

Small but Mighty! Keeping Your Small-scale Museum Vibrant

Key Takeaways from the Session:

Staffing:

Amarinda Keys, Children's Discovery Museum, Waterville, ME

1. **Trust:** Focus on building a tight-knit community by prioritizing open communication, regular check-ins, and ensuring staff have autonomy and ownership over their work.
2. **Flexibility:** Keep job descriptions specific but variable, include regular check-ins for miscellaneous tasks, consider constructing a team-based structure that is more circular than linear, allow for flexible work hours, and follow team member's strengths.
3. **Collaboration:** Look outside your museum and partner with other organizations to increase reach and capabilities.

Exhibits:

Erin Dowdall, Wonder Works Children's Museum, Oak Park, IL

1. Understand and articulate your SWNOB: Strengths, Weaknesses, Needs & Opportunities, and Budget.
2. One size does not fit all! Use models and approaches that best fit your museum and the key points outlined in your SWNOB. A big, expensive & flashy exhibit is not always best.
3. Get creative with unused spaces, materials, programming, material and toy rotations, and more.

Programs:

1. Determine the pillars you focus on and be faithful to them in terms of programming. Try to use as many as you can per programming activity.
2. Keep things organized: What are you offering, and how can you categorize it? Try to limit your programming to four or five types, and build a database for everything that is invented at your museum.
3. Keep an eye out for the blind spot. Consider things like inclusivity, partnerships, audience, and open-ended activities when creating a checklist for the programming of your museum.

What idea from this workshop can you try when you get back to your museum?

What idea may be a long-term goal?

Get (at least) two business cards/contacts from your networking time.

PROGRAMMING CHECKLIST

To what does this program activity comply?

	REGULAR PROGRAMMING	SPECIAL PROGRAMMING	COMMERCIAL PROGRAMMING	EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING
STEM				
ART				
NATURE				
LITERATURE				
CULTURE				

CAN WE DO IT IN TERMS OF...

Profitable?				
Planning?				
Staffing?				

BE CAUTIOUS OF BLANK SPOTS! DID WE THINK OF THE FOLLOWING...

Audience driven				
All-inclusive				
Partnerships				
Open-ended				