

## Suggestions for Future Sessions from 2018 Conference

evaluation 101

Loved the session on what locals think about history. I heard that a similar session took place in Austin. I think this could happen in each city we visit. Great for both locals and beyond. Perfect tie in with the History Relevance campaign.

Immigration is a huge topic right now. I'd love to attend more sessions about tackling this potentially controversial topic, exhibits that have successfully integrated immigrants, and museums that engage with immigrant/non-white audiences successfully.

Women's history roles and the women who were in traditionally male roles. Women Blacksmiths Women Chuck Wagon Cooks and Ranchers Etc

Update on Nomenclature as it evolves: terminology development, addition of images and definitions, partnership with AAT for co-referencing, evolution to a linked data resource in 2020...

Integration of militia/state national guard histories into local and state narratives; there's a lot there.

A workshop on using International Sites of Conscience methodology. I attended a couple of their sessions in Kansas City, and have been to other sessions they have run elsewhere. I read about their approach in grad school, and would gladly pay for a day-long workshop session to really learn about their techniques and put them into practice.

Perhaps more interactive sessions on set topics (addressing slavery, monuments, collections conundrums, etc.) could come in handy so the attendees can have conversations and talk through their struggles together instead of trying to fit a single presentation or case-study to the work they are trying to do.

More "how to" sessions on ways of publicly interpreting difficult history to various audiences. More ideas on how to make house museums relevant to today's audience. More on how to engage millennials in the history museum process.

I can understand that all the proposals you get for sessions come from staff of large institutions -- they have large staff and "experts" on various topics. That creates the bias towards larger museums. I don't know the process for seeing proposals but I think you need to clearly request a few session proposals that specifically address small institutions.

Not necessarily session topics, but conference topics/issues to address in some form or fashion: more mentoring, more passing on wisdom/lessons learned from field, participatory - maker space activities, planning/project management, learning from non-museum sources.

Can Southern history survive in an atmosphere of multicultural attacks?

Some ideas: \* effective internships \* how to apply/nominate a museum or individual for an AASLH award \* strengths and weaknesses of various program delivery options (such as when to use living history techniques) \* what happens when you have to close the museum door forever (we hope this never happens, but...)

I'd like to see topics relevant to heritage areas, both state and national. Heritage Areas could use a forum to learn from each other, and museums and other organizations might benefit from sessions aimed at helping them understand how to work as partners in a heritage area, and reap the benefits. Since our host city is in one of the few states that has a heritage area program, and the adjacent state of Maryland also has heritage areas program, the upcoming meeting seems perfect for a session that is heritage area specific.

More specific inclusion of indigenous, Asian and Latino topics - glaringly absent from most discussions and presentations

A session about how to coordinate projects within your own and other teams (i.e. when a maintenance project collides with a program or when the development team project impacts the ebb and flow of the the curatorial team's work). How does an organization negotiate which department's project gets green lighted and which one has to give up more in order to support another department's initiative? Breaking down silos to work together for the common good of the

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organization when departments are at odds??? Historic houses/properties as community centers that bring diverse people together for the good of the community or neighborhood. How a historic house has helped change their neighbor's attitudes about the site for the benefit of the community.

Museum labels and interpretation, Collection numbering

How to actively engage with people using collections - making those collections held in storage more useful.

Mid-career sessions. Book discussions. Local history sessions to tell us more about the area. History of the work of the field - how can we know how to build up our field if we don't know what we are building on? We have a need to feed our history souls.

Accessibility should always be a topic.

More on future trends, kinda like the 2040 session this year but less touchy feely and more on how the world around museums is evolving and what we need to consider going forward.

Topics geared at administration - went to a case study on reformatting a volunteer program. It was helpful to talk about pitfalls and "worst case scenarios."

Native American history; more engagement with tribal museums/partners

Anything related to social media or using technology in storytelling.

technology hits or misses within exhibitions

More about women represented in history. Strategic planning for historic house museums.

"We want our stuff back" -- working with lawyers and law enforcement to reclaim missing artifacts.

More lightning or 75 ideas in 75 minutes

More about accessibility for people with disabilities.

Volunteer Recruitment Strategies

Working within the larger "learning ecosystem" (i.e. collaboration between museums and schools/districts; educator professional development; advisory boards; etc.) Collaboration between museums (programmatic, cross-promotion, etc.) Museums in non-rural areas (not instead of--but in addition to rural areas)

Basic Museum 101 small museum administration being bullied by your board

Innovations in collections storage & easy conservation.

Self-care for museum workers by Seema Rao.

I want to know more examples from very small staffed museums and their successes. Also, museums that are embedded into non-related parent organizations, but related to the theme. How do they do it? We don't have an easy way to incorporate volunteers in such a setting, so must rely on a couple of talented staff and a couple of interns. So, how did they make their projects successful and who did they collaborate with?

More conversation sessions--or schedule some of them so they don't all compete with concurrent sessions.

Help developing curricula, more sessions with social psychology techniques (my area of specialty)

Deaccessioning as a healthy collections management practice; More on fundraising and marketing; hiring and working with architects and designers

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Last year there was a great panel chaired by Anne Ackerson on Women in the Museum. Please bring this back!! I would like to see more panels on leadership issues. For example: - Creating a healthy work culture among employees. Managing work/life balance and encouraging staff to do so. - How institutional values can help inform all departments' activities and culture. - Recruiting "museum people" for top positions. - Board management - how to herd the cats. - Are there any really good leadership training programs out there? It seems like there's a great deal of interest on incubating future leaders within the field, but without any direction on how one learns to be a good leader.

More clarity about specific lessons learned, techniques applied, tools used, etc.

### Visitor Services sessions

It's sometimes difficult to propose sessions that take hard looks at our internal, often staff-focused struggles, but I do think we would benefit overall from more sessions that acknowledge and explore the challenges we face within our own institutions as opposed to what we encounter with our audiences. We are generally outward-focused institutions, but it's often the inside stuff that really makes or breaks us.

cross generational endeavors in the field state of the state panel with NPS employees more women's history, historic house history and religious history topics perhaps a session with senior staff approaching the conclusion of their working years - lessons learned, hopes for the future, etc.

Session topics geared towards 1) accessibility, 2)a "state-of-the-state" for historic house museums, 3) a session on HR and managing staff who are "passionate yet overworked,"4) and how museums can effectively manage all of the civic charges we are faced with including DEI, accessibility, education partners, spaces for civic dialogue and truth-telling, etc.

### History programming for early childhood

More on volunteers, exhibit designing, living history

More people should have been at the Unconscious Bias workshop--it was great, I suggest we continue in this vein

More sessions on material culture, exhibits, interpretation, and practical application of theory.

More management/nuts and bolts topics.

### Evaluation

Professional issues and career planning

Exhibit case sourcing and or purchasing

I went to a phenomenal sessions about managing change by Linnea Grim and Trevor Jones (which was also great because it was so clear about its goals, outcomes, and deliverables). I think there could be a strong, organized track focusing on administration, management, and operation issues, especially for mid-career professionals but also for new people entering the field and new directors.

How to work with libraries; library partnerships; local history rooms at other institutions

More out of the box ways of thinking about programs and exhibits. Most highlighted topics this time seemed pretty standard. I want to new ideas! cross departmental and cross topic ways to approach topics...

There is so much to learn at this conference. I was in no way disappointed but I would like to have one session that focuses more on the curation of history. How the nature of exhibit design has evolved and why.

I hope next year that you have more sessions on grants and funding options. I would also like to see more sessions on technology and whether our best practices need to change to adapt to a

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changing world. I would also like to see more sessions targeted specifically for small museums.

Issues in small--really small--museums. Many presenters bemoaned the fact that their "small" museum only has a \$1.5 million dollar budget. Or that people with legal concerns should consult their museum's general council. Many presenters were from museums that have staff/budget enough to prepare and present. I'd suggest you actively recruit presenters who truly represent and "get" the small museums, those that have one part time employee or whose budget is barely enough to cover the cost of utilities. How to deal with boards, elected officials, leaders who are not interested in history or committed to supporting the historical sites for which they have responsibility. Challenges faced by rural museums/programs: volunteers, budget, visitation, revenue, marketing. How to create an exhibit from the very beginning to completion when you have no specialty staff. Sharing information on exhibit text. How much is enough? Research methodologies.

I will likely be submitting a proposal about Best Practices for supporting front line staff. It came up multiple times. Could also use more about training volunteers to understand systemic racism and/or inclusion. What was present usually focused on staff. With limited time with volunteers, how to communicate the message, train effectively, etc. Has anyone been using videos for training? How has that gone?

Using part time staff and volunteers effectively. When you are a team of one... Museums run by municipalities and how to navigate politics Museum best practices for people who didn't study for this...and just wound up here...

Dealing with contentious Boards. Creating an Educational Narrative based on your Mission.

Using museum/historic sites for private rentals - how to balance that and make it work for the mission and the site.

I'd love to see sessions specifically dedicated to very small museums.

I'd like to see something career-related for people still trying to break into the field.

The South and Southern History.

More critical skills, so that attendees can learn useful hands-on techniques in addition to philosophies.

Not sure how to do this, but allowing space for people to talk about things that didn't work. Did this in one of my sessions and the response was almost overwhelming.

Try to have folks from truly "small" institutions present. In almost every session when the speaker asked how many people were from museums with less than 3 staff or with a budget of less than 100,000, almost everyone raised their hand. The speakers were great but many of us do not live in urban areas or even in cities with 100,000 people.

I really appreciated the more conversational sessions. The pop-up on living history interpretation was a highlight for me. The sessions in which the leads provided discussion questions (Tale of Two Cities) were the least engaging (otherwise a great session). Some of the most valuable sessions included audience research and evaluation content. Here's where I learned something new.

Maybe a session for people who make presentations using digital presentations - PowerPoint or KeyNote for us Mac types - on how to put together a slide deck that can be seen and make our points stand out. More topics for REAL small museums

Arrange for at least 1 option where there is involvement from local teens with topic related to past, present, future relevant to the Annual Meeting theme. I want to hear young voices.

While understanding full well that time is tight, it would be informative, since this organization is devoted to state and local history, to have a speaker at the outset give us a brief history of where we are in order to convey a sense of place and of the issues recently that have controversial threatening that sense of place and where or if historical organizations have played a role (success

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or defeat, both are educational, and please not only success stories), and what issues are still at play re: the future of the place.

Sessions specifically for young/emerging professionals or maybe a mixer/reception.

More for museum leadership, best business practices, increasing visitor attendance.

Pop-ups are a great idea, but should be coordinated a few weeks ahead of time so that everyone can be aware of when, where etc. I helped coordinate them this year. Proposing sessions was kind of haphazard. Not many people were on Twitter - which is quicker and easier than a bulletin board. I don't know how many people (not on Twitter) actually knew about the bulletin board. Also, people who proposed a session sometimes were not available during certain time slots, making it difficult to match the most popular session with the right time slot. Doing this all ahead of time would help capture current topics while making the process more smooth once on site. Also, it would help if one person were in charge of pop-ups (with helpers). We kind of had a lack of hierarchy, which led to some haphazard planning.

It would be helpful for younger attendees to learn some of the basics to develop more of their skills. We would love to learn more about how to begin the process of board development, digitization, and fundraising.

