

Possible Triggers

ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY: A TOOLKIT FOR MUSEUMS

Why/When a Museum Might Decide to Use *Engaging your Community*

What is motivating your museum to use *Engaging your Community: A Toolkit for Museums*? The following symptoms or triggers suggest some possible motivators. Identifying the trigger for your museum is a useful first step in this process.

Internal Symptoms or Triggers

- Opportunities
 - Unexpected gain of financial support or resources
 - New or additional technology available to or acquired by the museum
 - A community group/organization/business has approached the museum about a project
 - A school class is interested in partnering with the museum for the year
 - Planning to revise the museum's policies

- Decline in
 - Visitation
 - volunteer support
 - financial support from the community
 - membership
 - morale
 - qualified applicants for staff positions
 - governance support

- Facilities
 - Plan to move to a new location or facility
 - Major repairs or renovations to the current facility
 - Rising operating costs for the facility

- Collections
 - Significant change in the collection, e.g., anticipation of the donation of a major collection, de-accessioning of a collection, receiving a major loan, etc.
 - Plan or requirement to address the cultural and/or spiritual needs of a particular collection

- Major Change
 - Physical loss, e.g., building
 - Major staffing changes, e.g., new positions created, job descriptions redesigned, loss of staff through resignations or retirement, etc.

- Governance leadership
 - A new board has been elected
 - Difficulty recruiting board members
 - Lack of vision
 - Inability to articulate the museum's value to the community
 - Mission statement for the museum has not been evaluated or changed since the inception of the museum
 - Museum needs a new strategic plan to set a new direction for the museum
 - Museum has a new strategic plan

- Programs are
 - underutilized or unsuccessful
 - planned with little or no consultation with or representation from the audience for which a program is intended
 - receiving negative feedback from evaluations
 - not being evaluated

External Symptoms or Triggers

- Community Change
 - Demographic changes (e.g., people leaving the community, people moving into the community, aging population, increase in one or more cultural groups, widening gap between the rich and poor, etc.)
 - Number of businesses in the community have increased/decreased
 - Essential services in the community have increased/decreased
 - New or increased competition from other leisure activities, facilities
 - New or increased competition from major events
 - Number of students in schools have increased/decreased
 - School closures/openings

- Higher cost of
 - Living
 - Utilities, insurance rates

- Politics
 - Election of a new government—municipal, provincial, federal

- Negative information about the museum has come to light in the community, i.e. negative publicity