

Museum Essentials: Working with the Learning and Engagement Manifesto - Transcriptions

Dhikshana Turakhia Pering: Putting it into Practice

Hello, I'm Dhikshana Turakhia Pering, I'm the Head of Engagement and Skills at Somerset House and I'm also a Museums Association Board member and I was part of the team alongside Sharon and David that instigated looking at learning and engagement in the museum and gallery sector as well as doing the research and writing the Manifesto.

Using the Manifesto

The great thing about the Manifesto is it is a tool to create action. You don't have to do it all straight away find the Manifesto points that relate and connect to something you're already doing then take that piece of work and think how do I make it better and stronger to achieve this Manifesto point? Use the case studies attached to give you thoughts map it out for the short, medium and long term and gauge as you go along if it's working or you need to change direction.

You don't have to do this all alone find allies and peers in your organisation and outside that can help you sense-check and navigate this process. In preparing like this you also are looking at your own journey and your own development so it will be useful when you go for job interviews or your next step in your career. When you feel like you've achieved that point there's probably more that you can do so never think that you're at the end of your journey. Or if you want to, move onto another Manifesto point and tackle that.

Using this Manifesto as a guide creates a framework for yourself. It connects to the sector and can work for all organisations whatever your size or your remit. And it's steeped in research and collaboration so take that time for yourself as well. It's a Manifesto and not a fifty-page document for a reason. It's meant to give you a kick, a gut feeling to know what you're doing is right especially if you're not sure where to start. Manifestos are call to actions so see it that way but know each person will take that call in a different way and that's exactly what we need we don't all have to deliver this Manifesto in the same way.

Using this Manifesto will build your strengths. It will give you a way to map the impact you want to have but also support you to be the leader you want to be and whatever that means to you. Our work is about engagement, impact and enjoyment so enjoy the process of using the Manifesto as much as the end goal you want to achieve. Change is always the end goal but we know that change is never-ending. If you don't take the time to see how you're changing it's going to be exhausting, and no-one needs exhaustion in the mix of enjoyment, engagement and impact.

Sustainability & Change

The idea of sustainability focuses on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations. This work is never-ending so we need to find a sustainable way but also know that we are not going to achieve everything in one go. The journey of change is long and never-ending it doesn't mean you need to rush it or that you should feel that you have not succeeded if you do not achieve that final goal.

This Manifesto will succeed if we create scaffolding for each generation to build upon as our communities and our museums evolve. You don't need to do this alone; find allies internally and externally, look at the case studies but also find those that inspire you and seek their inside thoughts. We are quick to share successes but all of us should look to share the process the end result is never the most important part of the journey. All of this work is key to our own development. Remember that you should be tracking your journey and your processes. You may not achieve this Manifesto in all its glory. In fact, you are unlikely to. But if you instigate a small change and you build a platform for others to build upon then this Manifesto is succeeding, and so are you. So take that moment to just have a conversation about where you can make some small act of change and take it one step at a time to create the change you want to see for your museum and your community. We need it now more than ever.