ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT VISITORS:

VISITOR BEHAVIOR AND STAFF OVERSIGHT:

- How does the museum expect its visitors to behave? How is it enforced?
- How is staff trained to interact with visitors and to reflect these assumptions?
    - Do we allow or even encourage our security and floor staff to profile visitors as potential security or disruptive risks? How are "suspicious" visitors identified and treated?
    - Do we exclude any people from even entering the museum? If so whom and how?
- What kind of activities do we consider too boisterous, too dangerous, or too violent and how do we train our staff to intercede?
- How can we be welcoming to all and still maintain an appropriate level of security?
- How approachable are floor staff and how do we signal their availability to our visitors?
    - What do they wear?
    - Do we have both security and floor staff and why?

CULTURAL BEHAVIORAL DIFFERENCES:

- Do we understand that what constitutes courtesy may be culturally or class-based and not universally observed? How can we study and change that?
- Do we know what parts of our overall expectations for behavior might be misunderstood by some sectors of our potential audience?
- Do we have an implied or actual dress code for our visitors? If so what is it and is it inclusive of minorities in the community?
- What does the museum believe is an acceptable noise level? Do we really need all spaces quiet or just some?
- In what ways are we dampening social interaction and is that appropriate?
- Can we vary the rules of engagement for different spaces, and how will the public know about these variations?
- How do we expect visitors to queue? Do we understand that queue behaviors differ in different cultures and we are sending a friendly signal as to the general etiquette we expect on line?

AMENITIES:

- Have we understood that placement of amenities and wayfinding signs serve as signals for welcome?

- Where are our seats and do they encourage crowd watching, nursing, resting, contemplation, family interaction, meeting and regrouping?
  - Do we wish to redesign to encourage more congregating?
- Where are our toilets and how are they fitted out
- What do we sell in the shop? What is our average price point?

FOOD SERVICE:

- Are our rules against eating, drinking, picnicking, congregating, lounging, and talking necessary in all locations?
  - Where is our food service and can we embed food within additional spaces to encourage different activities at the same time?
  - What food do we serve? Is it recognizable to many groups? What is the price point?

INTERACTIVITY:

- What is our position on group interactivity? Do we want to promote intergenerational learning and/or peer interchange, without creating interference for the quiet needed by others for their enjoyment?

TECHNOLOGY:

- What are our rules for picture taking, tweeting, texting, and phone calling within our premises?
  - Are our posted rules about technology use being disobeyed because they are no longer relevant or the norm? Are we therefore promoting disobedience and flaunting of authority?

SPACE:

- Can our floor itself become useful sitting space without becoming a safety hazard? Is it really only for walking especially for children?
- Can multiple activities go on in the same space without interference one to another?

TEXT:

- How are our labels and wayfinding signs designed? Do they work for the non-English speaker, the handicapped, the illiterate, the child and the unfamiliar user? Should they? Should there be multiple and duplicative ways of learning the same material?

LEARNING LEVELS:

- What learning levels to we expect our visitors to have? (Novice, enthusiast, expert.) Do we make accommodations for all or some of these levels?
- Do we expect our audience to come singly or in social groups? How do we make accommodations for these differences?
- Do we expect our social groups to split up and experience the museum individually or do we accommodate chatter and discussion in the presence of the object?

APPENDIX: CIVILITY WORKSHEETS:

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT STAFF:

INTERNAL WORKING ASSUMPTIONS:

- What is the tone of our Human resources policy, sexual harassment, etc.?
- How transparent are our pay bands?
- What is our recruitment policy especially toward minority hiring?
- Working conditions
- Individualized performance, hours, locations, etc.
- Contractor and salaried.
- Hierarchy, porousness, matrix management
- Ethical standards
- Economics and its tension with public service.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- What is the staff role vis-à-vis the public? accumulator, learner, teacher, lecturer, or orchestrator?
- How have we trained them to be interlocutors? as learner/teacher
- How does management recognize expertise? By degrees, cultural experience, traditional hierarchies, avocation?
- How is learning, change, sharing, experimentation rewarded?

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT MUSEUM-GENERATED AND USER-GENERATED KNOWLEDGE:

"For if we choose only to expose ourselves to opinions and viewpoints that are in line with our own, studies suggest that we will become more polarized and set in our ways. And that will only reinforce and even deepen the political divides in this country. But if we choose to actively seek out information that challenges our assumptions and our beliefs, perhaps we can begin to understand where the people who disagree with us are coming from."15

PROMOTION OF OVERT DIALOGUE IN CONTENTIOUS ISSUES:

- Does the visitor know the institution's point of view? And is it printed publically available for the interrogation of the user?
- Should exhibitions that display scientific explanations allow for spiritual or religious alternatives as well? Should they allow people with other opinions to lead tours within their exhibition publically countering the argument?
- If an exhibition will knowingly disturb the expressed beliefs of some members of the general public, what action/warning/negotiations should the museum take prior to its opening?
- Should memorial museums allow/consider the opinions of those who were persecutors? Those who were conscripted against their will?
- What line of argument does the museum use when some groups are unhappy? (e.g., protected freedom of speech, censorship, excessive kow-towing to the sensibilities of minorities, political correctness).
- In the midst of controversy, is the museum willing to modify its stance? Does the museum see modification as cowardice?
- Does the museum wish to produce multiple point of view exhibitions that include multiple communities?
- Are there ways for the public to comment on the exhibition? Are their comments available for others to see and comment further upon?

SHARING AUTHORITY:

- How do we encourage public debate in formats and language that is welcoming of thoughtful response?
- Have we built in and encouraged opportunities for sharing knowledge from those outside of the institution?

- What are the design methods of response (comment cards, talk-back boards, blogs, twitter, etc.) that the organization has built into their exhibitions and programs, that allow for further discussion and input?
- How do we use techniques like crowd-sourcing, tagging, cloud-building that encourages people outside the staff to contribute to our knowledge base?

APPENDIX: CIVILITY WORKSHEETS:

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY AND COOPERATION:

THE CREATION OF THE REAL FORUM OR MEETING GROUND

- How are community organizations made welcome?
- What is the pathway for public presentation by ordinary citizens?
- How are contemporary issues and things that immediately affect the surrounding area addressed in the museum? (e.g., zoning, pollution, disasters, etc.)?
- What social and/or political service can be helped by access to the institution?
- What groups (nursing homes, day care, handicapped, ESL classes, social service, grieving groups, etc.) would be assisted if invited to use the museum in ways that helped address their mission?
- How has the institution trained itself to be helpful in times of local catastrophe?
- What is the relationship between the museum and the homeless, and what is the etiquette that is observed?

ACCESS TO ASSETS:

- What assumptions about preserving objects, protecting the building, and securing our patrons that can now be discarded or transformed?
- How has technology made it possible for us to do things that no longer need human intercession?
- Are physical and staff assets to be made available to other organizations?
- Will we customize access to collections for use by others according to their need? (college courses, Alzheimer visitors, etc.)
- What staff participation is encouraged in outside organizations that support community wellbeing unrelated to the institution's mission?
- What is the museum's relationship the formal education and home-school systems of its community?