

SFU

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CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE

ROYAL BC MUSEUM MODERNIZATION



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

What We Heard Report

October 2019



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LIFE IN A TROPICAL RAINFOREST

The ancient Maya lived deep within the tropical rainforest—and the rainforest lived deep within them.

On the surface, the jungle's dense canopy provided food, shelter and the basic necessities of life.

But on a deeper level, the forest acted as a spiritual center, where the Maya who shared their world.

MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE LISA BEARE

Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture



The Royal BC Museum is one of our province's greatest cultural icons, welcoming hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. However, the building does not meet today's accessibility or seismic standards.

In February 2019, our government committed to modernizing the Royal BC Museum, to protect its historic holdings and provide better access to its collections. Our first step was to connect with people throughout B.C. to gather input on its future and discover innovative ways of sharing B.C.'s history.

From April 1 to June 27, 2019, we held a public engagement that asked people how a modern provincial museum could most effectively tell stories of B.C.'s communities and how the museum can collaborate most productively with communities around the province.

We held seven public meetings in five communities, as well as a province-wide virtual meeting, with a total of 131 people participating. We hosted an online discussion forum with three questions and provided the opportunity for people to email in their ideas. The engagement website received more than 5,000 visits and a total of 177 comments.

We heard from people from all over B.C., including Indigenous peoples, historians and scientists, academics, teachers, the technology sector, tourism organizations, and the gallery, library, archives and museum community.

And what people said was that they want dynamic and interactive exhibits, that they want a museum that builds relationships with a wide range of communities, that is a place of learning and that cultivates our living history. They also said that a modern museum means one that is accessible to all and state-of-the-art.

I want to thank everyone who took the time to participate in the conversation. The passion, expertise and excitement that people brought to the table – real and virtual – was inspiring. It's clear that British Columbians want the Royal BC Museum to continue to be a cultural leader and learning organization that inspires people. Your ideas will help shape the vision for the Royal BC Museum for the next 50 years and beyond.

Our government will use the feedback in this report to inform our decisions on the new modern museum experience. This was a first of many steps, and I look forward to sharing our vision soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Beare".

Hon. Lisa Beare,
Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

**ENGAGEMENT BY
THE NUMBERS:**

5,182 website visits
177 comments
131 participants at 7
community meetings

“The stories we remember the most and longest are the ones that touch us emotionally as well as cerebrally.”

“We need to have our children engaged with our history. Kids need to touch, explore, listen, try out, etc. Please work on making museum exhibits accessible to a wide variety of ages.”

“[A modern museum] embraces the role of museum as facilitator rather than controlling the narrative.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

The Royal BC Museum has been at its current location in Victoria since 1967.

In the 2019 Speech from the Throne, the B.C. government announced its intention to modernize the Royal BC Museum to protect its historic holdings and provide better access to its collections. To deliver on this commitment, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture and the Royal BC Museum (RBCM) are building a business case to support the modernization of the provincial museum.

On April 1, 2019, the B.C. government launched a public engagement process to seek feedback about the Museum's future. The process was open to all and ran until June 27, 2019. People could participate actively in the process by attending one of seven in-person community meetings held in five communities across

the province. In addition, people could participate in a "virtual" community meeting, an online discussion forum or make a formal submission.

The resulting feedback from this broad engagement is summarized in this *What We Heard* Report. This report explores seven themes of ideas shared by participants during the engagement process. The seven overarching themes are: Dynamic Exhibits and Programming; Building Relationships; Living History; Accessibility for All; State-of-the-Art Facilities and Operations; A Place of Learning; and Research.

The input collected from people across the province will inform the government's business case, expected later this year. People's feedback from the engagement will help shape the future of the Museum.



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

The Royal BC Museum offers visitors a place to explore the province's social and environmental history and to discover the events and people that have shaped our collective history. It attracts millions of visitors each year both onsite and online. The Museum was founded in 1886 and the Archives were founded in 1894. In 2003, these two organizations joined to become British Columbia's combined provincial Museum and Archives. The Royal BC Museum collects specimens, artifacts, archival records and cultural objects representing British Columbia's natural and human history with the goal of safeguarding them for the future and sharing them with the world.

The Royal BC Museum has been at its current location since 1967. The Museum's extensive collections have outgrown the available space and the buildings no longer meet today's accessibility or seismic standards.

On February 12, 2019, the Speech from the Throne announced the Provincial Government's intention to

modernize the Royal BC Museum. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture and the Royal BC Museum are working to develop a business case to support the modernization project. As part of this process, the B.C. government is investigating all possible options for the Museum, including alternate sites in Victoria for the Museum or for storing its holdings.

In order to gather ideas about the future of the Museum, the government, in partnership with SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, designed and facilitated a public engagement process from April 1 to June 27, 2019. People across the province had the opportunity to share their own ideas about how they envision a modernized museum: how it can most effectively tell the stories of B.C.'s diverse communities; as well as how it can most productively collaborate with communities throughout British Columbia. This engagement process provided critical information to inform the government's business case for modernizing the Museum.

METHODOLOGY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS:

1. Community Meetings, Online Discussion Forum, Formal Submissions



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMISH HAMILTON

The engagement process asked the following three questions:

- What do you expect a modernized museum experience to be?
- How do you think the museum could most effectively tell stories of B.C.'s communities?
- What opportunities are there for a modernized museum to collaborate most productively with communities across B.C.?

People were able to participate in three different ways:

1.1. Community Meetings

During May and June of 2019, the B.C. government convened seven in-person community meetings in five locations across the province: Prince George, Duncan, Kelowna, Vancouver (2) and Victoria (2). In addition, a “virtual” community meeting was hosted online on June 20, 2019. These meetings were co-designed and facilitated by SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue.

All of the community meetings were structured as facilitated round-table dialogues (process explained below). Representatives of local First Nations

opened each meeting. The community meetings were conducted in English; however, considering the demographics of the Lower Mainland, Cantonese and Mandarin interpreters were available at both Lower Mainland meetings.

1.2. Online Discussion Forum

The Royal BC Museum Modernization website received 5,182 visits during the engagement period. The online forum, which posed the same three questions as the community meetings, was open from April 1 to June 27, 2019. Members of the public posted 177 comments through this engagement process.

1.3. Formal Submissions

From April 1 to June 27, people had the opportunity to make formal submissions via email. The email address was available on the government-hosted Royal BC Museum Modernization engagement site. In total, there were 15 formal submissions (see Appendix 2 for a list of organizations that made formal submissions). In addition, seven individuals sent emails to the B.C. government. Due to their content and structure, these emails were analyzed in the same way as comments posted on the online feedback form.

METHODOLOGY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS:

2. Community Meetings: Participation and Process

The in-person and online community meetings were open to all, and participants could pre-register on the B.C. government website.

The following chart shows participation at each location:

| Date | Location | # of Registrations | # of Participants |
|---------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|
| May 11, 2019 | North: Prince George | 9 | 14 |
| June 8, 2019 | Lower Mainland: Vancouver | 23 | 18 |
| June 10, 2019 | Lower Mainland: Vancouver | 17 | 18 |
| June 13, 2019 | Mid-Vancouver Island: Duncan | 10 | 14 |
| June 13, 2019 | Southern Vancouver Island: Victoria | 63 | 26 |
| June 15, 2019 | Southern Vancouver Island: Victoria | 23 | 21 |
| June 18, 2019 | Thompson Okanagan: Kelowna | 18 | 14 |
| June 20, 2019 | “Virtual” Community Meeting | 28 | 6 |
| Total | | 191 | 131 |

Each community meeting followed the same structure: an Indigenous welcome and an introduction by a provincial representative, followed by table discussions and a short wrap-up. There was approximately one hour of dialogue at each community meeting.

In plenary following the table dialogues, one participant from each table shared an idea raised during their discussions. This enabled all participants to sample what had surfaced at the other tables. To ensure all ideas were captured, table note-takers provided their raw notes to the project team following the session.

At the end of each session, all participants had the opportunity to provide anonymous, written feedback about the process, as well as to make additional recommendations via a survey. This feedback on the process is presented in Section F, entitled *Summary of Participant Evaluation Surveys*.

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMISH HAMILTON

This section presents the seven major themes that emerged from the engagement process, including the community meetings, online discussion forum and formal submissions. The three questions asked in this consultation were intentionally open-ended, and the resulting conversations were wide-reaching and dynamic.

At the community meetings and in the online forum, the first question about a “modernized” museum elicited many responses that touched on aspects related to the second and third questions. For this reason, the following themes are reflective of the overall engagement and not the specific questions.

A diverse mix of the public participated in this engagement process. This diversity is not only measured by the

usual demographic criteria, but also by two different categories of participants: those who were relatively familiar with at least some aspects of the Royal BC Museum, and those with little or no knowledge of the Museum’s contents or operations.

This report is a summary of what was heard from British Columbians about their vision for a modern Provincial Museum. It is important to note that comments about what a modernized Museum should do, made by participants without any knowledge of what the current Museum does, should not be considered as evidence of the Royal BC Museum’s deficiencies in those respects. However, these ideas should also not be discounted.

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS

Theme 1. Dynamic Exhibits and Programming



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Subtheme 1.1. Interactive and Immersive Exhibits and Programming

This overarching theme relates to more ideas than any other theme that surfaced during the engagement process.

Participants envisioned “immersive” and “interactive” museum exhibits. They imagined a museum that can “play more with senses”, especially the sense of touch. As one participant suggested, “A modern RBCM exhibit would be, as much as practical, designed to take advantage of research into multi-sensory experiences, incorporating sights, sounds, textures, and smells.” Several online respondents noted that the ‘Old Town’ exhibit in the Royal BC Museum is a particularly

immersive experience they currently enjoy. Another participant shared a personal memory from a visit to the British Museum:

“I still find a face-to-face interaction with staff or knowledgeable volunteers the best experience. It’s even better if it involves hands-on experience. A year or so ago I visited the British Museum. Staff had a tray of artifacts in the gallery, and I was allowed to hold a 400,000-year-old Paleolithic hand-axe. That was an experience!”

Participants also expressed interest in interactive exhibits for other reasons. They imagined opportunities for visitors to speak and share ideas about the exhibits with other visitors. As one person stated, “I really love

having the opportunity to talk with diverse groups of people about issues, whether social or scientific.” People expressed interest in learning from researchers and staff, with some specifically keen to see interpretive guides in character, imagining a museum that would “incorporate interactive arts like theatre.”¹

Building on this interactive theme, participants imagined “ways for people to share their own experience” and “add their stories or knowledge” to the exhibition. It was noted that a modern museum could solicit public participation in exhibits and in archival work both on-site and online. Incorporating roles for visitors in exhibits could enrich the experience of future visitors.

“Allow the visitor to contribute to the experience of [future] visitors, for example, give people the option to create videos or collages of images.”

Particularly within the formal submissions, people highlighted the importance of interactive exhibits and programming that would enable visitors to engage with collections and specimens that inform current understandings of biodiversity and climate change in this province. One person noted, “The value of a specimen is not lost on children. My son, at eight years old, collected a beetle from our backyard and provided it directly to the entomology curator. [The curator] took the time to teach my son the value of what the specimen was providing to science. My son now hopes to volunteer in a museum.”

The vision for interactive exhibits intersects with suggestions that were made by some disability advocates about what it means for a modern museum to be accessible. Suggestions included the use of audio technology, physical objects to touch and guides specifically trained on how to maximize the museum experience for persons with disabilities.

Subtheme 1.2. Incorporation of Technology

Participants viewed technology as a tool for interactive and immersive exhibits: “exhibits that use new technology to tell old stories.”

Throughout the engagement process, references were made to the use of multi-media. Immersive technologies, including virtual reality, touchscreens, projection and audio, were suggested as tools for supplementing physical diorama exhibits depicting natural or human history, but which cannot be seen by all who visit a museum. Most frequently, individuals wanted technology to “remain human-centric” and to “act as a way to bring the object alive.” However, two formal submissions and a few community meeting participants noted that touchscreens and projections are inaccessible to visually impaired visitors.

Subtheme 1.3. From Compartmentalization Towards Interrelated Stories

“How were communities living together through time?”

People discussed the opportunity for a modern museum to tell interconnected stories. Participants envision exhibits and programming that explore the relationships between communities throughout B.C.’s history. This comment speaks to one of the impacts this approach would have: “Integrate the experiences of different immigrants, so children can understand where they came from.” Participants spoke about bringing history alive by teaching about the interconnected history of British Columbia’s communities. A few individuals suggested a chronological sequence of exhibits within the museum, or a timeline, to show diverse communities and how they have interacted over time.

Participants also talked about the Museum incorporating another set of important relationships: the interconnections between natural and human history. Participants envision a museum that presents the relationships between environmental and social histories. There is an opportunity to “tell stories of ecological communities and the biodiversity of B.C. within the Museum, while using the voices and perspectives of different communities: Indigenous Elders, Western scientists, engaged youth.” One participant suggested that exhibit content can be

¹ Throughout the engagement, there was extensive discussion of the value of exhibits and programming focused on oral histories belonging to different communities, starting with B.C.’s First Nations, but also including oral histories belonging to non-Indigenous cultural communities and other kinds of communities. This discussion is captured in another part of the Report and can be found in the *People telling their own stories* subtheme.

an important way to explore the complex relationships between environmental and social histories over time.

Participants imagine these stories being presented in ways that “break down barriers between disciplines” and reflect the “intertwining stories.” As one participant suggested, “I would love having a history museum that doesn’t have a strict divide between the arts and sciences. You cannot always divide the two.”

Subtheme 1.4. Designed for Intergenerational Enjoyment

One participant spoke about the importance of child-focused design: “A museum should have a mandate to elevate our minds, provide up-to-date research, and avant-garde thinking. They should not be only an amusement park for children, although there should be a wing for that purpose.”

Many participants seemed to feel that a modernized museum could meet the mandate described in the previous quote, while catering to a wide variety of ages through “true intergenerational design.” Participants were interested in capturing the minds of all ages, from toddlers to teens to seniors. Indeed, many also shared anecdotes about enjoying the Museum with children or grandchildren.

“We need to have our children engaged with our history. Kids need to touch, explore, listen, try out, etc. Please work on making museum exhibits accessible to a wide variety of ages.”

One participant asked, “What would the exhibit look like if you were three feet tall?” and suggested, “floor to ceiling exhibition design.” Other participants wanted to provide youth with technological experiences that might excite their imagination. Others imagined a museum that works with seniors and Elders, not only to ensure that exhibits are more accessible, but also to record their personal histories. A museum designed as a place to reflect people’s stories resonated with many participants.

Subtheme 1.5. People Telling Their Own Stories

Participants contended that a modern museum involves inspirational and engaging storytelling. One participant envisioned “superb storytelling” as a core strength of a

modern museum. Another participant suggested: “The best stories are the ones you remember long after being initially exposed to them. The stories we remember the most and longest are the ones that touch us emotionally as well as cerebrally. That is achieved by making the stories relevant and relatable to the audience being exposed to those stories.”

Participants spoke to the importance of learning as much as possible from people who directly experienced important events in B.C.’s history. They also outlined the opportunity to learn from the descendants of those people, who can share the oral stories from these important events.

“Communities can steward their own stories if you give them a chance. [Provide] financial empowerment to do this work.”

People cited various reasons for putting “captivating” storytelling at the centre of the museum experience. The most commonly mentioned reason was one of substantive equity: the importance of treating oral histories with the same respect as written histories. Participants spoke of the value and importance of hearing stories about First Nations directly from Indigenous Elders, as well as stories from Elders of non-Indigenous communities. They emphasized the value of hearing stories told by Elders from communities with roots from all over the world, in addition to the stories of European settler communities often found in museums. The notion of bringing community storytellers to the Museum surfaced in a number of discussions.

As one participant suggested, “I think having personal stories would be very valuable. But instead of sharing through screens or posters, inviting people in to do storytelling could have a huge impact.”

Another reason for using stories is to help “provide ‘tangible’ representation for communities, whose histories may have been misrepresented in museums in the past.” Furthermore, stories offer an especially engaging way to learn. When someone hears an engaging story, that individual learns about the people in the story and also about themselves. In other words, hearing a story of those who lived before us can help us to build our own story alongside theirs. Equally important

is for museums to provide a context for learning more about youth directly from youth: “Let youth tell us their stories. Don’t interpret on their behalf.”

Subtheme 1.6. Integrate Museum Experience with Surrounding Location

“The Museum starts at the sidewalk.”

This report later discusses participants’ ideas about opportunities to virtually interact with the Museum through web-based engagement and other ways from communities far from Victoria. For those who can visit Victoria, participants identified the importance of experiencing how the physical Museum is grounded in its particular geographic location. For one participant, connecting the Museum to its location serves as a reminder of the First Peoples on whose traditional and ancestral lands the Museum was constructed: “When you walk into the Museum you should be greeted immediately via protocol and ceremony of the peoples whose land the Museum is on.”

Another powerful illustration of how the Museum is connected to its location can be experienced by visitors to the Native Plant Garden. This Garden was described as a living collection of biologically important plants. Some visitors characterized this outdoor learning space as an invitation or gateway to the Museum. One participant noted the value of the Garden as an expression or continuation of the “inside of the Museum.” Some participants noted the opportunity for the tourism sector to highlight the Museum’s location “on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen peoples, today represented by the Songhees and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nations”, as the Museum’s website explains, and the interconnectedness of the inside and the outside of the Museum, including its unique Native Plant Garden.

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS

Theme 2. Building Relationships



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Subtheme 2.1. Reciprocal, Transparent, Long-term Relationships with Communities

Participants in all engagement streams – community meetings, online, email and formal submissions – highlighted collaboration with communities as a vital dimension of any modern museum. For some, collaboration entails “tangible” representation of B.C.’s communities within the Museum, including providing opportunities for community knowledge holders to tell stories and engage with visitors. For many participants, a “modern” provincial museum in B.C. is one that has reciprocal, transparent, long-term relationships with all of B.C.’s communities. In this context, participants mentioned relationships with Indigenous communities most frequently, followed by relationships with

cultural communities and lastly, relationships with local communities. Participants acknowledged the challenges that institutions can encounter when seeking to collaborate with diverse communities. As one participant suggested:

“Some communities have more capacity than others, so I would just recommend the Museum be very aware of that when engaging. Some communities will be quick to respond, others will not, but that doesn’t mean there isn’t an interest in participating.”

Participants envisioned a modern museum as a place where visitors can learn about Indigenous perspectives. They expressed a strong emphasis on the importance of ensuring that Indigenous content is curated and

“stewarded” by the Indigenous communities from which the objects and stories originate, and to which they ultimately belong. Participants who addressed this issue emphasized that building respectful relationships with Indigenous communities is a priority, and that repatriation of Indigenous regalia, for example, is a vital starting point. As one participant put it, “Honour First Nations cultures and return regalia to communities.”

One participant highlighted the importance of this type of relationship by sharing a story:

“An old lady walks in and sees a traditional Carrier bag, and picks it out of a special box where the curator only used archival gloves to even touch it. The woman, who appeared to be an Indigenous Elder, puts it on and starts to tell the story of the bag and how it is used. At first the curator was distressed to see the item being touched, and then she realized that she knew nothing about the bag, and that this woman knew everything about the bag. The curator realized that her [the curator’s] connection to the bag doesn’t mean anything, and that the Elder’s connection means everything.”

Collaborating with communities to make meaning for museum visitors struck a chord with many participants, who expect collaboration with cultural communities to be guided by long-term relationships of trust. As one participant stated, “There needs to be more work done so that the mindset shifts and the cultural group is the authority” (about the meaning of their important stories and traditions).

Participants wish to see a modern museum build relationships with diverse and varied communities and demographics, including teens, seniors, LGBTQ2S+ people and communities of people with disabilities.

Regarding the diverse mix of communities of people with disabilities, one participant noted the following:

“[The] most recent information from Stats Canada [is] that over 20% of Canadians have some form of disability. The experiences of B.C. residents with disabilities should inform significant portions of collections and programming.”

Throughout the engagement, participants expressed a desire for their provincial museum to be one that

reaches out widely and deeply, in order to build or strengthen reciprocal relationships with historically ignored or misrepresented cultural communities. Participants specifically cited a few non-Indigenous communities as examples of communities with whom a modern museum in B.C. can and should build relationships. Although this is not to be considered an exhaustive list or as evidence that the current Royal BC Museum necessarily lacks these relationships, suggestions included: British Columbians of Japanese, Chinese, Punjabi, Doukhorbor, African and diverse Black ancestries. At the sessions in Vancouver, participants noted that a modern museum could play an important role in reflecting the province’s history with the ancestors of first-generation and second-generation immigrants and diasporic youth.

Just as participants flagged the importance of collaborating with all Indigenous communities within the province, participants also emphasized the importance of collaborating with non-Indigenous cultural and other communities. Participants underscored the importance of reaching out to B.C.’s diverse communities to learn more about the ways in which they understand their unique histories in this land.

Participants also noted the value of museum-based education in addressing discrimination against identified groups, beginning with direct community outreach:

“I think they need to go to communities and see what communities want to be told about them.”

Participants consider the relationships between a museum and communities to be ongoing and collaborative, rather than one-off consultation. One participant described this approach of collaborative curation as “...making sure that the people of that place are able to share the history through their lenses. It is not enough to inquire on Indigenous people or B.C.’s (other) communities, but rather to work with them in curating stories that are representative of their communities.” As another participant suggested, “Get the local communities actively engaged in telling their own stories.” Naturally, even the most dynamic provincial museum cannot be everywhere at once, and many British Columbians live outside of Greater Victoria.

Subtheme 2.2. Nurture Relationships with Regional Museums

“Local museums are really important. There are about 400 museums within B.C. Make a stronger connection between the Royal BC Museum and local museums.”

Participants throughout the province envisioned the Royal BC Museum as a “hub” for a network of regional museums. “The Museum should serve as a hub connecting with small community museums.” Participants characterized this relationship as one of reciprocity. In essence, the Museum is a resource for sharing expertise and training with other museums, and regional museums can contribute local stories to the principal Provincial Museum. A participant far from Victoria observed:

“One thing that I’ve noticed about a lot of communities is that they themselves will also have little museums that highlight some aspect of their own history, and will show it in a way that is respectful to themselves. And I think it would be interesting if the Museum could have kind of like a networking program.”

Subtheme 2.3. Build Partnerships with Other Organizations

Participants identified libraries, community centres and school districts as important partners for a modern Provincial Museum. Such partnerships would enable these institutions to creatively share collections and programming, as well as to introduce the Museum experience to new audiences. Some participants envisioned relationships with companies for the purpose of obtaining innovative technology or additional funding. Two formal submissions encouraged the Museum to continue strengthening relationships with various provincial government departments.

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS

Theme 3. Living History

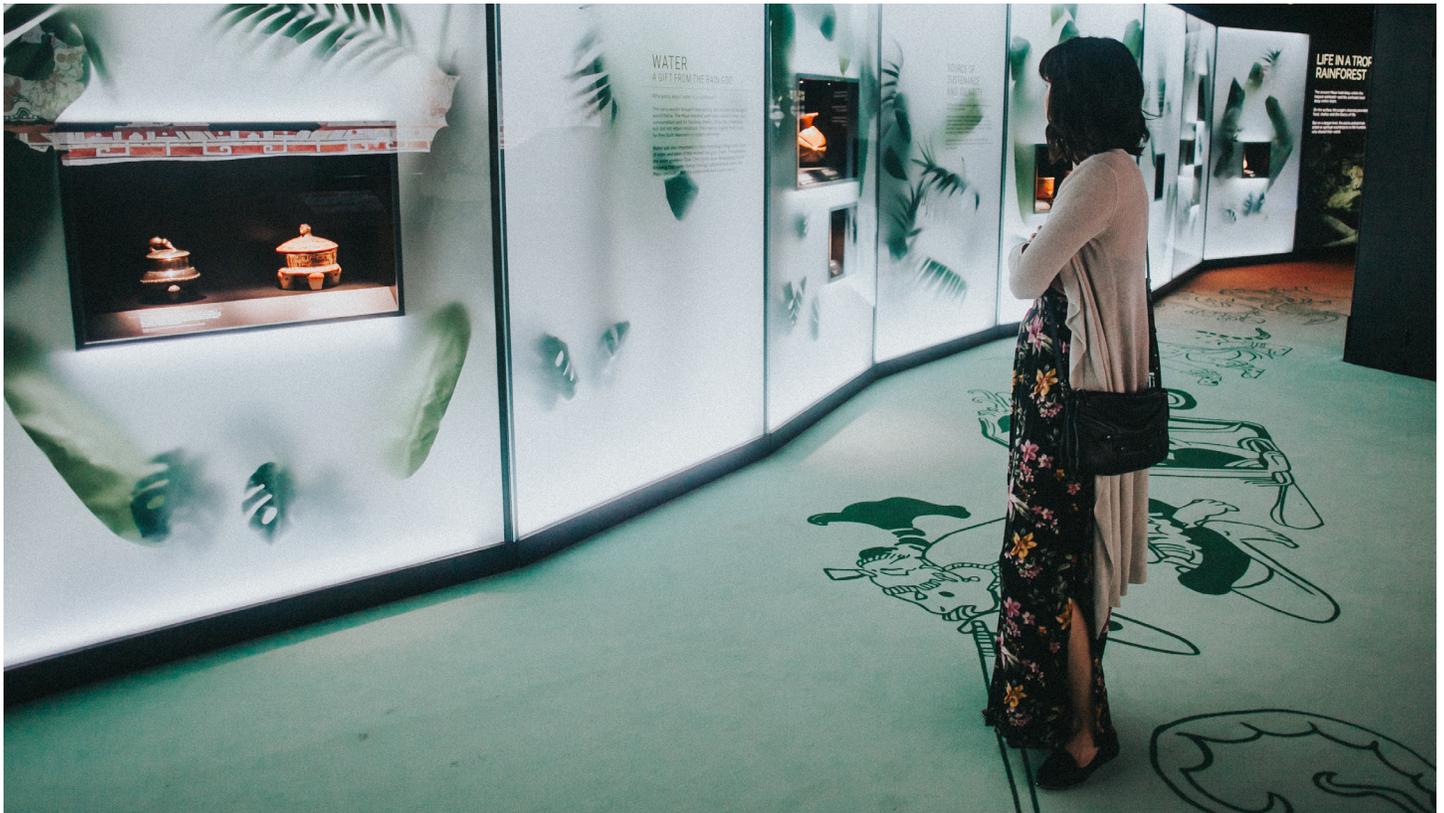


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Subtheme 3.1. Context and Continuity

Many participants remarked that a modernized Museum should present information and artifacts curated to tell a “complete” story. Participants desire artifacts that “come alive.” They want to know how the object came to be at the Museum, and they want to understand its cultural significance. They see artifacts as bearers of meaning, whose purpose is to enrich the stories being told.

Participants throughout the engagement process agreed that museums should tell these stories in order to connect the “past, present and future.” Building on this idea, a participant encouraged a modernized Museum to “interpret the evidence that we call ‘the past’, inform the present and inspire curiosity and investment in the future.”

Participants highlighted the role that museums play in supporting cultural activities. As one participant noted, “objects will not always live forever”; therefore, if museums can help to keep “intangible knowledge and skill” alive, “then we [will] have something forever.”

Participants expect a modernized Museum to teach about communities in the past in a way that honours the vitality of present communities. As one participant observed, “Presenting Indigenous cultures and peoples as ‘artifacts’ or primarily ‘of a bygone age prior to colonization’ undermines the connection to culture in the present.” Similarly, one participant highlighted the importance of understanding and teaching that B.C.’s history begins long before colonization.

The two formal submissions that addressed this theme emphasized different considerations. They identified the importance of past and present ecological and climate data for understanding the future environment of B.C. One online comment captured this thought: “I would expect a modern Museum to reflect the history and current state of British Columbia. I would expect it to provide a baseline of B.C. biodiversity as it is now.”

Subtheme 3.2. Multiple Voices to Tell B.C.’s Complicated Histories

Participants want a modernized Museum to tell B.C.’s histories through multiple lenses, by introducing “multiple narratives.” There was a deep desire to see different historical views and experiences presented side-by-side.

Ensuring that multiple voices are featured in a modern museum was important to participants who expect non-European “worldviews” also to be reflected in a provincial institution. Participants expressed a desire for a “truthful” museum that does not focus entirely on what some described as “one perspective” that has been “heard before.” Participants also mentioned a desire for a modern museum to include the voices, perspectives and stories of LGBTQ2S+ people, women, people with disabilities and youth.

Featuring multiple voices was also considered as a crucial consideration for accurate representation. All communities are made up of diverse individuals with different opinions and different stories. Participants encouraged the Museum to focus on individual voices and avoid broad generalizations about an entire community. Participants expressed a desire for stories that share “multi-faceted identities and experiences in terms of gender, ancestry, ability.”

For many participants, accurately reflecting many voices also meant accurately reflecting “difficult” parts of British Columbia’s history. Participants expect that “the Museum should not shy away from [any history], and instead allow dialogue to happen.”

“Our history is not all good. The rounding up of [Canadians of Japanese ancestry] in WWII is one example. But we need to tell the bad with the good.”

Subtheme 3.3. More Temporary Exhibits

In order to reflect the most current research and to strengthen the connections between the past and the present, participants underscored the value of rotating, temporary exhibitions.

“But what about descendants of families [the exhibits feature]? What about other, more contemporary voices? [We need] some way of incorporating new perspectives... Otherwise, things get dated and they get stuck in time. Maybe this means we stop making these permanent exhibits and create more contemporary spaces that keep moving and changing.”

Temporary exhibitions were also identified as opportunities for partnerships with regional museums or communities throughout B.C. in order to highlight different regional or geographic stories across the province.

Some participants noted that funding might be a potential barrier to frequent updates. Other participants supported the idea of temporary or rotating exhibitions in order to encourage return visits: “I love when museums keep up to date and when things change.”

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS

Theme 4. Accessibility for All



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

“A modernized museum experience would be one that is accessible to all individuals of varying cultures and abilities. For example, the museum could have free entrance days.”

In addition to seismic standards, expanding access to a Museum constructed 50 years ago was identified as a key impetus for modernizing the Museum. For this reason, it is not surprising that the issue of accessibility arose as an important characteristic of a modernized Museum. Accessibility also played a prominent role in participants’ ideas about how the Museum can most effectively tell stories of B.C.’s communities and collaborate most productively with people across the province.

Subtheme 4.1. Financial Accessibility

“In some ways it doesn’t matter what is on the inside if it is not financially accessible to everyone.”

The majority of participants, who identified the importance of accessibility, specifically mentioned financial accessibility. Participants believe cost should not be a barrier to enjoying a modernized museum. There were various suggestions for ways to provide a more financially accessible museum, including free entry one day a week, free access for B.C. residents and even universally free admission.

Participants suggested free access for locals, both as a way to encourage return visits and also as a way for a museum to be a place to which more local people

would consider bringing visiting friends and family. Some participants suggested that providing free access for locals, and specifically for people with lower income, would be a way for a museum to be an important community hub.

Some participants remember a time when the Royal BC Museum was free. They said that their relationship with the Museum changed as the admission price went up: “In the early years of the Museum, it was free. I went there often by myself as a teen. After marrying and having three young children, we attended the exhibits regularly. Then admission costs severely restricted our visits merely to the rare, free days.”

A Museum that is perceived as expensive to visit could limit the ability of a modernized Museum to fulfill its mandate. As one participant observed, “I think museums should be a place to learn and reflect on our society, and our ability to do that is limited when there’s a \$20 fee. Everyone should be able to [learn and reflect], not just a small group.”

Subtheme 4.2. Accessibility of Collections and Archives

One key issue that surfaced during the engagement was access to the collection and archives by individuals, Indigenous communities and regional museums. Low-barrier access to the collections and archives, including financial access, was expressed as a particularly crucial factor for productive collaboration. Access to archival materials at low cost was highlighted as especially important for another reason, given the Museum’s influence within B.C.’s network of archives. As one participant suggested, “Other people look to the Royal BC Museum for leadership. I know of one small town archive that basically just copies the fee and licensing structure that the Royal BC Museum sets.”

Those who spoke to this issue strongly supported digitization of the collection, along with an easily navigated, “engaging online portal.” This portal also was identified as a tool for gathering stories. One participant suggested that such a portal also presents an “interesting opportunity to explore community-sourced knowledge...where people can add local content, such as maps and stories.” Participants expressed interest

in the Museum providing programs to encourage data collection by citizen scientists by means of an online portal that allows submissions.

Digitization of the collections and archives is also a vital tool for the Museum to provide geographic accessibility and ensure that “people living far away can still access [the Museum].” The connection between the geographic accessibility provided by digitization, and affordable use of archival materials for local communities, is expressed in this quote:

“The online archives are a super great resource and sometimes we want it to be better, so that is why I get up in arms about reproduction fees. In general, the Royal BC Museum and the archives are really cool, because they hold things that are relevant to history up north and are a great resource in general, so increase more access to the archives.”

It was noted that for visually impaired, low-sight visitors or visitors who are blind to be able to access this portal, the website needs to be navigable by a screen reader and follow available accessibility guidelines.

Subtheme 4.3. Accessibility of Exhibits to People with Different Abilities

“I believe all museums must do a better job to make their collections come alive to all members of our communities.”

There was a deep interest among participants in museums that provide exhibits that “honour different learning styles and needs.” Participants expect exhibits to be designed with these differences in mind. Accommodating kinesthetic (or tactile) learners was frequently mentioned. Participants want to ensure that visitors who are not literate in technology, or who cannot afford smartphones, would not be excluded from interactive or technology-based exhibits. Likewise, participants suggested that technology be used to enrich visitors’ with disabilities museum experience, with the understanding that some technology is inherently inaccessible to people with certain types of disabilities. For those with visual disabilities, this includes most touchscreens or a reliance on projection. While discussing the need for accessible exhibits, one participant highlighted the need to consider the height of objects on display for wheelchair users.

A museum visitor who is visually impaired provided a list of ways that collections can be brought to life:

“A fully accessible website that is easy to navigate. A significant number of regular artifacts that can be touched by visitors. Docents/tour guides who are trained to assist visitors with various disabilities to enjoy their visit. Enhanced touch tours for people with disabilities. Kiosks with buttons, so that they can be operated independently by all visitors.”

As previously discussed, an overwhelming majority of participants expect a modernized Museum to have immersive and interactive exhibits, and this style of exhibit often enables a more fulfilling museum experience for visitors with disabilities.

A number of the suggestions in this report regarding disability were shaped by participants who were either visually impaired or who have visually impaired people in their life. It is not an exhaustive list of ways to accommodate people with disabilities, and some participants noted that what is necessary for visually impaired visitors may make an exhibit more difficult for people with other disabilities. As the Museum develops plans and designs for visitors with different requirements, participants suggested hiring consultants with disabilities to advise curators and program developers as new exhibits are planned and created. One participant remarked that the “Rick Hansen Foundation specifically has a rating certification for the building and (for) approaching the interactivity of displays and exhibit fabrication with [an accessibility] lens.”

Participants stressed the importance of exhibits being accessible in many different languages. Participants recommended “multi-lingual equipment,” such as self-guided audio tours, for both “the top five languages” most frequently spoken in B.C. and also for tourists. Participants suggested making exhibits more inviting to more communities by labeling exhibits with the specific language related to the community whose story is told in the exhibit.

Subtheme 4.4. Geographic Accessibility

“If the Royal BC Museum is mandated with telling the stories of British Columbia, then all residents deserve access in some form.”

Most participants throughout the engagement felt strongly that people from all across B.C. should have access to the Museum. Many suggestions for how to expand geographic access were discussed, including this one:

“I think that the Royal BC Museum needs to see itself beyond its physical structure. While it is important to have a central location, for some aspects storefront, mobile and pop-up ‘museums’ might also be considered.”

Participants, particularly those who live in regions away from Victoria and Vancouver Island, frequently suggested the idea of travelling collections, satellite museums or pop-up exhibits in partnership with local museums or community spaces such as halls, centres, or libraries. One individual commented on the cost of a trip if you live outside of Victoria. “For so many families, the cost of a visit to Victoria and the Royal BC Museum is prohibitive: road travel, ferry, hotels, meals, entry fees. Some have no car and a limited income.” Another participant suggested travel grants as a way to increase access to Museum holdings.

One participant living in the North commented that access to the Museum’s collections is a concern, especially because the Royal BC Museum is a “primary repository for artifacts and in some cases ancestral remains.” This participant asked, “In terms of modernizing, why is it always centralized in one spot? Is there a way that certain collections can be more available or accessible in other parts of the province, particularly the North?”

Subtheme 4.5. Building Accessibility

Participants want a modernized Museum to be “accessible for all,” including “the building itself.” There is an expectation that independent navigation through the building should be possible for visitors with disabilities.

“We need to update [the Museum] structurally to make it adhere to guidelines. When I visited museums in Ottawa, the structure of the buildings provided an all-inclusive learning experience. The buildings were easily accessed by people with a variety of disabilities.”

Participants emphasized that increasing accessibility enhances the Museum experience for everyone, including people who need time to rest periodically after encountering a lot of information, as well as elderly visitors. As one person commented, “it is nice to have a chair, to sit and rest, and then go on.”

Participants encouraged the Museum to define accessibility beyond physical and financial considerations and to also take into account socio-cultural inclusivity more generally, in order for all members of the community to feel welcome.

Subtheme 4.6. Museum as a Community Hub

Those who work from 9 to 5 want to be able to enjoy the Museum. Lectures, dance nights, cultural celebrations and other events were mentioned as opportunities to open the Museum to different audiences. Participants suggested that co-organizing these events with cultural organizations or not-for-profits could introduce the Museum to new visitors from diverse communities, including those who previously might not have felt connected to or included by the Museum. After all, as one participant noted, “the Museum can’t be expected to do it all” on its own.

One participant imagined all the people who would be able to benefit from a Museum that serves as a community hub, much like a contemporary community library:

“If the Museum has open space, then they can consider being a public space. So seniors and elders can have some other places to go during the day. Teens will have a good place to hang out. And those open areas can be targeted to younger populations, when kids have a desire to go there. They bring their parents and that, in turn, brings attraction... This also opens up more room for community engagement.”

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS

Theme 5. State-of-the-Art Facilities and Operations



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Subtheme 5.1. Architecture as an Integrated Part of the Experience

A modern museum experience is enhanced by the design of the building. Participants expect this design to be “welcoming,” filled with “light,” and immersive.

“Open layout for lots of people.”

The design of the Museum is also a way to show connections between histories and to create community. “If we divide the Museum into lots of rooms, we could also set up room in the middle for conversation in order to bring in communities and build bridges between them.”

One participant noted the opportunity for a new building to showcase innovative approaches to sustainable

design. Important elements of design innovation are not always visible to public visitors and a modernized Museum also needs the space and the resources to support work behind the scenes.

Subtheme 5.2. Adequate Resources for Research and Curation, for Collections and Archives

Throughout the engagement process, participants observed that a modernized Museum would need to provide staff with the capacity to collaborate and support stakeholders with archival and collection research. Participants noted the value of these aspects of the Museum’s work for individuals, Indigenous and other communities, regional museums and scientific

researchers. Some people spoke about the importance of properly controlled climate conditions and adequate storage space for the archives and collections in a modernized Museum.

“The current B.C. Archives building is insufficient for archival storage... It sits below sea-level. This could and should be mitigated in a new facility.”

Participants noted that the Museum would need adequate resources to support its vital work to nurture and sustain important relationships and deeper collaborations. Participants specifically mentioned a need for designated spaces for stakeholders and Indigenous communities to spend time with archived materials and collection materials.

“The records concerning the Indigenous archives are traumatic, and [currently] they have to [be read] in public. There’s no private space to do that. Creating this space is really important, actually... [Likewise] having a lot of more inclusive space and artwork in the design of the space, so the people who visit see themselves represented.”

Subtheme 5.3. An Attraction for Tourists or for British Columbians?

Participants had a range of ideas about who should be the Royal BC Museum’s target audience. Some participants felt that the Museum should cater to tourists, while other participants felt that British Columbians should be the primary target audience. Participants who suggested catering to tourists emphasized that tourism is an important source of revenue generation for the Museum and other community stakeholders. The idea of featuring “blockbuster” exhibitions was suggested as one way to attract tourists. It was noted that sometimes these featured exhibitions focus on histories from beyond B.C.

There is perhaps a link between the sentiments of participants who felt that British Columbians should be the provincial Museum’s primary audience, and the widespread support for participants to be able to see their own histories reflected in a modernized Museum. Other participants suggested that a strong Museum could serve both British Columbians and tourists.

Museums are a way “to learn about the local culture” when travelling. For this reason, focusing on local histories may also attract tourists. On the other hand, because so many British Columbians have connections to other places in the world, representing histories from other places may in fact be telling the stories of the roots of some British Columbians.

Subtheme 5.4. Organizational Structure

Throughout the engagement process, participants envisioned a Museum where the organizational structure reflects the values they associate with a modernized Museum. For some participants, this means creating more staff positions with direct responsibility for forming and maintaining these relationships. There was a sense that the Royal BC Museum does not currently “have the capacities to do that.”

For other participants, a modernized Museum can reflect its values within its organizational structure by building greater capacity for staff and volunteers. Both disability advocates and people interested in an interactive experience supported the idea of expanded training programs for staff and volunteers to become engaged guides. Participants also saw youth mentorship as a key staff role, especially in the pursuit of introducing a new generation to biological specimen collection and storage.

The role of volunteers was heavily discussed throughout the engagement process. Some participants advocated for more volunteer opportunities as a way for youth to gain experience and a way for retired people to share their knowledge. Others called for the complete elimination of volunteer roles as a way to ensure that work is properly compensated. One person spoke to the importance of both considerations: “There should be younger people volunteering. There can never be too many people volunteering. They should encourage people to participate. The balance is a problem, because it’s easy enough for the government to say, I’m going to get rid of these three full-time positions, because it will be taken over with the volunteers.”

Participants called on the Museum to actively seek staff who reflect diverse communities in B.C. “at all levels throughout the Museum: staff, volunteers, tour guides, and board members, as that is where major decisions about the Museum are made.”

Subtheme 5.5. Build on Strengths of the Current Museum

Some participants expressed concerns that focusing during the modernization engagement process on what could or should be changed, might detract from an appreciation of the Museum's current strengths. Some of these participants pointed to the insights of the many people who are part of the current structure of the Royal BC Museum. One participant advocated for a modernization approach that is "holistic [and] includes communications people, archive people [and] stakeholders."

Another participant expressed a desire to build a modernized Museum on the strengths of the current Museum:

"I would expect [a modernized museum] to not only expand upon what is presently offered, but also to retain what is already recognized as first-class in the global museum community. By this I mean the second and third floor dioramas."

Subtheme 5.6. Amenities

Participants from Victoria spoke of wanting the Museum to have amenities that will encourage city residents to spend more time at the Museum. They identified the cafeteria, coffee shop and gift shop as some of the amenities that would draw repeat visitors. There was disagreement as to the direction a modernized coffee shop and cafeteria should take. Some participants expect food and beverages to be "affordable" and envision a comfortable place to study, whereas another participant imagined a restaurant they could visit for a special dinner out.

More frequently, these amenities were identified as a way to strengthen the Museum's existing relationships or to build new relationships with communities. Participants described visions of a gift shop featuring and supporting artists from Indigenous and historically misrepresented cultural communities. Others proposed a modern cafeteria featuring food from different cultures, as long as it is not tokenistic. Another individual considers focusing on local food in the cafeteria as a way for the Museum to be a leader in sustainability.

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS

Theme 6. A Place of Learning



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Subtheme 6.1. Public Education

Throughout the engagement process, participants defined one of the principal roles of a modernized Museum as a place of public education. Participants value the Museum's capacity to engage visitors in "thought-provoking" ways that contribute to British Columbians "understanding ourselves better."

"I recognize the power of museums as institutions and their role as conduits for transforming the public consciousness, invigorating civic engagement, and celebrating cultural identity."

Some participants saw the project of modernizing the Museum as an opportunity to address knowledge gaps among British Columbians, particularly to provide a better understanding of non-European histories and greater understanding of remote communities. One participant noted that visitors have an "opportunity for our education to continue and be corrected, as our museums are more agile [than schools]." One participant identified a very particular gap: "My daughter graduated high school knowing nothing about First Nations. The museum could have a role to play in [addressing] that."

Subtheme 6.2. From Gatekeeper to Facilitator

“[A modern museum] embraces the role of museum as facilitator rather than controlling the narrative.”

Some participants underscored the value of a museum’s role in inviting visitors to question their assumptions and to expand their understanding of social and environmental histories. More specifically, participants want a museum designed and equipped to facilitate their learning: “I hope that [the Museum] will take up the challenge of becoming a leading facilitator of learning and dialogue through providing a platform for groups who have stories to tell, stories that can be enriched by the collections held by the Royal BC Museum.”

One participant gave an example of how a museum had provided them with the opportunity to clarify and question their understanding of a new topic: “[I] wanted to learn more, because it was my first time hearing about this background and history. [A museum in Prince Rupert] was a place to answer my questions, specifically about Indigenous people. It was a safe place to ask questions.” Educators also look to museums as important resources.

Subtheme 6.3. Resource for Educators

The Museum should continue to expand dynamic education programming for field trips and organized school-aged visits: “Make field trips for kids more exciting and memorable... We want a kid’s experience of the museum to be so mind-blowingly awesome, that they want to come again and again.” The interest in dynamic field trips to the Museum emerged most strongly within the online discussion forum.

Some participants discussed the value of providing accessible online resources for teachers. Video calls with researchers or virtual tours of exhibits in real time were suggested as tools to enable teachers and students in schools that are located far away from Victoria to still have a dynamic museum experience.

The capacity of the Royal BC Museum to provide all teachers in British Columbia with unique resources is highlighted by this comment:

“School districts are all different, but how much history are kids getting that is pre-contact history or even geological history?”

This excerpt from a formal letter envisions a modernized Museum, which plays a vital educational role in collaboration with partners beyond the school system: “Partnerships with other institutions and event-coordination with interest groups (...) will see further integration and collaboration between amateurs and professionals centred around a tangible hub of learning in the Royal BC Museum.” This question from a community member in Prince George suggests there may be room to expand existing partnerships, and public knowledge of those partnerships with schools around the province: “I wonder if the Museum has a connection with school systems? Maybe in Victoria.”

WHAT WE HEARD: MAJOR DISCUSSION THEMES AND FINDINGS

Theme 7. Research



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Subtheme 7.1. Museum as a Resource and Partner for Researchers and Other Research Institutions

Formal submissions highlighted the importance of continuing to maintain artifact and specimen collections as resources for researchers and for other research institutions, including international partners. Three formal submissions pointed to a need to ensure adequate space and resources to facilitate paleontological research in B.C.

Subtheme 7.2. Recognize Collections as a Tool for Policy Decisions

Only in formal submissions was the “unique” role the Museum plays in policy decisions discussed. These submissions suggested the current and historical collections in a modernized Museum should continue to “assist in ecosystem and human health assessments [by] providing accurate science-based information to inform decision-making.”



SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANT EVALUATION SURVEYS

At the end of each in-person community meeting, participants were invited to complete an evaluation survey. This provided organizers with feedback about the quality of the experience for the participants, as well as informing planning for subsequent meetings. At the in-person community meetings, participants were asked three qualitative questions and three open-ended questions. At the virtual community meeting, participants were asked Question 1 and Question 3.

Q1 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your experience as a participant of today's dialogue?

Q2 What has made this dialogue meaningful to you?

Q3 Do you feel you had enough opportunity to express your views in a way that felt comfortable to you?

Q4 To what extent did you feel your needs as a participant were taken care of (e.g. by providing support services, refreshments, etc.)?

Q5 What suggestions do you have to improve future sessions like this one?

Q6 What can we do to better promote public engagements like this?

Below is a summary of the survey evaluation feedback collected at all seven in-person community meetings and the virtual community meeting. Out of the 131 participants, 105 filled out the evaluation survey (80.2%). The percentages reported below do not include blank responses.

94.3% of respondents were satisfied with their experience at the dialogue. 97.1% of respondents felt they had enough opportunities to express themselves in a way that felt comfortable to them. 97.0% of respondents felt their needs as a participant were taken care of.

1. Summary of What Made this Dialogue Meaningful to Participants:

- Opportunity to involve communities and shape the future of the Museum;
- Opportunity to listen and share with people from diverse backgrounds and hear other people's perspectives;
- Thoughtful and respectful space for disagreements and collaboration;
- Sense that ideas will be documented and used;
- Facilitation and moderation of table dialogues by student facilitators led to focused discussions;
- Direct conversation with Museum leadership; and
- Opportunity to share experiences about the value of museums and collections with people throughout the province.

Appendix 4 lists a summary of participants' suggestions for improving future dialogue sessions and, more generally, future engagement processes.

2. Top Two Wishes for the Future of the Royal BC Museum

In the surveys completed at the end of each community meeting, participants were invited to share their top two recommendations for the future of the Royal BC Museum. Keeping in mind the mix of participants who have visited the Museum and those who have not done so, the themes from the answers are consistent with what is summarized in the *What We Heard* Report.

Overall, participants' top two recommendations were for dynamic exhibits and dynamic programming.

"Improved digital media-online exhibits, superior online archive database, better use of technology (virtual reality for example) in exhibits."

"Mini-exhibits in Vancouver or pop-up shops; open a food court of historical food from different people in B.C. in the Royal BC Museum Food court."

NEXT STEPS IN THE MODERNIZATION PROCESS



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

The feedback contained in this report will help inform development of a business case in the Fall 2019. The business case will include considerations of costs, location, program, timelines and impact on stakeholders.

The Royal BC Museum has begun the process of engaging directly with Indigenous communities. This work will continue throughout the Museum modernization project. Phase one of this work is focused on discovering themes and gathering Indigenous perspectives on a modernized Museum. Phase two will be focused on programmatic and Museum gallery development.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Engagement Outreach

Posted the poster on engagement website – to make it available for social media sharing or PDF downloading.

Sent emails to the following people and groups:

- 209 people who subscribed to receive project updates on the engage site
- Local First Nations
- Local MLAs

Sent invitations to the following:

- Prince George: Lheidli T'enneh
- Vancouver: Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh, as well as Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre
- Duncan: Cowichan Tribes
- Victoria: Songhees First Nation
- Kelowna: Westbank First Nation
- Key stakeholders in each location including local government and council, heritage societies and foundations, cultural foundations, museums and museum associations, arts councils and art galleries. The number of invitations sent out by location were as follows:

529 – Vancouver

148 – Victoria

89 – Kelowna

74 – Duncan

Shared information for inclusion in newsletters and listservs with the following groups:

- BC Social Studies Provincial Specialist Association
- BC Recreation and Parks Association
- BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

Promoted the meetings through paid advertising two ways:

- 1) Paid print advertising in meeting locations to encourage attendance:
 - Cowichan Valley Citizen
 - Campbell River Mirror
 - Times Colonist
 - Kelowna Capital News
 - Vernon Morning Star
 - Penticton Western News
- 2) Facebook ads promoting the engagement and face-to-face sessions were posted by the Royal BC Museum.

Encouraged participation through social media, including:

- Facebook campaigns for each face-to-face community meeting (created SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue)
- Information and Twitter graphics were shared on @govTogetherBC, @bcgovnews, @RoyalBCMuseum and @SFUDialogue
- Minister Beare shared news on her Twitter account
- Twitter graphics were tweeted with geographical hashtags to reach targeted areas of the region (#kelowna, #victoria, etc.)
- Posted to Kijiji and Craigslist arts and culture pages for Prince George meeting

Posted the information about each face-to-face session in community events calendars. Calendars by location:

- Vancouver, 13 (including Daily Hive, WestEnder, Georgia Straight, Richmond Review)

- Duncan, 17 (including Cowichan Culture, North Island Gazette, Harbour Living)
- Victoria, 11 (including DVBA, Times Colonist, CBC Radio)
- Kelowna, 9 (including Kelowna Now, The Daily Courier, Penticton Herald)

The B.C. government promoted the engagement process through media in the following ways:

- Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture sent out a News Release about the public engagement province-wide on March 22.
- Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture sent out Information Bulletins about meetings in each community regionally (5 Information Bulletins)
- Minister Beare conducted three interviews with local media.
- CEO Jack Lohman conducted 2 interviews.

To facilitate the community meetings, the SFU team emailed:

- Individuals and networks, including various offices and departments at local universities within each region.
- University-based (mostly student) facilitators and notetakers. Each local team member was provided with information and a request to spread the word through their local networks.

APPENDICES

Appendix 2: Summary of Where Formal Submissions Came From

In total, 16 formal submissions were submitted. The breakdown of these submissions is provided below.

4 organizations submitted formal letters:

- Braille Literacy Canada
- The Native Plant Study Group
- Pacific Salmon Foundation
- Archives Association of British Columbia

2 branches of the Provincial Government submitted formal letters:

- The Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group
- The Ecosystems Branch within the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

8 individuals sent formal submissions via email and 2 individuals submitted formal letters in-person at the community meetings.

APPENDICES

Appendix 3: Methodology

Nota Bene: For purposes of clarity, where a participant’s comment was about museums in general, the lower-case for “museum” was used. In contrast, where a comment was about the Royal BC Museum, the upper-case for “Museum” or “Royal BC Museum” was used. Where uncertain, lower-case was employed.

1. Note-taking and Facilitating at the Roundtable Community Meetings

During each meeting, volunteer facilitators were present at each table to guide the discussion as “neutral conveners,” while note-takers took written notes of all ideas shared, whether popular or unpopular. All ideas were noted without identifying the speaker, in order to protect the privacy of public participants. The facilitators primarily were graduate and upper level undergraduate students from the closest university to the event location: the University of Northern British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver Island University’s Cowichan Campus, the University of Victoria and the University of British Columbia’s Okanagan campus.

2. Data Analysis

SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue analyzed the ideas contributed in response to the three discussion questions by combining the notes from the roundtable community meetings and the responses to the online feedback form. The formal submissions were analyzed separately for two principal reasons: to provide equal weight to all public input, and also to provide transparency regarding significant differences between the relatively lengthy, formal submissions from organizations, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the ideas contributed by individuals online and at the community meeting dialogue tables. Whereas the online comments and the ideas generated at the community meetings responded to one or more of the three engagement questions, the formal submissions followed their own structure. Section E of this report, entitled *What We Heard: Major Discussion Themes and Findings*, integrates the themes from all three principal avenues of feedback.

APPENDICES

Appendix 4: More Feedback from Participant Evaluation Surveys

1. Summary of Suggestions to Improve Future Sessions:

1.1. Structure of the dialogue

- Provide more time for the open discussion;
- Hold the events at a variety of times; some people preferred Saturday afternoons, while others can only attend weekday evenings;
- Opportunities to share ideas in ways other than talking, such as drawing ideas;
- Have a way to report out in “real time,” perhaps using technology; and
- Some people enjoyed the small groups to ensure everyone was heard; others wished for more people at each table to spark conversation.

1.2. Community engagement

- Increased promotion and publicity for the event, including promoting the event earlier;
- Ensure all age groups, ethnic communities, and other stakeholders, including local museums, are part of the conversation; and
- Go to smaller communities, especially First Nations, to hold dialogues.

1.3. Context for the process

- Provide more context for the plans for the museum and what prompted the engagement, including having staff from the Royal BC Museum available for questions; and
- Some felt that the term “modernize” was unclear and that the questions were similar in scope.

2. Summary of Suggestions to Better Promote Public Engagements:

- More frequent use of news media, including radio and print media announcements;
- Participatory social media campaigns, including Instagram contests or giveaways;
- Posters in local coffee shops, organizations, universities;
- Have a raffle prize for attendance, such as passes to the museum;
- Identify community champions to promote the event;
- Provide invitations to specific community groups, and ask partner institutions to provide invitations;
- Chalk invitations in high traffic areas; and
- Include date, location and time of event in all social media.

