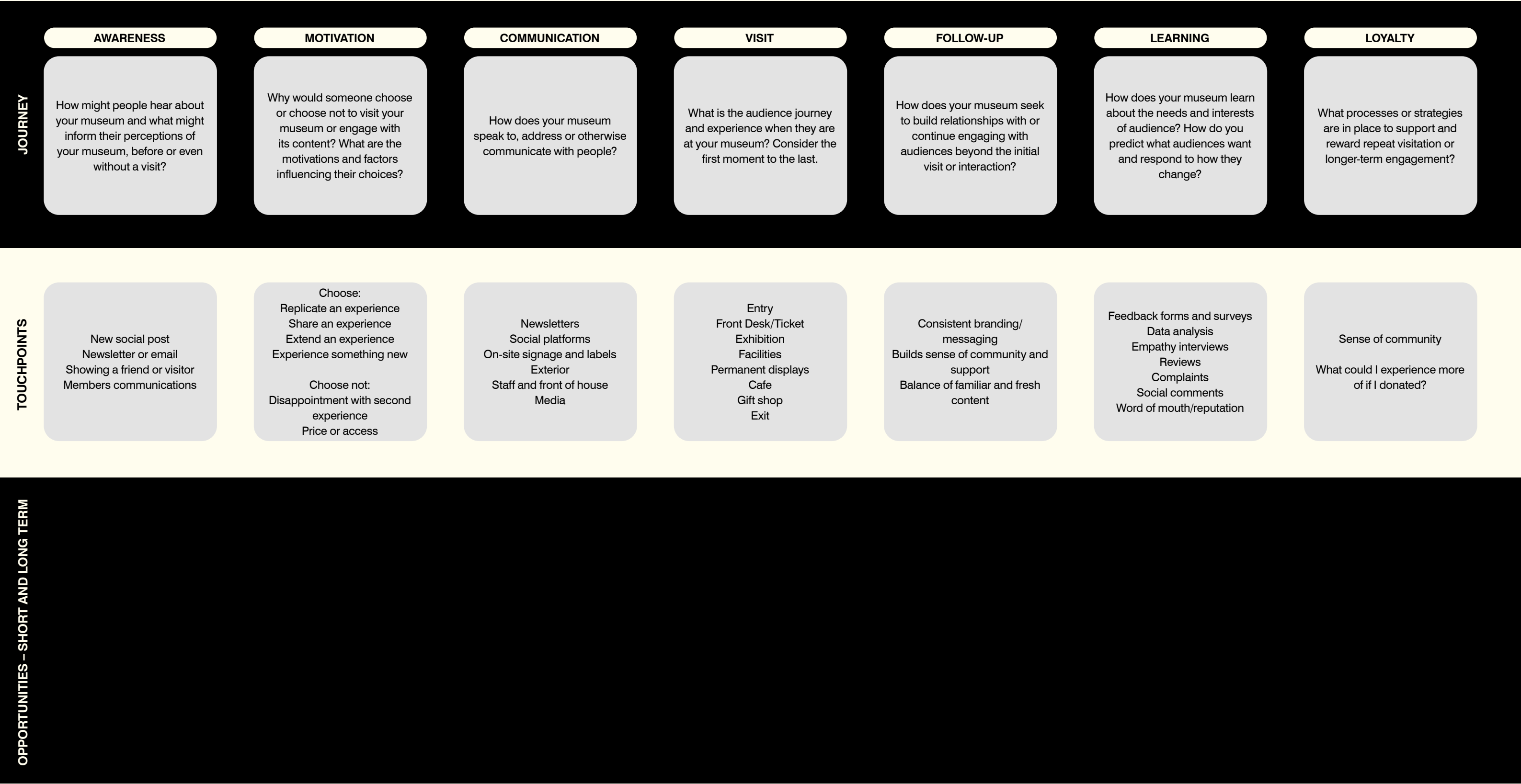| AWARENESS	MOTIVATION	COMMUNICATION	VISIT	FOLLOW-UP	LEARNING	LOYALTY
How might people hear about your museum and what might inform their perceptions of your museum, before or even without a visit?	Why would someone choose or choose not to visit your museum or engage with its content? What are the motivations and factors influencing their choices?	How does your museum speak to, address or otherwise communicate with people?	What is the audience journey and experience when they are at your museum? Consider the first moment to the last.	How does your museum seek to build relationships with or continue engaging with audiences beyond the initial visit or interaction?	How does your museum learn about the needs and interests of audience? How do you predict what audiences want and respond to how they change?	What processes or strategies are in place to support and reward repeat visitation or longer-term engagement?

TOUCHPOINTS

Social platforms Email Media Word of mouth Web	Education Interest in exhibitions Social reasons Tourism Just walking by	Newsletters Social platforms Signage and labels Staff Media	Entry Front Desk/Ticket Exhibition Facilities Retail Exit	Feedback form Email Targeted campaigns Member offers	Surveys Data collected Empathy interviews	Greater access behind the scenes Incentives and offers Access to specially-developed content

OPPORTUNITIES – SHORT AND LONG TERM

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE MAP: REPEAT VISITOR

How does a regular or repeat visitor experience your museum and how can you refine and improve this experience? Use the template below to guide your assessment of the journey of a repeat visitor.

JOURNEY

AWARENESS	MOTIVATION	COMMUNICATION	VISIT	FOLLOW-UP	LEARNING	LOYALTY
How might people hear about your museum and what might inform their perceptions of your museum, before or even without a visit?	Why would someone choose or choose not to visit your museum or engage with its content? What are the motivations and factors influencing their choices?	How does your museum speak to, address or otherwise communicate with people?	What is the audience journey and experience when they are at your museum? Consider the first moment to the last.	How does your museum seek to build relationships with or continue engaging with audiences beyond the initial visit or interaction?	How does your museum learn about the needs and interests of audience? How do you predict what audiences want and respond to how they change?	What processes or strategies are in place to support and reward repeat visitation or longer-term engagement?

TOUCHPOINTS

New social post Newsletter or email Showing a friend or visitor Members communications˜	Choose: Replicate an experience Share an experience Extend an experience Experience something new Choose not: Disappointment with second experience Price or access	Newsletters Social platforms On-site signage and labels Exterior Staff and front of house Media	Entry Front Desk/Ticket Exhibition Facilities Permanent displays Cafe Gift shop Exit	Consistent branding/ messaging Builds sense of community and support Balance of familiar and fresh content	Feedback forms and surveys Data analysis Empathy interviews Reviews Complaints Social comments Word of mouth/reputation	Sense of community What could I experience more of if I donated?

OPPORTUNITIES – SHORT AND LONG TERM

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE MAP: STAFF

The experience of the staff in your museum is as important as that of audiences. How do your staff use your museum spaces and how might this impact the perception or experience of audiences? Take the journey then add in your findings and ideas at the bottom.

JOURNEY

AWARENESS	MOTIVATION	COMMUNICATION	VISIT	FOLLOW-UP	LEARNING	LOYALTY
How might people hear about your museum and what might inform their perceptions of your museum, before or even without a visit?	Why would someone choose or choose not to visit your museum or engage with its content? What are the motivations and factors influencing their choices?	How does your museum speak to, address or otherwise communicate with people?	What is the audience journey and experience when they are at your museum? Consider the first moment to the last.	How does your museum seek to build relationships with or continue engaging with audiences beyond the initial visit or interaction?	How does your museum learn about the needs and interests of audience? How do you predict what audiences want and respond to how they change?	What processes or strategies are in place to support and reward repeat visitation or longer-term engagement?

TOUCHPOINTS

Job sites Recommendations Colleagues/friends Media presence Reputation	Choose: Interest in industry Reputation Passion Choose not: Reputation Workload Unsure of purpose	Sites like LinkedIn or employment review sites Staff newsletters Group meetings Social gatherings Networking	Employment Orientation Team building Career growth	Encouragement Wages Exposure Experience Career growth	Staff feedback surveys Word of mouth Manger–staff relationships	What does career progression look like at your museum?

OPPORTUNITIES – SHORT AND LONG TERM

Attendees to the 2019 IAE Network working meeting,
at the National Gallery Singapore.

THANK YOU

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

All images were taken during the IAE Network working
meeting, National Gallery Singapore, December 2019.
Photographer: Ken Cheong.

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guides, tips, diagrams and templates, has been developed
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