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* fully accredited by AAHRPP the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs
Conference Schedule at a Glance

**Monday, July 13**
4:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
**Registration Open**

**Tuesday, July 14**
8:00 – 11:00 a.m.  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
**Registration Open**  
**VSA Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Pre-Conference Workshops**

**Wednesday, July 15**
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
**Registration Open**  
**VSA Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Pre-Conference Workshops**  
**April Award Celebration**  
*(ticket required)*  
**Opening Reception at Indiana State Museum & Eiteljorg**  
*(ticket required)*

**Thursday, July 16**
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
8:30 – 9:15 a.m.  
8:30 – 9:15 a.m.  
9:15 – 9:45 a.m.  
9:45 – 10:45 a.m.  
11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.  
12:15 – 2:00 p.m.  
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.  
2:00 – 3:15 p.m.  
**Registration Open**  
**Coffee Break**  
**Focused Interest Group Gathering**  
**Welcome from VSA and President’s Address**  
**Opening Keynote**  
**Concurrent Sessions – One**  
**Ambassador Program Lunch**  
**Lunch on Your Own**  
**Committee Meetings**  
**Concurrent Sessions – Two**

**Friday, July 17**
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.  
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.  
9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
10:30 – 11:45 a.m.  
11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.  
11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.  
12:45 – 1:45 p.m.  
1:45 – 3:00 p.m.  
3:15 – 4:45 p.m.  
3:15 – 4:45 p.m.  
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
**Registration Open**  
**Coffee Break**  
**VSA Business Meeting**  
**Keynote Speaker**  
**Concurrent Sessions – Four**  
**Visitor Studies Editorial Board Meeting**  
**Lunch on Your Own**  
**Committee Meetings**  
**Concurrent Sessions – Five**  
**Coffee Break**  
**VSA Poster Session**  
**Get to Know VSA Happy Hour**  
**Dining Discussions**

**Saturday, July 18**
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.  
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.  
9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
10:30 – 11:45 a.m.  
12:00 – 1:30 p.m.  
2:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
**Coffee Break**  
**Committee Meetings**  
**Concurrent Sessions – Six**  
**Concurrent Sessions – Seven**  
**Closing Luncheon & Keynote**  
*(ticket required)*  
**Post-Conference Workshops**

Indianapolis photography courtesy of VISIT Indy.
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- Cathy Sigmond, Research Assistant, Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.

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Dear Visitor Studies Conference Attendees:

Welcome to Indianapolis for the 28th Annual Conference of the Visitor Studies Association! The theme of Taking Action for Improvement, Growth, and Social Change is particularly timely for this year’s conference and host city. We want to take this opportunity to reaffirm that VSA welcomes and advocates for all people, and so does Indianapolis. This year’s sessions, speakers, and events offer a chance for you to explore new findings and methods, but we hope that you will also find others who share goals of advocating for visitors and social improvements.

Taking Action for Improvement, Growth, and Social Change
The 2015 VSA conference offers a venue for presenting new research, findings, and methods and exploring higher level topics and questions of interest to the field of informal learning. This year, the thematic focus of the keynote and plenaries will emphasize the ways in which we can take action through our work. VSA is dedicated to meeting the growing demand for the tools and the inspiration to better understand informal learning, as well as best-practice strategies for how to attract, educate, and serve diverse communities. To take action, we need to develop ourselves as creative and dynamic leaders, as individuals and within institutions and organizations dedicated to supporting informal learning opportunities; this is the key to fulfilling our potential for public service.

Our Indianapolis Hosts
Welcome to Indy, Nap Town, Data Town, the Crossroads of America—however you like to say it, we’re glad you’re here! We hope you enjoy getting to know the vibrant sights and sounds of downtown Indianapolis. You can take a ride on a gondola, walk the cultural arts trail, and sample local brews, all within walking distance of our host hotel. Our hosts from the Indianapolis Consortium on Audience Research and Evaluation (ICARE) have planned two evening events at local institutions: the Gold Star Opening at the Indiana State Museum and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art and Art, Innovation, and Design at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. We hope you enjoy exploring these local institutions. Please thank our hosts when you see them!

We hope you learn, interact with others, enjoy this conference, and leave inspired. Do feel free to share your suggestions and thoughts with VSA about the 2016 conference that will be in Boston! We hope to see you there!

With warmest regards,
Your Program Co-Chairs and Indy Insiders
Claire Thoma and Elee Wood
Registration and Information Desk
Check in at the registration desk, located in the Alexander Ballroom Foyer on the 2nd floor of the Alexander Hotel, for conference materials, badges, tickets, and information.

Registration Desk Hours:

Monday, July 13
4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 14
8:00 – 11:00 a.m.; 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 15
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 16
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Friday, July 17
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Conference Abstracts
The 2015 VSA Conference Abstracts introduce the presentations, panels, and posters at this year’s conference. Additionally, they act as a lasting record of the topics discussed here in Indianapolis as we take action. In keeping with our commitment to environmental stewardship, VSA now publishes the abstracts exclusively in electronic format. Visit www.visitorstudies.org and click on the Conference page to view or download the abstracts in PDF format.

CONFERECE EVENTS
(Pre-registration is REQUIRED for ALL events. Some tickets may still be available at the information desk during registration)

19th Annual April Award Celebration
Wednesday, July 15, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
$25 minimum

Tastings, A Wine Experience
Tastings is a 0.6 mile walk north on Delaware, where you pick up the Cultural Trail at Virginia and head west.

Focused Interests Group Gathering
Thursday, July 16, 8:30-9:15 a.m.
Alexander Ballroom

Ambassador Program Lunch
Thursday, July 16, 12:15 – 1:45 p.m.
Meet at Registration Table

Dining Discussions
Thursday, July 16, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Friday, July 17, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Meet at the Registration Table

Get to Know VSA Happy Hour
Friday, July 17, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Free
The Slippery Noodle Inn
The Slippery Noodle Inn is a 0.2 mile walk due west from the Alexander Hotel on West South Street.

Closing Luncheon
Saturday, July 18, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
Alexander Ballroom

2nd Annual Artist Raffle
Closes Saturday, July 18, 12:00 p.m.
$10 per ticket (3 for $25)
Alexander Ballroom

Kathleen McLean, artist, designer, author, and past VSA president, has put history, memory, and pen to paper in this original one of a kind piece for our Artist Raffle. Purchase as many tickets as you like! Raffle tickets will be sold onsite and online (http://bit.ly/1Hk9JZ1) until 12:00 p.m. Saturday, July 18. The winner will be announced at the Closing Luncheon (You do not need to be present to win).
We will also use the Gallery, located on the first floor by Market Dining but not pictured here.

1. The Alexander Hotel
2. Slippery Noodle Inn
3. Tastings
4. Eiteljorg Museum
5. Indiana State Museum
Questions still answered. Problems still solved.

Your audience detective agency, still open for business.

Now brought to you by Kate Tinworth Livingston.

Special thanks to 2015 clients and partners: Chicago Zoological Society, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Columbia Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, ECHO Lake Aquarium & Science Center, Garibay Group, Great Lakes Science Center, Historic Hudson Valley, History Colorado, Institute for Learning Innovation, & Minnesota State Arts Board. Here’s to learning together!

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VSA presents two days of professional development workshops in conjunction with the conference. Conference workshops provide an important opportunity for professional development and are attended by students, evaluators, exhibit and program designers, and museum directors. Leaders of these lively half and full day workshops come from a broad range of fields and professions.

We offer a slate of workshops for those who may be new to visitor studies but want to add evaluation to their skill set. These “get started fast” workshops are labeled “Level 101.”

For experienced evaluators, we also have a robust slate of “Level 301” advanced workshops.

Full Day Workshops -
- $170 VSA Member
- $200 Non-Member
- $145 Student Member

Half Day Workshops -
- $95 VSA Member
- $110 Non-Member
- $85 Student Member

VSA supports the ongoing professional development of all evaluators across the informal learning field. With the support of a planning grant from the Informal Science Education Program of the National Science Foundation, VSA developed the Evaluator Competencies for Professional Development Assessment (visitorstudies.org/professional-development). Since individuals are attracted to the field of visitor studies from a variety of backgrounds, these guidelines are to aid in the identification of transferable skills and knowledge from previous experiences as well as areas that are considered specific to the field of visitor studies. VSA has identified the competencies most relevant for each conference workshop. Below is a description of each of the major competencies:

**Competency A: Principles and Practices of Visitor Studies**

All professionals involved in the practice of visitor research and evaluation should be familiar with the history, terminology, past and current developments, key current and historic publications, and major contributions of the field. Visitor studies professionals should also be familiar with major areas that have relevance to visitor studies, including evaluation, educational theory, environmental design, developmental psychology, communication theory, leisure studies, and marketing research.

**Competency B: Principles and Practices of Informal Learning Environments**

All individuals who engage in visitor research and evaluation must understand the principles and practices of learning in informal environments, the characteristics that define informal learning settings, and an understanding of how learning occurs in informal settings. An understanding of the principles, practices, and processes by which these experiences are designed or created is required in order to make intelligent study interpretations and recommendations.

**Competency C: Knowledge of and Practices with Social Science Research and Evaluation Methods and Analysis**

Visitor studies professionals must not only understand but also demonstrate the appropriate practice of social science research and evaluation methods and analysis. These include: Research design; Instrument/protocol design; Measurement techniques; Sampling; Data analysis; Data interpretation; Report writing and oral communication; Human subjects research ethics; and Research design, measurement, and analysis that shows sensitivity to diversity and diversity issues.

**Competency D: Business Practices, Project Planning, and Resource Management**

Visitor studies professionals must possess appropriate skills for designing, conducting, and reporting visitor studies and evaluation research. Professionals should demonstrate their ability to conceptualize a visitor studies or evaluation research project in a context of informal learning institution management and administration (i.e., scheduling, budgeting, personnel, contracting).

**Competency E: Professional Commitment**

Visitor studies professionals should commit to the pursuit, dissemination, and critical assessment of theories, studies, activities, and approaches utilized in and relevant to visitor studies. Through conference attendance and presentations, board service, journals and publications, and other formal and informal forums of communication, visitor studies professionals should support the continued development of visitor research and evaluation.
Tuesday, July 14

**Full Day Workshops**
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

*What Makes Learning Fun? (and Why We Should Care)*
Deborah Perry, Director, Selinda Research Associates

**Developing Rubrics: Authentic Measures of Informal Learning**
Stephanie Downey, Managing Director, Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.; Amanda Krantz, Senior Associate, Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.

**Full Day Workshop**
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

*Timing and Tracking 101: Planning and Carrying out a Timing and Tracking Study*
Allison Cosbey, Evaluation Coordinator, Conner Prairie Interactive History Park; Beverly Serrell, Director, Serrell & Associates

**Half Day Workshop**
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

*Evaluable Assessment: Its Practicality and Utility for Meaningful and Useful Evaluations*
Thomas Grayson, Evaluation Consultant, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; John Evans, Assistant Vice President for the University Office for Planning & Budgeting, University of Illinois

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Wednesday, July 15

**Full Day Workshops**
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

*A New Method for Analyzing Data From Visual Artwork*
Donna DiBartolomeo, Director of Exhibits, Sciencenter; Zachary Clark, Director of Early Learning, Sitar Arts Center

Elizabeth Bolander, Director of Research and Evaluation, The Cleveland Museum of Art; Meghan Stockdale, Research Analyst, The Cleveland Museum of Art

**Flexible Methods for Exhibit Formative Evaluation**
Anna Lindgren-Streicher, Manager of Research and Evaluation, Museum of Science Boston; Elizabeth Kollmann, Senior Project Manager for Research and Evaluation, Museum of Science Boston

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**Data Visualization in Excel 101**
Claire Quimby, Research Assistant, Rockman Et Al; Alison Allen, Research Assistant, Rockman Et Al

**Advanced Statistical Techniques: Conceptual Frameworks and Strategies for Application**
Amy Cota-McKinley, Professor, Worcester State University

**Recruiting, Training, and Maintaining Research and Evaluation Volunteers**
Fran Mast, Researcher/Analyst, Manager of Audience Research and Evaluation, Shedd Aquarium

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Saturday, July 18

**Half Day Workshop**
2 – 5 p.m.

*Frequently Utilized Statistical Techniques: Conceptual Frameworks and Strategies for Application*
Amy Cota-McKinley, Professor, Worcester State University

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Registration is required
Wednesday, July 15
Evening Events

19th Annual April Award Celebration
Wednesday, July 15 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
$25 minimum
Tastings, a Wine Experience
Join us! Kick off your 2015 VSA conference in Indianapolis with a celebration to remember. Each year, the April Award honors one outstanding new professional and welcomes them to the visitor studies field. Come toast this year’s award recipient, Joseph Schantz from the Science Museum of Minnesota, meet friends and colleagues old and new, and support a longstanding VSA tradition. All ticket levels include admission, appetizers, a drink, and a contribution to the April Award fund. The $35 and $45 ticket levels include extra perks at the event as well as an extra contribution to the April Award fund. This is a fundraiser to help the April Award fund continue to thrive, so please give generously if you can! Please note, the event is conveniently located between the conference hotel and the opening event.

Tastings, a Wine Experience is centrally located between the Alexander Hotel and the Indiana State Museum.

Entry ticket is required. There will be ability to purchase admittance at the door, for a minimum of $25.

Congratulations to the Recipients of the April Award and Student Scholarships

The April Award and Student Scholarship programs help bring new talent to the field of visitor studies and the Visitor Studies Association.

VSA is pleased to welcome the following recipients to their first Visitor Studies Conference:

19th Annual April Award:
Joseph Schantz, Science Museum of Minnesota
Meet Joe at the April Award Celebration on Wednesday, July 15. The April Award commends an outstanding emerging professional in the field. It was established by Dr. Marilyn (Molly) Hood to honor the memory of her longtime research assistant April Lahm.

2015 Student Scholarships:
Jason Allen, Michigan State University
Sarah May, Harvard Graduate School of Education
Catherine Dornfeld, University of Wisconsin-Madison
The Student Scholarship program supports conference attendance for active students interested in the field of visitor studies.

A Gold Star Opening Reception at the Indiana State Museum and Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art
Wednesday, July 15 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
$50
Join VSA for a traveling conference kick-off event. Starting at the Indiana State Museum, begin your discovery while dining bathed in blue and gold - our state flag colors. The 19th state to join the union, Hoosier history unfolds in the museum’s Natural and Cultural History galleries. But leave room for dessert and be prepared to roll up your sleeves!

The Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art will continue the entertainment with more music and fun. Try your luck at gold-panning in the museum’s latest exhibit: Gold! Riches and Ruin. Who knows, you might just strike it rich!

The Indiana State Museum is a 1.1 mile walk northwest. Buses will begin circulating from the hotel lobby at 5:45 p.m.

Event hosted by the Indianapolis State Museum and Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art

Congratulations to the Recipients of the April Award and Student Scholarships
Fall Admission ONLY
Department of Art Education

Museum Education & Exhibitions,
M.A. and Ph.D.

Application Deadline:
Fall Enrollment, March 1st

Coursework Includes:
Visitor Studies
Museum Education
Art Museum Education
Visitor - Centered Exhibitions
Managing the Arts Organization

Contact:
Pat Villeneuve, Ph.D., Professor and Director of Arts Administration,
Doctoral and Masters Advisor, pvilleneuve@fsu.edu
Ann Rowson Love, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Arts Administration,
Ringling Museum Liaison, ann.rowson@fsu.edu

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- UBC ranked in the top 20 public universities worldwide

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pdce.educ.ubc.ca/MED4

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Education for science professionals - online

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Our M.S. in Science Education Free-choice Learning concentration or Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) Free-choice Learning Professional Certificate for nondegree-seeking students, are provided completely online. A Ph.D. is offered on campus.

M.S. in Science Education
campus.oregonstate.edu/fcl
Free-choice Learning Certificate
pace.oregonstate.edu/free-choice
Session Formats

This year’s conference features a variety of presentation formats. Please review the list below to learn more about the kinds of presentations you can attend:

- **Individual Project/Paper Presentations**
  These sessions include 3 presentations on separate, but related, topics. Each speaker gives a 15 minute presentation about his/her project. Presenters reserve time for audience discussion about the topic.

- **Panel Presentations**
  The session includes several panelists who examine an issue, topic, problem, or theme from a variety of perspectives. Panel discussions reserve sufficient time in their sessions for audience discussion about the topic.

- **Roundtable Discussion**
  An individual presenter facilitates an informal small group discussion around a key topic or area of interest in the field. Multiple presenters will lead these discussions in the same room during a 75-minute session. Attendees will be allowed but not required to rotate between conversations.

- **Working Group**
  An individual or group of presenters facilitates action-focused discussion to generate ideas or plans to move towards data visualization, white papers, publications, and/or policies. These sessions are highly collaborative and intended to result in new directions or products.

- **Hands-on Workshop**
  Demonstrations or applied practice where participants experience or take part in active learning.

- **Poster Presentations**
  Individual presenters provide graphic displays and are present for one-on-one discussions about specific studies or projects. All posters will be presented during a single session that will take place in the Alexander Ballroom on Friday, July 17 from 3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Session Streams

This year, we provide a variety of streams of discussion for attendees to navigate. Each session’s stream is depicted with the following icons:

- **Evaluation 101** Introductory concepts, how-to, information relevant for those new to the field
- **Methodology** Strategies and concepts related to data collection, analysis, and reporting
- **Reporting Findings** Presenting the findings from a discrete research or evaluation project
- **Research to Practice Cycle** Applied use of evaluation in informal learning settings, emphasizes use of findings and strategies, role of partnerships
- **Big Questions and Field-wide Issues** Wrestles with a big question in the field and/or poses a problem or question for a group to discuss/solve. This could be work continued from a previous convening.

8:30 – 9:15 a.m.
Coffee Break
Alexander Foyer

8:30 – 9:15 a.m.
Focused Interest Group Gathering
Alexander Ballroom

VSA would like to welcome the first Focused Interest Groups (FIGs) to meet up at VSA! These groups will be collecting for an informal kickoff in advance of the keynote speaker: Internal Visitor Studies Managers, Zoo and Aquariums, and Bridging Communities. Come learn more and consider joining!

9:15 – 9:45 a.m.
Welcome from VSA and President’s Address
Alexander Ballroom

Join conference attendees and the VSA President in hearing about recent VSA activities and welcoming all to the conference.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 – 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Opening Keynote</td>
<td>Liz Ševčenko is founding co-Director of the Humanities Action Lab at The New School in New York City, a network of 20 universities who collaborate on student- and community-created public projects that bring historical perspective to contested current issues. HAL is an outgrowth of the Guantánamo Public Memory Project, which Ševčenko launched while director of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, a network of historic sites that foster public dialogue on pressing contemporary issues. Before founding the Coalition, Ševčenko was a Vice President at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum and developed public history projects to catalyze civic dialogue in New York and around the country. Exhibits often have the most impact on the people who make them. How can we build national dialogue on sensitive issues by building an exhibit together? Ševčenko will explore how communities across the US and internationally have collaborated to confront the most difficult parts of their pasts – from Guantánamo to the Gulag – and open dialogue across major divides on their future.</td>
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<td>11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions – I</td>
<td><strong>Fletcher Place</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Learning Beyond the Walls:</strong> Evaluating Informal Education Experiences in Public Spaces&lt;br&gt;Chris Cardiel, OMSI; Kevin Crowley, UPCODE/University of Pittsburgh; Toni Dancu, Exploratorium&lt;br&gt;<strong>Fletcher Place</strong>&lt;br&gt;In this session, we will begin a conversation regarding the evaluation of exhibits in outdoor and nontraditional spaces intended to reach underserved audiences. Bring a data collection instrument you'd like to share and join us to discuss current projects and explore the opportunities and challenges involved in evaluating such experiences!**&lt;br&gt;<strong>Evaluators and Non-Evaluators:</strong> Shades of Grey Matter&lt;br&gt;Elle Wood, IUPUI Museum Studies; Susan Foutz, The Children's Museum of Indianapolis; Amanda Krantz, Randi Korn &amp; Associates, Inc&lt;br&gt;<strong>Evaluators and Non-Evaluators:</strong> Shades of Grey Matter&lt;br&gt;Evaluators from a history museum and a science museum discuss how their close partnership impacted the development of a key initiative to marry history and science. This case study will highlight the ways in which the two very different organizations worked together to plan, carry out, analyze, report, and utilize formative, remedial and summative evaluations. They will describe how various phases of the evaluation of the project informed changes to exhibition and interpretation development.</td>
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<td>11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions – I</td>
<td><strong>Method to the Madness: When Methods Meet the Real World</strong>&lt;br&gt;Liz Kollmann &amp; Juli Goss, Museum of Science Boston; Gia Svarovsky, University of Notre Dame; Liz Rosino, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry&lt;br&gt;<strong>Pogue's Run</strong>&lt;br&gt;Come talk about the nitty-gritty details of data collection! Over the past few years, we've thought through some worst-case scenarios with projects large and small and realized that even basic methods can be challenging. Hear about our tactics and ask the group about any of your recent struggles.</td>
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**Implementing Collaborative Exhibition Development in an Art Museum**
*Tiffany Leason, Indianapolis Museum of Art*

With the aim of becoming a more visitor-centered institution, the IMA has implemented a new exhibition development model that is a team-based collaborative effort that seeks visitor input throughout various stages of development. While not uncommon in other cultural institutions, it is a significant shift for an art museum.

**Leisure & Practice: How Museum Visits Impact Your Work**
*Taline Kuyumjian, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry*

What happens when YOU visit a museum for fun? This session explores museums’ most unique visitors – museum professionals – and the complexities that exist between their leisurely museums visits and their professional practice. Research findings show that experiences in both environments contribute to and shape how the other is understood.

**12:15 – 2:00 p.m. Ambassador Lunch**

*Please meet at the Registration Table to walk to lunch.*

This year, the VSA Ambassadors are excited to host our first ever Ambassador lunch. If you are new to VSA, or new to the conference, join us for a lunch session where VSA Ambassadors will chat about their work, the association and the conference. If you cannot make the lunch, please find one of us, or feel free to send us an email and we’d be happy to get together. We are here to help you make the most out of your VSA Conference experience!

**12:15 – 2:00 p.m. Lunch on Your Own**

**1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Conference Planning Committee Meeting**
*Fletcher Place*

**Professional Development Committee Meeting**
*Renaissance Place*

**2:00 – 3:15 p.m. Concurrent Session - II**

**Point of No Arrival: Cultivating Culturally Responsive Research & Evaluation Practices**
*Ivel Gontan, OMSI; Cecilia Garibay, Garibay Group; Jane Schaefer, Garibay Group; Veronica Garcia-Luis, Exploratorium*

Being thoughtful about practice comes naturally to visitor studies professionals, but how does reflecting on that practice help you grow professionally? Join us for a discussion as we talk through our trials, tribulations, and triumphs in our journey to conduct research and evaluation that is culturally responsive and competent.

**Visitor Photography: Engagement, Empowerment, Education**
*Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert Cyprus University of Technology; Divya Rao Heffley, Carnegie Museum of Art; Kristin Bayans, Portland Museum of Art; Justin Meyer, University of MI; Kaeleigh Herstad, Indiana University*

**Fletcher Place**

Photography in museums has become a major part of the museum experience and many museums have, or are, re-evaluating their policies regarding photography. This panel presentation focuses on research and practice that supports visitor photography’s capacity to enhance informal learning opportunities, empower visitors, and encourage civic conversations and democratic participation.

**Roundtable Discussions**
*Alexander Ballroom*

**Publishing Your Work: A Chat With the Editor of Visitor Studies**
*Steven Guberman, Science Museum of Minnesota*

In this roundtable, the editor of Visitor Studies -- the peer-reviewed, international journal of the Visitor Studies Association -- will describe the process of preparing, submitting, reviewing, and revising manuscripts, discuss the types of manuscripts published in the journal, and answer questions.
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 – 3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Session - II</td>
<td>Lisa Newton, Lawrence Hall of Science</td>
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<td><strong>Studying Young Children’s Engineering &amp; Design-Based Experiences</strong></td>
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<td>**Join colleagues to discuss strategies for studying engineering and</td>
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<td>design-based experiences of young children from Pre-K to early</td>
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<td>share successes and challenges, and pose your own questions.</td>
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<td>Alexander Foyer</td>
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<td>4:00 – 5:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions – III</td>
<td>Kristina Johnson, Access Indy; Elaine Klemesrud, Indiana State Museum</td>
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<td>Amy Grack Nelson &amp; Sarah Cohn, Science Museum of Minnesota; Liz Kollmann,</td>
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<td>**Embrace the Complexity! Building Evaluation Capacity Within a</td>
<td>Museum of Science in Boston; Anika Taylor, The Bakken Museum</td>
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<td>2:00 – 3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Leadership in VSA. Past. Present. Future.</td>
<td>Joe Heimlich, Dale McCreedy, Kirsten Ellenbogen; Mary Ellen Munley</td>
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<td><strong>Time for YOU to get involved!!</strong></td>
<td>Deborah Perry, Ross Loomis, Ridgeley Williams</td>
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complex systems help foster evaluation capacity building? We will answer these questions through four perspectives of evaluation capacity building efforts.

**Visual Communication in Evaluation: The Leading Edge of Awesome**

*Claire Thoma, The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis; Kate Livingston, ExposeYourMuseum; Kate Haley Goldman, Audience Viewpoints*

Visual design may be a hot topic, but clear communication and evaluation use are no passing fad. Hear from evaluators about incorporating better visual communication into their work, from written reports to presentations and many points in between, and leave inspired to apply these strategies in your own practice.

**Paper Presentations**

**Renaissance Place**

**Using an Evaluation Tool Across Programs and Institutions**

*Sara Martinez Davis, Saint Louis Science Center*

Program evaluations often answer specific questions about individual programs making broader comparisons across programs difficult. This session focuses on the lessons learned from one institution’s efforts to assess and track audience program data across their diverse programs and subsequently adapt the tool for use across programs at multiple institutions.

**Fine-Tuning a Family Learning Object Rating System**

*Elee Wood, Laura Weiss, & Alysha Zemanek, Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis*

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Dining Discussions**

On Thursday and Friday evenings, we will be offering participant-led conversation over dinner; the purpose of these conversations is to provide informal networking and socializing opportunities for attendees who share a common interest. Find the list of topics and sign up to participate in a discussion at the registration table. Diners will gather in the hotel lobby at the designated time, walk to the restaurant together, dine, discuss, and pay for their own dinner.

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

**Art, Innovation, and Design Night**

$50

Join VSA at the Indianapolis Museum of Art and explore its exceptional art collection spanning 5,000 years and visit the *Dream Cars: Innovative Design, Visionary Ideas* exhibition featuring rare, one-of-a-kind concept cars from the early 1930s to the 21st century. Visit the *Car Design Studio* where you can try your hand at designing your own dream car or get creative in the other activity spaces in the museum like *Star Studio*. Walk the 152-acre campus with its lush gardens, outdoor sculptures, historic home, and greenhouse.

You will enjoy heavy hors d’oeuvres and cocktails while you explore a fantastic museum.

*Buses will begin circulation promptly at 5:45 p.m. from the main entrance of the Alexander Hotel.*

*Hosted by the Indianapolis Museum of Art*
10:30 – 11:45 a.m.
Concurrent Session – IV

From Questions to Results: The Research Road Map
Elizabeth Bolander & Meghan Stockdale,
Cleveland Museum of Art

Pogue’s Run

Broaden your research tool box by learning tips and tricks for project management, evaluation planning, and study design in this conversational panel session. Topics will range from the early stages of determining key research questions and methodologies through data collection, basic analysis, and reporting.

The Unlikely Evaluator: Taking Action to Foster Allies and Advocates
Kate Livingston & Nambii Mangun,
ExposeYourMuseum; Betsy Martinson,
Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave; Elizabeth Fleming, Museum of Life and Science; Jim Kisiel, CA State University at Long Beach

Gallery

Many of our roads to visitor studies have been riddled with twists and turns, bridges and barriers. Join this panel of “unlikely evaluators” and share your own journey, as we explore how action (and inaction) by audience evaluators and learning researchers can either cultivate or curtail potential allies and advocates.

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.
Coffee Break
Alexander Foyer

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.
VSA Business Meeting
Alexander Ballroom

Join fellow members and colleagues for the latest VSA news to find out what is in store for the organization in the coming year. VSA President Joe Heimlich will discuss recent activities within VSA, we will review the Association’s finances, and a variety of awards will be presented. Please join us in thanking outgoing board members and welcome incoming board members.

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
Keynote Speaker
Dr. Jean King
Alexander Ballroom

Jean A. King is a Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development at the University of Minnesota where she serves as Director of the Minnesota Evaluation Studies Institute (MESI). A long-time writer on evaluation use and evaluation capacity building, she is the author of numerous books, articles, and chapters. Professor King has received several awards for her work, including the Myrdal Award for Evaluation Practice and the Ingle Award for Extraordinary Service from the American Evaluation Association, three teaching awards, and three community service awards.

Taking What Action for Change? Dare Evaluation Build a New Social Order?

What, finally, should the evaluator’s role in social change be, and with what expectations? Remembering that evaluators often play an indirect role in organizational change efforts, the question becomes how to inspire and support key leaders and decision makers to use the evaluation process and its results. Thankfully, almost 50 years of evaluation use research point to overarching principles and specific actions evaluators can take to help make this world a better place.
### From Field to Institution: Putting Research Agendas Into Action

Jessica Luke, Museology Graduate Program at University of Washington; Stephen Ashton, Thanksgiving Point Institute; Mary Nucci, Rutgers University; Danielle Ross, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

**Fletcher Place**

This session is a follow up to last year’s research agenda panel session where field-wide research agendas were discussed. This panel discussion will take the conversation one step further, as panelists share how individual institutions are applying field-wide research agendas in their own practice.

#### Paper Presentations

**Renaissance Place**

**3D Visualizations Engaging Students and General Visitors About Environmental Topics**

*Steven Yalowitz, Audience Viewpoints Consulting*

This presentation summarizes the findings from the summative evaluation of an NSF-funded project about using visualizations to engage students and general visitors about freshwater ecosystems. The project included multiple 3D visualizations, apps, interactives and tabletop exhibits; their individual and collective impact is measured, both short term and longer term.

**Exploring how Visitors Find Relevance Within an Exhibition**

*Stephanie Iacovelli, Museum of Science in Boston*

What leads visitors to find an exhibition relevant? Come hear about research studying how visitors make connections between nanoscience and their lives during an exhibition experience. Exhibition content and design elements that lead visitors to find relevance will be presented along with a framework for examining relevance in informal environments.

**A Kids-Eye View of the Zoo**

*Alexandra Burris, Indiana University*

This presentation presents the results of a pilot study using new camera technology, which may allow us to peek into the experiences of child zoo visitors. This long-term study hopes to examine events that take place in the zoo, which may impact child interest development in animals and other science topics.

### 11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.

**Lunch on Your Own**

**Visitor Studies Editorial Board Meeting**

*Pogue’s Run*

### 1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

**Concurrent Session – V**

**Try it Out! Using Collaborative Evaluation Spaces for Capacity Building**

*Charity Counts, Chris Carron, Susan Foutz, Cathy Hamaker, Rachael Mathews, & Lisa Townsend, The Children’s Museum Indianapolis*

This space is used for organization-wide visitor research needs. Learn more about Try It Out!, research outcomes, and the overall collaborative process.

**Zoos and Aquariums as Agents for Social Change and Betterment**

*Kathryn Owen, Woodland Park Zoo; Kathy Kiser, Shedd Aquarium; Jerry Luebke, Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo; Rebecca Coon, Denver Zoo*

The panel will address current efforts among zoos/aquariums to identify their unique role when it comes to engaging the public in skills and behaviors aimed at saving wildlife and creating a sustainable planet, and the role of evaluation in shaping institutional thinking and practice on this issue.
### Conference Schedule

**Friday, July 17**

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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 – 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Roundtable Discussions</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Gallery</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Edu-Curation: Embedding Visitor Studies in New Museum and University Collaboration</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ann Rowson Love, Florida State University/Ringling Museum; Pat Villaneuve, Florida State University</td>
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What if current research, theoretical development, and practice-based models led to real change in the way we prepare future museum educators and curators in graduate programs? Florida State University and the Ringling Museum developed one approach, combining museum education and visitor-centered exhibitions, where embedded visitor studies embrace collaboration and change.

**Evaluating the Visitor Experience: Effective Measures for Live Cultural Programming**<br>Betty Belanus, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage; Jon Kay, Traditional Arts Indiana/Indiana University

This session will invite VSA conference audience members to meet with two Indiana folk artists and to view them demonstrating and talking about their work. Audience members will then step back from the experience and brainstorm ideas for effective evaluation of visitor engagement for live cultural programming.

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<td>3:15 – 4:15 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Coffee Break</strong>&lt;br&gt;** Alexander Foyer**&lt;br&gt;<strong>Poster Session</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Building Cross-Institutional Relationships</strong>&lt;br&gt;Bryn Pernot, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago; Lei Zhao, John G. Shedd Aquarium</td>
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Cross-institutional collaboration has been promoted as a way to build research capacity, but what does the implementation process look like and what do we learn from this process? A recent partnership between two museums in Chicago is used to contextualize the opportunities and challenges of relationship-building.

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<td>3:15 – 4:15 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Building the ISE Field By Synthesizing Evaluation Reports on Informalscience.org</strong>&lt;br&gt;Amy Grack Nelson, Science Museum of Minnesota; Sarah Cohn, Visitor Studies Association</td>
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The Building Informal Science Education (BISE) project coded 520 evaluation reports posted to informalscience.org, and now we want you to use our freely available resources to inform your own practice. Stop by and learn about our coding framework, NVivo database, synthesis papers, blog posts, and more.

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Embedded assessments create opportunities for evaluators and researchers to make data collection more fun and less onerous for visitors and program participants. Those with experience using embedded assessments and those interested in learning more are invited to discuss contexts, strategies, and challenges of designing embedded assessments for programs and exhibits.
Capturing the Visitor Experience
Jan Packer, University of Queensland

The visitor experience is commonly considered the “core product” of museum-type attractions. It is what visitors anticipate, communicate, and remember. Models of the visitor experience and experiential profiles of six zoo/aquarium exhibits are presented. These will contribute to understanding, designing, improving, and marketing the visitor experience.

Case Studies in Open-Ended/Reflective Interviews: Tips & Lessons Learned
Maggie Ryan Sandford, Science Museum Minnesota

Via two qualitative studies from the Science Museum of Minnesota, this poster shares proven new open-ended reflective interview techniques: technical particulars of exhibit-focused listening and prompting, age-specific reflective interview Dos and Don'ts (including Puppet Facilitation for preschool-aged subjects), and vocabulary modifications for dampening an interviewer’s cultural bias.

Chinese Visitors’ Motivations and Learning Experiences
Qinglian Zhang, New York University

The poster will focus on Chinese visitors, including tourists, students, and immigrants in New York art museums to learn about their motivations, expectations and difficulties. Art museums want to attract more diverse audiences, but cultural differences can produce obstacles to repeat visitation.

Conservation Choices: Inspiring Action Through an Immersive Aquarium Exhibit
Sarah Werner, Lee Patrick & Sarah Edmunds, Wildlife Conservation Society

Through the design of a new exhibit—Ocean Wonders: Sharks!—the New York Aquarium is striving to increase awareness of New York’s critical, often overlooked, seascape. By focusing exhibit components on how peoples’ choices affect local ocean ecosystems, the exhibit promotes social change by empowering visitors with specific conservation actions.

Demographic Differences Between Museum-Based Fab Lab Attendees and Non-Attendees
Gloria A. Segovia & Bryn Pernot, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago

Makerspaces have the potential to influence large numbers of people, but there is little known about who uses them. This poster will share information about engineering attitudes, creative identities, do-it-yourself backgrounds and demographics of guests who visited a museum-based Fab Lab and how they compared with the general museum audience.

Does Collecting Data on Tablets Still Provide Quality Responses?
Elaine T. Horr, COSI

Is qualitative data value compromised when collecting data using electronic devices versus traditional pen-and-paper? This question is explored by developing a method used in analyzing and comparing the analysis of questionnaire items gathered using pen-and-paper and tablets with paired keyboards, and planned future work using other types of electronic devices.

Engaging the Visitor: Increasing Confidence & Interest in Contemporary Art
Lauren M. Wilson, University of Texas at Austin

Responses of 70 participants informed a study investigating the connection between feeling confident interpreting contemporary art and subsequent interest. Findings address the perspective of those who are not regular museum visitors and offer suggestions for engaging infrequent contemporary art viewers.

Evaluation as an Action: Navigating Change with Marcellus Matters
Dolly Hayde, Lifelong Learning Group

This poster explores how strategic application of evaluative thinking helped a critical science literacy project adapt to unavoidable change. By embracing the role of evaluation as a constant, personnel used project modeling, a study of team communication, and data management support to inform the structure and delivery of program elements.

Evaluation Resources on InformalScience.org
Grace Troxel, Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE)

The Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE) developed a new evaluation landing page on InformalScience.org. The page visually highlights resources to help both new and veteran project leaders leverage professional evaluators to develop evaluation plans and proposals, iteratively inform projects, and disseminate evaluation findings.
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<td><strong>Poster Session</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exploring a Model of Adult Development in Engineering Education</strong></td>
<td>Lauren Causey &amp; Joseph Schantz, Science Museum Minnesota</td>
<td>The research describes an approach to preparing teachers to implement the Engineering is Elementary curriculum in the school districts that surround the Science Museum of Minnesota. We explore ways in which this particular model of adult development compares with existing ways of preparing classroom teachers for engineering content.</td>
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<td><strong>Fact and Fiction of Visitor Pathway Choice in Museums</strong></td>
<td>Stephen Bitgood, Jacksonville State University; Gareth Davey, Monash University Malaysia</td>
<td>Pathway choice is fundamental to visitor movement through museums. This presentation: (1) refutes the over-generalized dictum of right-turn bias; (2) challenges poster viewers to identify correct pathway choices based on exhibit configurations; and (3) summarizes findings and recommendations from the literature.</td>
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<td><strong>Get in the Game: Evaluating the Indie Game Revolution Exhibit</strong></td>
<td>Anna Lopez, University of Washington, EMP Museum</td>
<td>This summative evaluation is a collaboration between Anna Lopez, University of Washington Museology graduate student and the EMP Museum. This evaluation assesses visitors’ understandings on the topic of independent games with regards to its definition, evolution, impact, and creation after experiencing the Indie Game Revolution exhibit.</td>
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<td><strong>Going Pro and Tracking Stats: Is It Worth It?</strong></td>
<td>Kelsey Picken, Claremont Graduate University</td>
<td>There are many ways to connect with your visitors. In considering which platforms to use, or starting your social endeavor, how do you know if it is “worth” it? Upgrading and tracking your statistics is one way, but what does it all mean, and what does it tell you?</td>
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<td><strong>Learning Through Touch</strong></td>
<td>Jen MacDowell, Ellen Roth, and Lauren Messenger, University of Washington</td>
<td>This summative evaluation conducted by the Seattle Aquarium and University of Washington Museology Graduate Program students assesses observable visitor learning behaviors that take place at the Life on the Edge: Inland Seas touch pools in order to inform current programming and develop future exhibits.</td>
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<td><strong>How can Learning Effectiveness in Planetariums be Measured Using an Online Journal?</strong></td>
<td>Kristen Vogt, University of Illinois at Chicago</td>
<td>This poster examines how students engaged with learning at the Adler Planetarium’s out-of-school program. By using the programs in the museum, as well as participating in an online reflective journal, the Planetarium explores the benefits that museum and evaluation professionals have by using online journals for visitors and students.</td>
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<td><strong>The Impacts of Co-Tinkering at an Engineering Design Exhibit</strong></td>
<td>Lauren Wielgus &amp; Matthew Berland, UW Madison</td>
<td>We looked at the effects of co-tinkering on visitor exploration at an engineering design exhibit about circuits. We combined a quantitative analysis of telemetry data with a qualitative analysis of video data. Through this work, we can see that co-tinkering supports more effective exploration of the problem space.</td>
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<td><strong>Kids’ Opinions Count: Learning From Young Multimedia Guide Users</strong></td>
<td>Lynn Courtney, Museum of Fine Arts</td>
<td>The multimedia guide’s Kids Tour at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston contains family-friendly content for 153 artworks throughout the MFA’s collections. This poster reports on a study of the Kids Tour conducted to inform upcoming improvements, and explores what was learned from observations and interviews directly with young visitors.</td>
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<td><strong>Making Natural History: Dynamic &amp; Collaborative Audience Research in Exhibit Design &amp; Planning</strong></td>
<td>Fiona P. McDonald, John Fraser, Su-Jen Roberts &amp; Kate Fliner, New Knowledge Organization</td>
<td>Through a single case study of concept testing that emerges from the context of a natural history museum, this poster presents the visualization of data of how researchers engaged visitors and museum staff, as well as two external design firms, in participatory action research at Cleveland Museum of Natural History.</td>
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<td><strong>Looking Inwards: Moving from External to Internal Program Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Sarah Dunifon, Lincoln Park Zoo</td>
<td>Moving from external to internal evaluation in a student program at Lincoln Park Zoo will be showcased. Looking outside an organization for program evaluation or conducting it in-house can be dependent on funding, staffing, and evaluation goals. Key points include the IRB, the revision process, challenges and lessons learned.</td>
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<td><strong>Metacognitive Discourse in</strong></td>
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**Museum Cafés: Assessment in Unexpected Spaces**  
Catherine L. Dornfeld, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Matthew Berland, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Museum cafés are potential spaces for assessment of metacognitive discourse occurring after exhibit exploration. Metacognitive discourse reveals visitors' individual and collective knowledge. Prior studies indicate the need for evaluation of metacognition in museums—a challenging task. Expanding beyond exhibits into cafés provides increased opportunity for researchers to evaluate learner outcomes.

**Out of this World! NASA Educator Workshops and Astronomy Days at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences**  
Lisa Shannon, Mary Styers & A.C. Cosby, Magnolia Consulting, LLC

Magnolia Consulting, LLC collaborated with the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences to conduct a 3-year formative and summative evaluation of museum space science programming under a NASA grant. The mixed-method study revealed positive program outcomes for educators, students, and adults. Evaluators will discuss project findings and key takeaways.

**Penguin Promises: Moving Visitors From Intent to Action**  
Judy Mann & Gabby Harris, South African Association for Marine Biological Research; Roy Ballantyne & Jan Packer, University of Queensland, Australia

The Penguin Promises campaign encourages aquarium visitors to make a promise to the penguins: a promise to become more environmentally responsible after their visit. The poster will answer the question, "What are some of the ingredients of a successful behavior change campaign?"

**Places & Spaces: Mapping Science**  
Katy Börne & Elizabeth Record, Indiana University School of Informatics and Computing

Places & Spaces showcases innovative approaches to data visualization, critical for making sense of the large streams of data we confront on a daily basis, and provides examples of data visualizations that delight the eyes, engage the viewer, and impart vast amounts of information in a focused, digestible format.

**Poverty, Programming, and Participation: Mapping Data to Inform Action**  
Erin M. Nolan, Washington University

Mapping can unveil patterns of institutional access, helping to inform future action. By combining previously collected visitor zip codes with U.S. Census Bureau information on median household income, we find that, for one institution, community programming can help offset disparities in ways even free admission cannot.

**Primates Watching Primates: Evaluating Guests’ Orangutan Exhibit Experience**  
Anna Musun-Miller, Indianapolis Zoo; Laura Weiss, IUPUI/Indianapolis Zoo

The Indianapolis Zoo’s Simon Skjodt International Orangutan Center represents a major innovation in zoo guest experience and conservation impact. This project investigated how guests use the space, what key messages guests took away from the exhibit, and what effect the exhibit had on guest attitudes towards orangutans.

**Quiz Yo’ Self: Evaluating Network Stations at the Wellbody Academy**  
Jana Greenslit & Anna Lopez, University of Washington

This formative evaluation is a collaboration between the University of Washington Museology Graduate Program and Pacific Science Center. This evaluation assesses how visitors use and understand the Network Stations at the Professor Wellbody Academy of Health and Wellness exhibit.

**Reflections on Lessons Learned from Evaluating the NISE Network**  
Marta Beyer, Museum of Science; Marcie Benne, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry; Marjorie Bequette, Science Museum of Minnesota

Learn about the recently produced document from the NISE Net Evaluation Team about what we learned from evaluating one of the largest NSF-ISE initiatives ever implemented. This includes lessons about setting up the evaluation, collecting data, and disseminating findings. Copies of the document will be available to flip through!
Friday, July 17
Conference Schedule

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.
Poster Session
Alexander Ballroom

Supporting Youth Development
With Evaluation and Assessment Tools
Rich Pennington and Ayiana Machedo,
Science Museum Minnesota

Before youth can become leaders in their communities, they need to gain relevant skills and the confidence to use those skills. Evaluation can provide many development opportunities. At this poster, we will share how evaluation has tools to help youth take action to improve themselves and their environment.

Uncharted Waters: Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Seattle Maritime Gallery
Jimi Hightower, Sara Strasne & Sarah Taggart, University of Washington

This remedial evaluation was conducted in MOHAI’s McCurdy Family Maritime Gallery to better understand how visitors use the space and to determine what elements can be incorporated to make the space more effective.

Uncovering Environmental Understanding and Engagement of Aquarium Guests
Lindsay Maldonado, Shedd Aquarium; Jessica Mikels-Carrasco, DJ Case & Associates

Informal Science Institutions (ISI) have the potential to promote an environmentally sustainable society, but there is limited research on environmental learning and environmental social psychological outcomes for visitors. We seek to address this gap in visitor research and understanding. Here we present our preliminary findings and plans for future work.

Sarah Cohn & Eric LaPlant, Science Museum Minnesota

Millennials. Boomer senior citizens. Demographic and culture shifts. If you didn’t notice, our audiences are changing. We present the past, present, and future of audience studies at the Science Museum of Minnesota and how we are responding and taking action to improve our relationships with our many, varied adult communities.

Understanding Children’s Connections to Nature Through Facilitated and Non-Facilitated Experiences
Amy Rohlman, Shedd Aquarium

How do children make connections to nature, animals, and the environment? Is it through facilitated activities or free play? This poster presentation will focus on research investigating how children visiting Shedd Aquarium make connections to nature through exhibits and what Shedd is doing to help facilitate those connections.

Visitor Responses to Carcass Feeding: A Study Conducted at the ABQ BioPark
Ellen Roth, University of Washington

This summative evaluation assesses the attitudes and comfort levels of visitors who view carcass feedings in three animal exhibits at the ABQ BioPark: Hyena, Tasmanian Devil, and African Painted Dog.

5:00 – 6:30 p.m.
Get to Know VSA Happy Hour
Slippery Noodle Inn

Free

VSA’s Membership Committee invites you to attend a Happy Hour at the Slippery Noodle Inn. Hangout with other attendees and VSA members to get to know them and the organization better while exploring part of Indianapolis’ night life.

Pre-registration is not required for this event. Food and drinks available for purchase.

The Slippery Noodle Inn is located at 372 S. Meridian St., a 5 minute walk west from the Alexander Hotel.

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Dining Discussions

On Thursday and Friday evenings, we will be offering participant-led conversation over dinner; the purpose of these conversations is to provide informal networking and socializing opportunities for attendees who share a common interest. Find the list of topics and sign up to participate in a discussion at the registration table. Diners will gather in the hotel lobby at the designated time, walk to the restaurant together, dine, discuss, and pay for their own dinner.
Inspire curiosity, foster experimentation, stimulate informed action.

The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in beautiful Portland, Oregon serves over 1 million visitors each year.

As we continue to grow, we often seek research and evaluation professionals to join our team.

Learn more at: omsi.iapplicants.com

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Start thinking about how you can continue the conversations with us next year.
### Saturday, July 18

**Conference Schedule**

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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| 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. | **Coffee Break**

Alexender Foyer

| 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. | **Finance Committee Meeting**

Fletcher Place

**Newsletter Team Meeting**

Renaissance Place

| 9:00 – 10:15 a.m. | **Concurrent Sessions – VI**

**Exploring Evaluation Across Multiple Institutions**

Renae Younsg, Minnesota State Arts Board; Betsy Martinson, Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave; Julie Scordato, Columbus Metropolitan Library

**Fletcher Place**

What does it mean to build evaluation capacity within a network of institutions? What does it look like to evaluate progress toward outcomes shared by many organizations? Compare perspectives on multi-site evaluation from a grantmaking agency, an evaluation community of practice, and a cross-institutional youth development program.

**Complex Studies of a Complex Subject: Data Visualization and Visitors**

Mary Ann Wojton, Lifelong Learning Group; Sasha Palmquist, Palmquist & Associates; Lisel Record, Cyberinfrastructure for Network Science Center at Indiana University

**Fletcher Place**

This session will share insights from university scientists and museum evaluators who partnered to create a series of studies to explore how visitors make sense of “big data” visualizations. Methods used include intercepts, structured interviews, and card sorts. Panelists will also discuss the benefits and challenges of a complex partnership.

**Harnessing Empathy: The Path to Inspiring Others to Take Action**

Barbara Soren, University of Toronto; John Goodson, The Children's Museum of Indianapolis; Sharon Pierce, The Villages

**Pogue’s Run**

At The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, The Power of Children's Take Action gallery helps families learn how they can make a difference in the lives of others. Live theatrical performance, real-life community partnership, and evaluation of visitors will assist in developing ‘tools’ for harnessing visitors' empathy into implementing social change.

**Paper Presentations**

**Renaissance Place**

**“Making Connections:” Fostering Change at the Science Museum of Minnesota**

Marjorie Bequette, Science Museum of Minnesota; Gina Svarovsky, Notre Dame University

**Gallery**

In its first year, the “Making Connections” research project has already caused ripples of change within the Science Museum of Minnesota. The study population of underrepresented audiences allowed internal teams to begin building an understanding of the nuance of new strategic planning initiatives whereby SMM seeks to engage diverse audiences.

**Inclusive Learning Opportunities at the Zoo for Individuals With Disabilities**

Jennifer Matiasek, Chicago Zoological Society

**Renaissance Place**

As Chicago Zoological Society increases the inclusivity of its programs for individuals with disabilities, we hope to create a model that enables participants to transition across programs and sustain personal growth beyond a single experience. Initial evaluations have provided feedback to help us expand and develop as a community resource.

**Gendered Understanding of History Exhibitions (and how This can be Expanded)**

Antonette Hrycyk, History Colorado Center

This session provides an example from research performed at the History Colorado Center in Denver, CO to demonstrate how a simple post-visit intercept interview can be of help to understand how visitors interpret the gendered narratives in a history exhibit.

| 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. | **Concurrent Sessions – VII**

**How Orangutans Started an Evaluation Program at the Indianapolis Zoo**

Laura Weiss, Indiana University-Purdue University; Don Reifler, The Children's Museum of Indianapolis; Caitlin Kegley, COSI

**Renaissance Place**

A single exhibit, the Simon Skjodt International Orangutan Center, changed the Indianapolis Zoo’s attitude
and approach towards evaluation. Over the course of four projects done in partnership with Museum Studies graduate students at IUPUI, the institution saw forward shifts in student/staff involvement, review processes, and the use of findings.

Assessing Public Impacts of Multi-Site Projects: Opportunities and Challenges
Steve Guberman & Gretchen Haupt, Science Museum of Minnesota; Gina Svarovsky, Notre Dame University; Chris Cardiel, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

Projects taking place in multiple locations present opportunities and challenges for the assessment of public impacts. Hear about the advantages and difficulties of assessing the impacts of multi-site projects, the methods used to study three informal science education projects taking place at multiple sites, and the lessons that were learned.

Assessing and Improving Programming for Specific Audiences
Rachael Mathews, The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis; Fran Mast, Shedd Aquarium; Elaine Horr, COSI

This session introduces three examples in different museums of how planning and evaluation have led to more effective programs. Beginning with the planning process, examples of planning tools are introduced and shared. The discussion leads to the processes of collecting data, analyzing the data and using it for training and program improvement.

Exploring Tools for Empowering Visitors
Stephen Bitgood, Jacksonville State University; Elizabeth Bolander, Cleveland Museum of Art; Amy Cota-McKinley, Worcester College; Lindsay Maldonado, Shedd Aquarium

Questions addressed in this session include: “How can we empower visitors to engage with exhibit content in the most meaningful way?” and “What cost-effective empowering tools can be used to supplement the ‘hardware’ of exhibits?” Presenters will guide participants in a discussion of these and other related questions.

NEW! Post-Conference Workshop
Registration is required

Half Day Workshop
2 – 5 p.m.
Recruiting, Training, and Maintaining Research and Evaluation Volunteers
Fran Mast, Researcher/Analyst, Manager of Audience Research and Evaluation, Shedd Aquarium

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
Closing Luncheon
Alexander Ballroom
Free — Ticket Required

Keynote Speaker
Javier Barrera Cervantes

Originally from Veracruz Mexico, Javier Barrera Cervantes is an Indianapolis-based Media Strategist. He is a founding board member of the Latino Youth Collective, a program that provides resources and opportunities for youth to engage in personal and community development through critical pedagogy, grassroots organizing, and collective action. He also serves as the Director of the Campecine Youth Academy, a summer research program that trains and employs youth to conduct research and enact social change in their community.

The Shock Doctrine, the Distraction Industrial Complex and the Rise of the “don’t give a f#$@” Generation

We will take a look into a generation growing up in an era of information overload, pervasive social marketing, and the lack of a persistent sense of historical conscience and explore how these realities present a wave of new challenges for those working with and for youth. We will use the Campecine Youth Academy, a summer leadership institute designed to train youth in participatory action research using new media technology, as an example and see how this program has helped us to move people from empathy or charity to solidarity in the search for collective consciousness.

Event includes lunch.
VSA Conference Team

Special thanks to our conference team, whose time, energy, and dedicated service has enabled VSA to present such a fantastic event.

2015 Conference Team

Sarah Cohn, Association Manager
Rita Deedrick, Development Committee Liaison
Valerie Grabski, Abstracts Editor
Amy Grack Nelson, Workshop Co-Chair
Kate Livingston, April Awards and Scholarships Chair
Sara Martinez Davis, Membership Committee Liaison
Julia Miller, Workshop Co-Chair
Camellia Sanford, Conference Planning Committee Chair
Claire Thoma, Program Co-Chair
Elee Wood, Conference Planning Committee Vice-Chair and Program Co-Chair

Jennifer Borland
Jennifer Holland
Jerry Luebke
Jessica Luke
Jessica Sickler
Jill Stein
Josh Gutwill
Joyce Ma
Karen Wizevich
Kari Williams
Kate Haley Goldman
Kate Tinworth
Kayte McSweeney
Kerry Morgan
Kirsten Latham
Kirsten Buchner
Kris Morrissey
Laureen Trainer
Lauren Marallo
Linda Wilson
Lindsay Maldonado
Lisa Newton
Lisa Sindorf
Liz Rosino
Lynne Carmichael
Maia Werner-Avidon
Marley Steele-Inama

Martin Storksiegel
Mary Ann Wojton
Mary Jane Taylor
Matt Sikora
Meghan Stockdale
Michelle Maghari
Minda Borun
Nette Fletcher
Nick Visscher
Nicole Stutzman Forbes
Rebecca Teasdale
Rebekah Sobel
Regan Forrest
Rita Deedrick
Ryan Auster
Sarah Brenkert
Sarah Cohn
Sarah Lee
Sheila Brommel
Stephen Ashton
Stephen Bitgood
Steven Guberman
Susan Foutz
Tiffany Leason
Wendy Meluch
Zdanna Tranby

2015 Session Proposal Reviewers

Amy Niedbalski
Andrea Michelbach
Angie Ong
Beth Maloney
Beth Shea
Beverly Serrell
Caren Oberg
Chris Catanese
Clara Cahill
Donna Braden
Elaine Herr
Elizabeth Bolander
Ellen Giusti
Emily Craig
Emily Skidmore
Fran Mast
Ivel Gontan
Jeff Hayward

VSA Annual Fund Donors

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Thank You to our 2015 Conference Donors and Sponsors

The 28th Annual Visitor Studies Association Conference is supported by businesses, organizations, and individuals committed to understanding and serving visitors in informal learning environments. Please support those whose work furthers VSA’s vision of a world where lifelong learning is embraced, and where learning in informal settings benefits individuals, communities, and society at large.

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Vice President, Professional Development – Jessica Luke, University of Washington
Vice President, Outreach – Michelle Maghari, Crocker Art Museum
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Ly Foor, Ohio History Connection
Patsy Reublin, Bootheel Youth Museum

Special thanks to the outgoing board members who have dedicated between 2 and 6 years to improving and developing VSA from the inside.
Marcie Benne, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry
Robert Breck, Science Museum of Minnesota
Kate Haley Goldman, Audience Viewpoints
Elisa Israel, Saint Louis Science Center
Randi Korn, Randi Korn & Associates
Dale McCreedy, The Franklin Institute
Randy Roberts, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art
Saul Rockman, Rockman et al
Gina Navoa Svarovsky, University of Notre Dame
David Ucko, Museums + More

* The VSA Board of Directors will be holding a strategic organization retreat prior to the VSA conference to set our path for moving forward. We will then share this information with the membership and identify individuals with the right skills to compliment the other skilled leaders on the board to fill the open slots and help move and guide our organization into the future.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Vice President: Laura Huerta Migus
Thanks to outgoing Vice President: Dave Ucko

BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Incoming Chair: Not yet identified*
Vice Chair: Anna Lindgren-Streicher
Members: Betty Dunckel, Julie Johnson, and Janet Rassweiler
Thanks to outgoing Chair: Laura Huerta-Migus

The Board Development Committee is charged with ensuring effective board governance of the Association. The committee is responsible for overseeing elections, monitoring and assessing board processes, structures and roles, and providing board members with the tools and support needed to fulfill their board duties.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Incoming Chair: Not yet identified*
Vice Chair: Lynn Courtney
Members: Rita Deedrick, Anna Johnson, Kim Kiehl, Kelsey Picken, Ellen Roth, Kelley Staab, and Mira Zergani
Thanks to outgoing Chair: Randi Korn

The Development Committee is charged with raising money to support the work of VSA. The Development Committee works with other committees to understand resource needs so it can raise dollars accordingly. Committee members design, manage, and execute fund raising strategies to encourage charitable donations, advertising, and sponsorships.

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Incoming Chair: Not yet identified*
Members: Sarah Lee, Jessica Luke, and Dave Ucko
Thanks to outgoing Chair: Kate Haley Goldman

The Finance Committee is charged with reviewing the financial processes and systems that are facilitated by VSA’s contractors. The Finance Committee works tightly with the Treasurer and the Association Manager to ensure all aspects of the financial accounting are transparent, followed, and documented.
Consider volunteering a few hours a month to support VSA’s efforts for its members by joining a committee.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Vice President: Jessica Luke

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Chair: Camellia Sanford
Vice Chair: Elee Wood
Members: Ellen Bechtol, Clara Cahill, Allison Cosbey, Ly Foor, Dolly Hayde, Claire Thoma, and Zdanna Tranby

This group is the major workforce behind the annual conference. The Conference Planning Committee (CPC) is responsible for ensuring that the annual conference is designed to serve VSA’s mission, strategic direction, and members. The CPC oversees the direction and logistics of planning for VSA’s current and future annual conferences. The CPC also oversees and advises the annual Conference Team as they prepare for each conference. A new Team is created for each year’s conference, consisting of the Association Manager, Program Co-Chairs, local VSA members, and representatives from other VSA committees. The CPC provides guidance and continuity between each year’s planning processes.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Incoming Chair: Jennifer Borland
Members: Elsa Bailey, Jen DeWitt, Erin Gong, Michelle Maghari, Amy Grack Nelson, Dolly Hayde, Jennifer Holland, Taline Kuyumjian, Julia Miller, Leah Reisman, Kate Livingston, Nick Visscher, and Lauren Wilson
Thanks to outgoing Chair: Elisa Israel

The Professional Development Committee is responsible for providing training and growth opportunities for VSA members and other informal learning professionals. Specifically, the committee is charged with the following responsibilities: conference workshops; webinars; regional workshops; the April Award and Student Scholarships; and professional standards.

OUTREACH
Incoming Vice President: Michelle Maghari
Thanks to outgoing Vice President: Bob Breck

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
Members: Jim Kisiel, Lesley Langa, Lauren Marallo, Amy Niedbalski, Liz Rosino, and Beth Shea
Thanks to outgoing Chair: Gina Svarovsky

The Communications Committee is in the process of sunsetting as a formal committee for VSA. Instead of being a standing committee, communications will become a part of every other committee’s work, and the Association Manager will provide continuity of communication with members by following a set of communication policies. The Newsletter Working Group will continue to function, in coordination with the Association Manager, producing at least one newsletter every quarter. The liaison to the editorial board of VSA’s journal, Visitor Studies, will connect directly with the Vice President for Outreach.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Incoming Chair: Renae Youngs
Members: Linda Allegro, Patience Baach, Chris Catanese, Andrea Giron, Lindsay Maldonado, Sara Martinez Davis, Patty Montano, Lisa Newton, and Maia Werner-Avidon
Thanks to outgoing Chair: Marcie Benne

The Membership Committee strives to create accessible and inclusive pathways for joining and engaging with VSA. The committee co-develops a variety of resources and activities to help members get acquainted with each other, share expertise, develop VSA competencies, create VSA experiences, and collaborate to advance the field.
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Roto is pleased to announce the renewal of its annual partnership with Dublin City Schools, comprising 12 elementary, 4 middle and 3 high schools surrounding Roto’s central Ohio headquarters. The partnership provides Roto’s museum projects with a diverse pool of participants for our extensive in-house exhibit development and evaluation efforts, while students and teachers enjoy expert support for their innovative in-class projects. Together with our museum and science center colleagues, Roto relies on practices like these to produce some of the most effective and durable exhibitions and cultural experiences in the field.