

VSG CONFERENCE 2020 Programme: Co-Creating the Future: Participation and the Role of Visitor Studies.
Thursday 5th and Friday 6th March 2020, Museum of London #VSGconf20



DAY 1: Thursday 5 th March 2020	
09.30-10.00	Registration and welcome coffee
10.00-10.10	Welcome by VSG Committee
10.10-11.00	Keynote: <i>The People's Palace Story – Innovating and working together in Glasgow</i>, Jane Rowlands (<i>Glasgow Life</i>) and Kevin Ditcham (<i>The Democratic Society</i>): This presentation by The Democratic Society, Glasgow Life and Glasgow City Council will explore the journey towards empowering communities in the capital transformation programme for the People's Palace in the heart of Glasgow. A co-production approach to community engagement and the impact it's had so far.
11.00- 11.45	Museum and community in networked innovative practice: <i>The role of evaluation in resolving tensions and supporting collaboration and co-design</i>, Karen Knutson and Kevin Crowley (<i>University of Pittsburgh</i>): In this presentation, we discuss our evaluation work with a network of museums and community-based organizations co-designing programming to support early literacy for urban families in a large US city. We'll discuss findings from the first two years of the project in the context of the challenges of using evaluation to simultaneously address impact, improvement and participation across the network.
11.45- 12.00	Coffee break
12.00- 13.00	Participation: <i>so easy a child can do it...</i>, Nicola Wallis and Kate Noble (<i>Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge</i>): An exploration of participatory practice in museums with very young children. What can we learn from Early Years Education about how to create a meaningful dialogue with our youngest visitors?
13.00- 14.00	Lunch (VSG AGM 13.45- 14.00)
14.00- 15.00	<i>Spatial politics of participation: the changing role of public spaces in arts institutions</i>, Stefania Donini (<i>Guildhall Barbican</i>): Using the Barbican Centre's foyers as a case study, this presentation discusses the tensions between ideas of inclusivity and participatory processes, and the needs of spatial management and maximising income for the sake of financial sustainability. It draws conclusions on alternative methods in visitor and audience studies, discussing the changing nature of public spaces in arts institutions, the role of mediators (i.e. visitor assistants) in audience research, as well as key questions on the 'publicness' of public spaces and programmes.
15.00- 15.15	Coffee break
15.15-16.00	<i>Challenging The Norm: Reconsidering Participatory Practice And Evaluation</i>, Kayte McSweeney (<i>British Museum and Independent Consultant</i>) and Jen Kavanagh (<i>Independent Curator</i>): Following the publication of their book ' <i>Museum Participation: New Directions for Audience Collaboration</i> ' in 2016, Kayte and Jen will reflect on their impressions of where the cultural heritage sector is today regarding participatory practice and collaborative curating. Drawing on case studies and considering the role visitor research is - or indeed should - play in evidencing the impact of these methods of working, this 'in conversation' will allow space for discussion and reflection to conclude day one of the conference.
16.00- 16.15	Reflections and looking ahead to Day 2
16:15- 17.15	Networking drinks (Museum of London), followed by optional VSG Social – drinks and dinner locally. <i>Please sign up at conference check-in desk when you arrive on Day 1 if you would like to join us for dinner.</i>

DAY 2: Friday 6 th March 2020		
09.30-10.00	Registration and welcome coffee	
10.00-10.10	Welcome by VSG Committee	
10.10-11.00	Keynote: Critical Conversations: Becoming a Listening Museum, Kirsty Devine (Project Director, Paisley Museum Re-imagined): Paisley Museum Re-Imagined is the biggest renewal that the Museum has ever undertaken in its 150 years history. To help realise this ambition, the wider public have been involved in shaping plans for the building, landscape and the collections. Co-production and audience engagement are core to all aspects of the redevelopment and the approach has resulted in changes in practice and project outcomes. While challenging at times, ultimately the aim is to create a rich and diverse museum experience.	
11.00 –11.15	Coffee Break	
11.15- 12.45	Listening to Londoners: Developing a New Museum of London, Elly Magson, Lauren Souter and Vandana Patel (Museum of London): The Museum of London aims to work with 100,000 Londoners to inform the development of the new museum, opening in 2024. Participation, collaboration and co-curation opportunities are some of the ways in which the museum will involve Londoners in this project. But what does it mean to engage with this many people, and how is the museum doing it? Delegates will learn more about the engagement strategy for the new Museum of London; how the Talking Point format can be used to facilitate visitor research; and how the museum is using new and existing research to inform their methodology and decision-making. There will also be an opportunity to visit the museum following the session.	
12.45- 13.45	Lunch	
13.45- 14.45	Parallel Session 1A: Embedding participatory practice to create organisational change, Rosie Bullimore, Jatinder Kailey, Kim Klug (Historic Royal Palaces): This workshop will explore how Historic Royal Palaces is designing high-impact participatory programmes that benefit participants and their organisations whilst creating strategic, sustainable change at our palaces. Delegates will discuss methodologies for effectively collecting and using data for programme development, delivery and advocacy for change. Terrace Gallery	Parallel Session 1B: Thinking Exhibitions Systemically: What is the role of Visitor Research in Co-Production?, Julia Ankenbrand, Nabeelah Hafeez, Alice Parsons, Chris Whitby (University of Leeds/Bradford's National Museum Project): This practical session will introduce participants to using visitor research as part of an ongoing systemic experimental learning process, how it can make tensions visible and allow them to be to actively considered as part of moving towards sustainable co-produced change. Garden Room
14.45- 15.30	Putting the purpose into participation, Irenie Ekkeshis and Katie Dunstan (New Citizenship Project): Over the last year, six institutions - Wellcome Collection, Tredegar House, Royal Pavilion and Museums (Brighton & Hove), Fountains Abbey, The National Archives and York Minster - have worked together with New Citizenship Project to explore what it <i>really</i> means to think of people as participants in shaping cultural heritage, and institutions as places for that to happen. This workshop will invite and equip attendees - using a mix of theory and practice - to start the journey towards “purposeful participation” in their institutions.	
15.30 –15.45	Closing remarks from VSG Committee	