

WMA 2023 Annual Meeting Evaluation

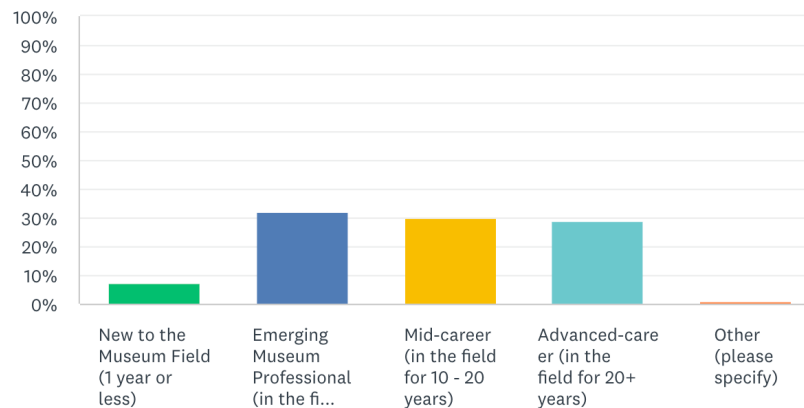
PURPOSE

The Western Museums Association's (WMA) 2023 Annual Meeting was held October 5-8 in Pasadena, California. More than 400 attendees from across the West and beyond, came together to reconnect, learn from professionals in a variety of sessions, and attend fun networking events. To understand, evaluate, and improve upon the 2023 attendee experience, WMA sent out an Annual Meeting Evaluation. A total of 97 people responded. The results are shared below.

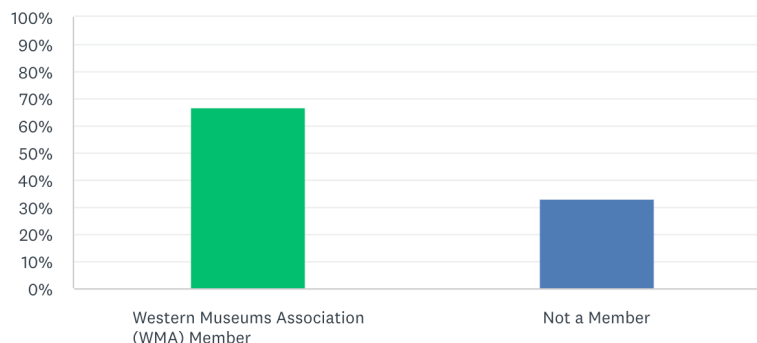
GENERAL QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

To get to know the survey respondents better, WMA first asked a few generalized questions. The first was "At what stage are you in your current career path?" 96 people answered - 31 (32%) are Emerging Museum Professionals; 28 (29%) are Advanced-Career; 7 (7%) are New to the Museum Field; and 1 (1%) are something other.

The one individual who entered "other" shared that they're in the art logistic field.



The next general question asked if the survey taker was a current member of WMA. Out of 97 respondents, 63 (67%) are a WMA member; 31 (33%) are not a member, and 3 did not answer.



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In the third generalized question, we wanted to know where the respondents lived. While everyone resides in the US, 19 (20%) live in Los Angeles/Pasadena, 9 (10%) live in Seattle, WA, 6 (6%) live in San Diego, 4 (4%) live in Portland, OR, 3 (3%) live in Phoenix, AZ, and the rest live somewhere else in the US.



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Moving onto more Annual Meeting-specific questions, WMA first asked “What was your primary reason for attending the Western Museums Association 2022 Annual Meeting?” 45 (46%) people stated they primarily attended WMA 2023 for professional development; 19 (20%) for networking; 2 (2%) for the exhibit hall, and 25 (26%) respondents said they attended because they were presenting. Additionally, 0 people attended just to see a specific speaker or for job-seeking purposes, and 6 people stated they attended for another reason.

Those that selected “Other” stated the following reason for their attendance:

For work, as an exhibitor

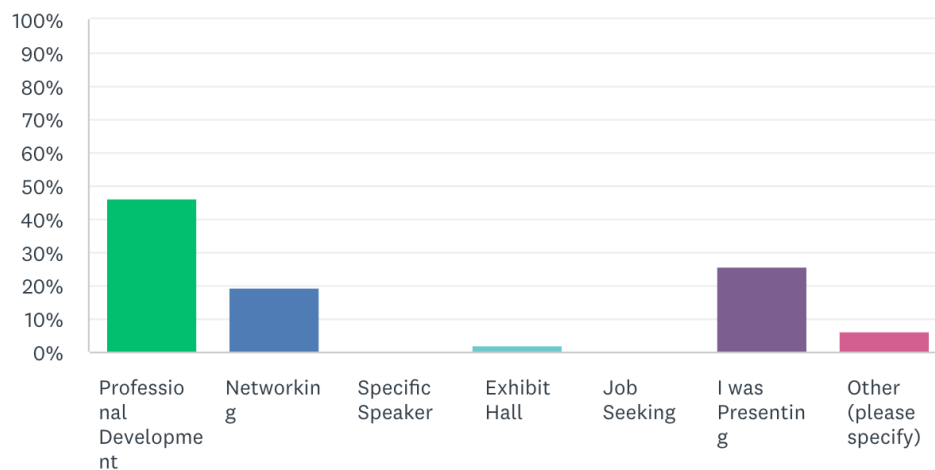
WMA Board

An employer sent them

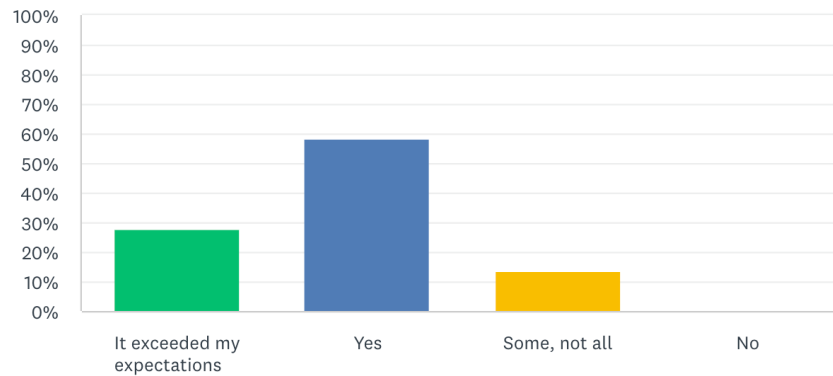
Presenting, work, networking

Supposed to sit on a panel but did not because of the labor dispute

WMA PC member and Presenter

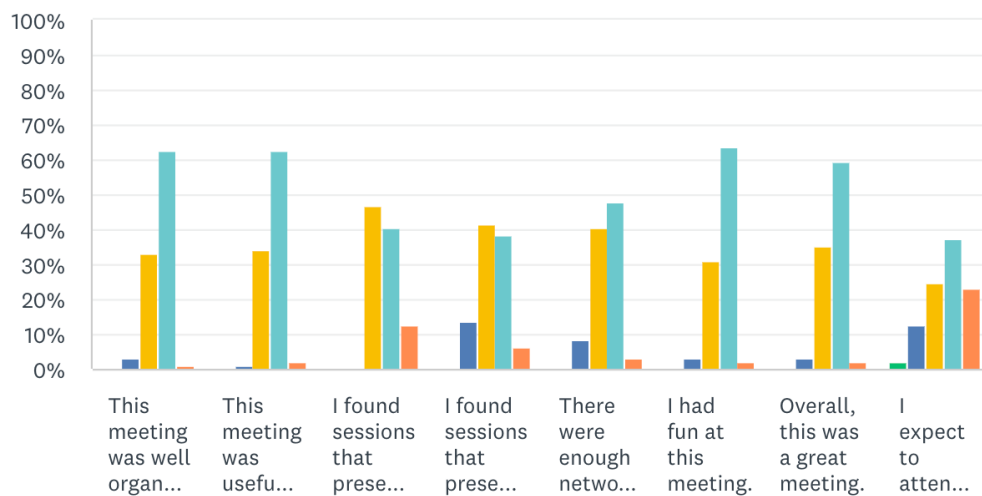


The 5th question asked if the Annual Meeting met their expectations. Out of 97 responses, 56 (58%) said it met their expectations; 27 (28%) said it exceeded their expectations; 13 (14%) said it met some but not all of their expectations, and 1 individual skipped the question.



The 6th question asked survey respondents if they agree or disagree with the variety of statements seen below.

- 61 (63%) strongly agreed that the meeting was well organized
- 61 (63%) strongly agreed that the meeting was useful to them as a professional
- 45 (47%) agreed that the session material was presented at an appropriately introductory level for them
- 40 (42%) agreed that the session material was presented at an appropriately advanced level for them
- 46 (48%) strongly agreed that there were enough networking opportunities
- 61 (63%) strongly agreed that they had fun
- 57 (59%) strongly agreed this was a great meeting overall
- 36 (38%) strongly agreed that they expect to attend next year



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The second part of the survey moved to focus specifically on the Annual Meeting Sessions. A total of 6 questions were asked in this section.

WMA began with questions 7a-e. Question 7a asked “What were the two or three best sessions you attended? What made them great?” A total of 68 attendees responded, 29 skipped. Here are the top favorite sessions of WMA 2023:

These are the sessions attendees found to be the **best session** they attended:

6 attendee votes

Museum 101: Building a Program Plan

4 attendee votes

Reclaiming Land – In and Out of the Museum

Shifting Power Dynamics: Dismantling Colonial Practices

Play Has a Role to Play

The Current State of Fine Art Insurance

3 attendee votes

Monumental Reckoning

Museum Governance Essentials and Best Practices

These are the sessions attendees found also to be **great**:

4 attendee votes

Re(centering) the Conversation: From Colonization to Indigenization

3 attendee votes

Balancing Act: Navigating Programming and Preservation in Museum Galleries

Centering Native Voices in Exhibitions

Empathetic Museum

Museums in Militarized and Colonial Spaces

WMA-lympics

These are the sessions attendees found to be **good** as well:

4 attendee votes

Collections Conundrums: A Therapy Session

3 attendee votes

Loosen Your Grip!

Museum 101: Building a Program Plan

Museums as Neighbors

WMA-lympics

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Next, 7b asked: “What was the least effective or valuable session you attended? What made it less than wonderful? How could it have been made better?” A total of 42 attendees answered, and 55 skipped.

WMA categorized the responses by session title. These were the top 4 **least effective or least valuable sessions** that received 2 or more votes:

1. Fostering Nimble, Inclusive, & Equitable Museums – 5 votes
2. Reinventing Field Trip Programs – 3 votes
3. When Museums Close – 2 votes
4. Re(centering) the Conversation – 2 votes

Below, are all the individual responses.

Living Cultures, Living Collections: Bishop Museum's Pacific Pipeline, Sunday 11 a.m. This was definitely an interesting topic and they had a lot of good things to share, two of the three panelists were long-winded and this made the session drag somewhat. I would also have liked for them to share more slides of the museum and artifacts on display.

Fostering Nimble, Inclusive, and Equitable Museums, Friday, Oct. 6, 11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. While it was great to learn about the DEAI focused online course currently in development by CCLI, I had been hoping for more information on tools and resources that I could take back to my museum now. I had been hoping to learn about best practices that we could implement right away. While

we (my museum) will explore the CCLI online course once it launches next spring, it would have been great to have something that could be applicable now.

Lighting as Narrative: Harmonizing Design and Conservation in Artifact Presentation, Saturday, October 7. This was the least valuable session to me only because I am new to the intricacies of museum lighting. Nothing against the presentation itself.

The Tonga and the Importance of Creating a MOU with Museums, Saturday 2:00-3:15 PM I was disappointed that they did not share aspects of the actual MOU which is one of the most challenging things to draft. I was hoping to get more guidance on those technical aspects than how the two groups worked to develop an MOU.

Honestly, I dipped in and out of a few sessions. In my opinion, there was too much talking/reporting on programs, and not enough interaction/workshopping.

You Collect What - on Sunday afternoon. There were some interesting anecdotes but the attempt to make it a conversation/small groups seemed to fall a little flat.

The sessions about decolonization and Indigenization were very thought-provoking. More time for discussion and Q&A would be helpful. Designated time to process would also be helpful. Play has a Role to Play met expectations for an interactive session/workshop. It was great to actually talk and connect with colleagues.

WHEN MUSEUMS CLOSE - WHY COMMUNITIES MATTER since it was canceled. But Janice stepping in to lead a conversation was helpful.

Collection Conundrums. Case studies not generally applicable.

Reinventing Field Trip (Sunday @ 4pm) was less eventful for me. All the point that were offered the Skirball had already implemented them in our programs last year.

There wasn't a least effective session. It was more of, how can each session be more effective. Showing scalability is huge! Not everyone is a large, well-staffed museum with funding. Also, providing tools for implementation. Case studies are great, when they provide actual takeaways and not just a story.

Fostering Nimble, Inclusive, and Equitable museums. I thought the first half of the presentation was great. It had great content, and showed how the program was being received. I got thrown off when they asked for feedback about the program. It was not communicated at the beginning that they were building a program, and wanted to get feedback on what they were doing. So I didn't have that mindset going into the session, and was a little confused coming out of the session.

Reinventing Field Trip Programs - Sunday, October 8, 4:00PM-5:15PM The speakers were not very engaging, and the lecture format was difficult to sit through. I believe a coinciding PowerPoint and audience interaction would have been a better benefit.

REPATRIATION BEYOND NAGPRA Sunday 2-4pm; I liked the material and the discussion but the room was so noisy it was hard to communicate without talking quite loudly. I think it would have been better if it was in a more isolated place. I did like the open nature of the format though, being able to engage in conversation about what my museum is doing and hear what others are doing was helpful and I feel like I have people I can reach out to if I have any questions now.

Living Cultures, Living Collections: Bishop Museum's Pacific Pipeline: important topic on challenging outreach; however, the presenters read too much rather than speaking conversationally, and used too many Hawaiian language terms that they did not translate for the non-Hawaiian-speaking audience!

Shifting Power Dynamics. The discussion felt limited in scope. Presenters appeared to be a small intimate group. The circle format didn't work well for a large group. No visuals.

CCLI Session-FOSTERING NIMBLE, INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE MUSEUMS. The description in the program made it sound like they were going to share tools for engaging with DEAI work. In fact, they wanted feedback on a tool they are developing so that they can get more Museums to sign up for their product. It wasn't helpful or all that practical and by the end I felt like I was wasting my time.

Museum Empathy Lab- they went well over the time limit and I had to leave so I did not see the whole presentation.

I loved the keynote speech - about museums as fundamental places of care. It really changed my opinion on my job (visitor services) and made me think more about how our museum cares for the people who enter through our doors.

SHARING, TASTING, AND STORYTELLING: INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING. I didn't find much about how to really foster intergenerational learning with intentionality. It seems like the highlight programs just seemed to attract a variety of ages, rather than begin intentionally created to foster intergenerational learning.

FOSTERING NIMBLE, INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE MUSEUMS - I was very interested in the subject matter and would have liked more group share outs/small discussions. It felt like the discussion portion was more on how they could sell their product better rather than sharing knowledge on DEAI best practices in museums.

WHEN MUSEUMS CLOSE - WHY COMMUNITIES MATTER - This program was canceled 15 minutes after it was scheduled to begin. More prompt communication would be appreciated.

Programs and Preservation - I thought it would be more about historic house preservation, not traditional gallery rules. Still good - just not what I expected.

FOSTERING NIMBLE, INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE MUSEUMS: I thought the lengthy amount of time spent watching videos from the online course was really challenging to engage with. I ended up leaving early.

I wish the happy hours on Friday evening would have been in a bigger room or be spread out because it was too loud and crowded to be very conducive to actually connecting with people. I also think there could be a better way to format the physical space for panel sessions. It is hard to see the speakers in places like the Pasadena room for example. Maybe setting up chairs in a more inclusive way rather than in straight rows.

Embracing Change: Lesson Learned From Navigating Career Transitions in the Museum Field 10/7/2023: This session was by no means bad it just was my least favorite of the conference. The room set up (in a sort of circle at the front and then rows in the back) felt exclusionary as it was difficult to see speakers if you were not in the front third of the room.

Museums and Climate Action - Presenters were great, but the conversation was too focused on individual work for climate action and discussions focused on the big corporations and other societal changes were not as explored. WMA needs more climate action sessions.

Re(Centering) the Conversation on Friday, Oct 6th at 3:30 pm. The chairs were arranged in a circle and the panelists allowed us all to take part in an inspiring and powerful conversation.

Bringing Museums to Stressful Environments - I did not realize this session was specifically geared toward working with prisons and hospitals. That is not something my facility has the capacity to do.

Re(centering) the Conversation was interesting, but I had difficulties following the thread. One of the speakers, in particular, was not the best public speaker and rambled. I really dislike being negative because I understand how difficult it is to do what that person did, but it's important to note that it made it difficult for me to feel as if I got something out of the session.

7c asked, "What session formats did you find the most valuable?" Overall, most attendees seemed to gravitate more towards Active Learning and conversation-focused sessions, or sessions that consisted of both a standard panel followed by an opportunity for Q&As, an interactive activity, or group discussion. The word However, there are still those who prefer the standard mainstage passive panel format.

Out of 97 survey takers, here's what 60 attendees had to say about the session formats:

I prefer sessions that are discussion-based (somewhat Socratic seminar style).

All the formats worked out well- round table discussion, panel, and presentation format.

The time for questions was really important at the end of each session—getting the perspective of many people in the audience and hearing the panelists' responses was always interesting and helpful.

While of course, most sessions were basically lectures (even if though they were panels), it's great whenever they can add some interactivity. Such as having time to break into smaller group discussions around a topic for a portion of the time. I also loved that one session gave us the option to embroider or weave while they were talking! (Bringing "Museums" to Stressful Environments, Sunday 9:15 am)

Fishbowl or conversational, w/o slides.

I enjoyed the variety of formats. having different formats kept the learning fresh.

The active learning format of the "Museum Exhibitions and Difficult Content" session was very beneficial. It gave the attendees the opportunity to share about things going on at their institutions and get feedback from colleagues who could offer an experienced or outside perspective.

The traditional presentation format.

I appreciated the sessions that managed time well enough to build in two-way conversations with the attendees. Thereby leveraging the collective wisdom.

Non-traditional

I want to see more interaction, talking with peers, and coming up with solutions in real-time. More flexibility in session agendas, more room for process and conversation.

Conversation, when the panelists had a moderated conversation with the time and space for Q&A following.

Concurrent sessions that used a panel of presentations and plenty of room for discussion as a larger group of attendees

Depends on the content. Strong preference for workshops vs. lectures/presentations.

Short panel presentation with group breakout discussion, led by presenters.

Well run panel discussions are actually great - good images and collaborative back and forth among panelists can be informative and is not distracting.

Presentation from the whole panel with time for audience conversation

I prefer passive learning, but I understand that is just my learning style and that active learning/conversation fosters better environments for certain subjects.

The talks were done really well and having panelists/multiple museums participate in talks with one another and their experiences was wonderful.

Active Learning

Longer sessions

Museums as Neighbors was super helpful because they took us through their process in learning about the community they wanted to serve. Furthermore they helped us identify our specific communities which got me thinking how are we engaging our community as an institution. Very insightful!

Sessions that had built-in work time (either independently or in small groups)

Those without breakout groups.

I did like having break-out discussions with other people in attendance, and hearing experiences from them as well.

Sessions that included group discussion, participation, and activities felt incredibly valuable and informative.

I liked the sessions that were part lecture style, part interactive/discussion. I think that I got the most out of those because there was a deeper engagement with the material.

The ones that allowed plenty of time for small group discussion were great for networking.

Traditional presentations and panel discussions; small group breakouts take up too much time and do not convey as much information as from the panelists

The format didn't matter too much. Content and presenter knowledge are important. Interaction with the audience helps if the material lends itself.

Any format where the presenters provided activity/ideas to engage with/work on during the session.

I liked the panels or short presentation and open question format.

I found the break-out sessions and times to discuss helpful - especially when they had worksheets and tools to help us think about the content presented (like the Museums as Neighbors worksheet).

I really liked the format that blended shared experiences and group discussions. Most rooms were small enough that the open questions/discussions felt manageable and productive.

Ones with time for discussion, not just panel talks

I particularly enjoyed the conversation and passive learning formats.

Active Learning

I love the traditional formats - but the experimental ones were very well received, too

The walk-in museum tools session was a good idea. I'm sorry I hadn't known about it b/c I would have been able to bring lots of useful things for folks. I hope this happens again - but maybe not a session - maybe during one of the coffee hours or something??

In general, I prefer more passive learning formats. However, Play Has A Role to Play had specific activity prompts that made it a fun and engaging session.

I actually found the roundtables the best part of the conference because they were themed and allowed me to actually speak to people in a casual way that still had a clear objective/goal. These conversations were the most fruitful. The format of a panel, although making for good learning, feels too passive and intimidating for me as an emerging professional to go up and actually connect with the speakers, which I feel is the most useful way to engage at this conference.

Embracing change and Board Governance had unique ways of interacting and talking about the info.

I actually enjoyed the passive formats as much as I enjoyed the active formats. I think having a balance of the two works well.

Speed Networking, but PLEASE space it out it was too loud to hear your partner.

Conversation-style panel discussions

Conversation, Active Learning, and Passive Learning

Sessions with open conversations or interactives

I presented in two informal sessions, one Saturday morning (tools) and one Sunday afternoon (inspiration). I enjoyed the opportunity to meet and chat one-on-one or in small groups with a range of people I might not have met otherwise.

Question 7d asked the survey takers to share any additional feedback about the sessions they attended. Only 22 wrote in their thoughts, and this is what they had to say.

There were many sessions that related to my interest in collections during the same time that I was unable to attend all of them, and at other times there were not sessions that directly applied to me.

For information heavy-based, having printouts worked really well (like with fine art insurance - it helps get the key points down in case you miss something, especially for newer professionals).

It felt raw and authentic like we could be ourselves without professional posturing. That was exhausting to share myself on a more personal level, but so worth it for the better relationships that were built.

I prefer to take notes on my laptop and none of the sessions had tables that allowed for this. It would be nice to not have to type off my lap next time.

I do think the descriptions of the sessions could've been a little more illustrative. I feel that some of the content didn't quite align with how they were represented in the description. I think including definitions for each type of learning format would've been helpful in making my decisions as well.

The Keynote was exceptional!

The speed networking could have been slightly better organized. It was incredibly loud in the room, making it hard to connect authentically. I also think giving even just 15-30 seconds would have helped people settle into their conversations more.

For talks that wished for participants to break out into groups, the layout was a bit odd, and [we had to] move chairs. Once we moved the chairs, we stayed that way for the rest of the session.

some case studies were very specific and non-replicable to other museums.

WMA-lympics was a much-needed comic relief and was appreciated!

Niki Stewart is an incredible asset. She provided takeaways that were real, scalable, and could be implemented.

Having more educational-based sessions would feel more inclusive to better reflect the different types of museum careers.

Attended 6 of the concurrent sessions. I would rate 3 as very good. 1 as good and 2 as needing work.

I prefer practical instruction and facilitated conversation as a group to the "turn to your neighbor" model. It seems like we can get into deeper more meaningful questions when the presenter facilitates with a purpose rather than having more superficial ice-breaker conversations.

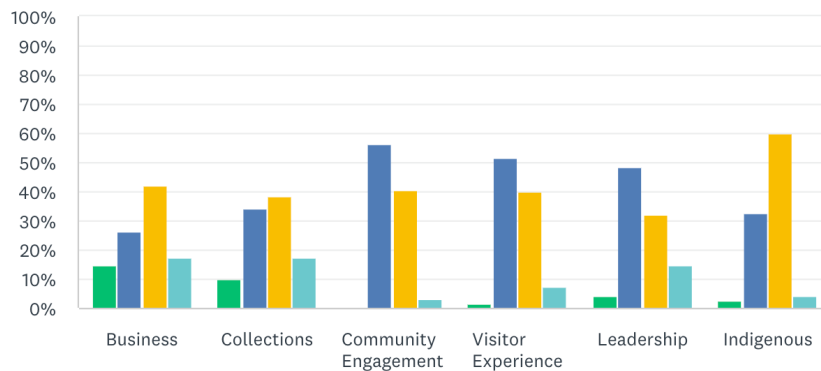
FOSTERING NIMBLE, INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE MUSEUMS - This program felt more like a focus group for improving the presenters' product than an informative session. Tech challenges also made it less than ideal. LOOSEN YOUR GRIP! - This program was heavily weighted toward Children's Museums, which wasn't clear in the program. I wasn't able to find many applicable takeaways for my institution.

All the sessions I attended were valuable but some of the ones about indigenous work did seem to re-tread similar themes on the need to employ and center indigenous individuals (I went to 3.) All of that work is immensely important but I wonder if there could have been a way to combine them into a more active session or to facilitate networking and solutions building instead of re-treading what we seem to already know about the need for museums to center indigenous needs.

It is unfortunate that WMA chose to have their event at a place that had a labor dispute and communicated poorly to the participants about the dispute. The Pasadena Hilton was clearly listed on the Local 11 website as a hotel with striking workers: <https://www.unitehere11.org/>

Would love to see more roundtable opportunities spread out throughout the conference, every day. I believe these are where real rich conversation happens and true connection (aside from milling around at random and meeting folks). I think the evening events are also a great place to have fun and network/learn but they are not accessible to all due to the cost. I am not sure much can be done about this since I imagine it must be expensive to have the space + food + drinks, but I was sad to miss the evening events due to not being able to afford them.

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Question 7e asked, "As WMA prepares for 2024, how should we structure the new program compared to this year's program?" A total of 72 survey respondents answered. To highlight the responses, 42% want the program to include **the same amount of Business** content; 39% want it to include **the same amount of Collections** content; 57% want the program to include **more Community Engagement** content; 51% want it to include **more Visitor Experience** content; 49% want it to include **more Leadership** content; and finally, 60% want it to include **the same amount of Indigenous** content.



A few attendees shared their thoughts:

Maybe consider including grant writing in the pre-conference workshop.

Black/Afro-American, etc.

I could have used more from a house museum perspective on all the sessions that I attended.

I work in Education, and this is lumped in with Visitor Experience. If possible, I'd love to see more Education-focused topics.

Decolonization/Indigenization. We need to start actually doing this as a field and we could use support understanding how to approach it and strategies/tools to help us do the work.

The hot topic of the moment: AI - What and How can it benefit Museums? What do we know, who is using it or experimenting? Issues of oversight and investigating Copyright.

I'm not sure where this may fit, but a session focused on "how to bring your Board along", e.g. how to work on promoting and getting Board buy-in and support on DEAI initiatives, diversifying collections, etc., would be extremely beneficial. As museums move towards being more inclusive and equitable institutions, many of us (based on conversations I've had with colleagues all throughout the US) are getting pushback from conservative Board members. And often we're not in a position or have the power to change the make-up of our Boards. What are tools/ways that we can educate Board members on the importance of the inclusive and equitable work we are trying to do? What can we do to "bring them along" and have them become more understanding and supportive of the work we're doing?

Cultural Facility/Museum development (capital projects)

In addition to including more programs related to Visitor Experience, I think it worthwhile to include the work of membership and fundraising departments. While some content was very applicable to all areas of museum work, it would've been great to see the public-facing work and the development aspects highlighted more.

Programming that specifically speaks to the roles, responsibilities, and perspectives of public-facing museum professions, such as those in visitor experience, would help to break down traditional organizational hierarchies and promote more inclusive participation. Programming to promote collaboration and brainstorming across departments to rethink how organizations are structured and operate, as well as how organizational structure impacts how we operate internally and what goes out to the public.

Rights and reproductions, publishing, imaging services

Volunteers, Board Training

Having more talks on collections and exhibitions would have been great.

Dealing with challenging situations.....like security issues, doxing, negative social media, etc.

As an education/engagement professional, I would love more in that vein. Sessions on pedagogy, educational approaches, etc. Could be from an interdisciplinary perspective (e.g. art museum, science museum, historical museum, etc.).

Need more fundraising sessions—or at least sessions that include conversations about funding in their program explanation

Membership engagement and fundraising

I would love to see more front-of-house staff presenting - like visitor services, events staff, or operations. Having perspectives from a range of job types at museums would help give me ideas on where we could grow.

HR, Evaluation, Marketing

More climate-focused sessions would be wonderful!

there was very little talk of exhibition design, I'd love to see more design discussions from materials to innovations and project reviews

My main concern was there was a lot of representation of Collections, Programs, and Exhibits, but as an Operations professional it was hard to find peers in Operations. My Marketing colleague also had trouble finding other Marketing people.

Managing your career / Technology

How Climate Action is a DEIA issue, and ways that museums can bring this work together to make change. More resources on social justice issues, anti-racism, etc.

Evaluation

Would love more visitor experience and education folks to be able to attend and present. These are often the least paid and most front-facing staff at the museum but should have a bigger platform and access opportunities to attend.

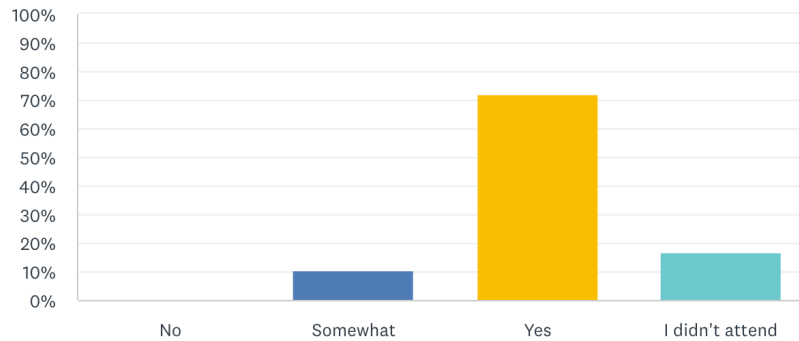
I would love some more sessions focused on the queer community, how it can be engaged and protected.

Youth and Teen Programs - Education programs in general Climate Action

Technology

Exhibition Design, best practices, case studies, guidelines for success

Next, Question #8 asked the survey takers if they found the 2023 Opening General Session & Keynote speaker Sandra Jackson-Dumont, to be valuable or not." A total of 76 people responded – 55 (72%) voted "Yes;" 13 (17%) didn't attend; 8 (11%) said "Somewhat; and 0% said "No."



Some people elaborated further on why they found the Opening General Session and keynote to be valuable or not.

Absolutely amazing!

Alas, I saw several people on their phones during the keynote. I think you need a really charismatic and engaging speaker, especially since they are following several "welcome" speeches. I actually did like this year's keynote and appreciated her message!

I appreciated the less formal, more human feel this year. Would love to see the keynote expectations heightened to allow different types of programming.

Emily Edenshaw, President & CEO, Alaska Native Heritage Center Kim Christen, Professor Digital Technology & Culture, WSU; Founder, Mukurtu CMS; Co-Founder, Local Contexts

Very engaging speaker and great introduction to the theme of the year.

Sandra was great and inspiring. I always enjoy the keynote speakers at WMA.

Sandra was incredible and her message really set the tone for the weekend.

The WMA portion of the Opening General Session was very strong and cohesive.

More people like her. It was so refreshing to hear from an active museum leader who is engaging with so many hard questions. The Keynote was my highlight.

The speech did trail off at times and I got a little confused.

I loved it - it made me think about the work we do differently (perhaps that millimeter she was talking about).

The awards last a bit longer than I'd like!

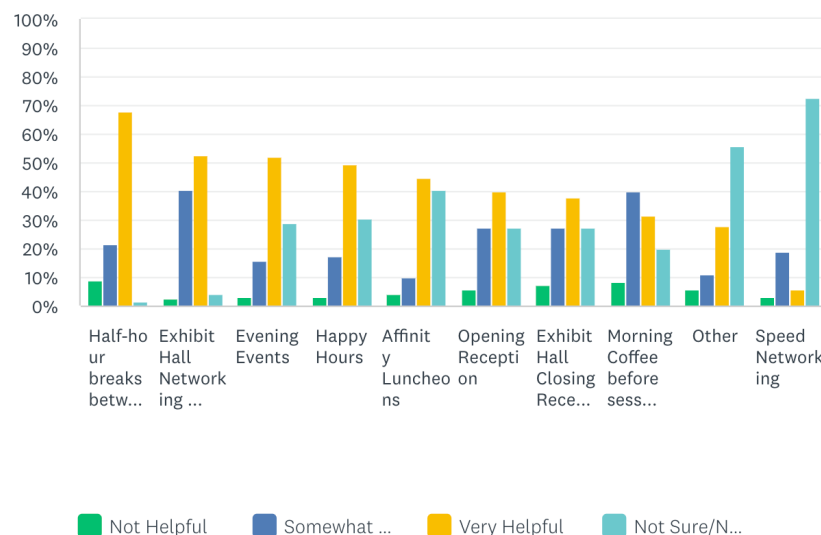
She was wonderful and I wish she had remained for the rest of the conference to have an opportunity to interact with her.

Now, the survey enters the third section focusing on **Networking and the Exhibit Hall**.

First up, WMA wanted to gauge just how much the various WMA 2023 networking opportunities facilitated networking for each attendee. Of the 97 survey takers, 72 answered and 25 skipped.

The top 3 opportunities that were *very helpful* in facilitating networking were the half-hour breaks between sessions (68%); the Exhibit Hall Networking and Refreshment Breaks (53%); and the Evening Events (52%). The bottom 3 opportunities that were *not helpful* in facilitating networking were the Morning Coffee before sessions (9%); the half-hour breaks between sessions (9%); and Exhibit Hall Closing Reception (7%).

Additionally, 40% said the Exhibit Hall Networking and Refreshment Breaks were *somewhat helpful*, as well as the Morning Coffee before sessions (40%), and the Opening Reception (27%).



Here are a few comments from each networking opportunity:

Half-Hour Breaks Between Sessions

Time to decompress and not feel rushed between sessions was great

The half-hour breaks were important, but I typically used them as breaks rather than networking opportunities.

A good amount of time to get a snack and debrief with others over the sessions we had just attended!

Exhibit Hall Networking & Refreshment Breaks

Nice to continue to talk to exhibitors and network

Good balance of refreshments

Evening Events

These needed to be longer - by the time people finished their dinner, the events were more than half done.

Great for those who can afford it.

They were sooo expensive. I felt this caused a huge barrier.

The Autry Museum had most of its exhibits closed.

Extra cost not included in the budget to attend the conference

These were fun, but pretty expensive for what you got

Liked these but the energy level is on empty by 9:00.

Some of them were cost-prohibitive

Perhaps have some lower priced options. It gets pricey to attend more than one of these.

The high price tag for evening events made it difficult for anyone on my team to attend/be able to network.

Very fun! Perhaps more by way of substantive snacks

Happy Hours

Didn't attend but see this as another place to have more affinity spaces

It was fun, but way too loud, hot, and crowded. I like how the happy hours used to be, at local bars or restaurants.

Different happy hours in separate rooms would be helpful; it was very loud and hard to hear instructions.

My group didn't have an assigned activity, so while it was nice to chat and meet other early-career people, it would have been great to have icebreakers or other structures.

Again, super loud in that small room! Possibility of spreading out?

Great. Thank you, sponsors.

I jumped ship on the one I signed up for because there was no structure (Imposter Syndrome)

the happy hour was great and very affordable!

The space for the director's happy hour was small and as an emerging professional in a director role, the other mixed room was easier to join in.

Wish there was more space, it was very loud, and not enough room to join in some of the happy hour conversations.

Nobody gave us our drink tickets while we were doing our activity. :(

Either we should skip the activities or break out into a separate room (NAME Drink and Draw)

Affinity Luncheons

Loved Ben Garcia's talk.

The idea of Luncheons is great, but it definitely limits the group of people that can or cannot attend. Personally, my co-worker and I had to decide on a Pre-Conference Tour or a Luncheon, and we essentially voted on a tour since the cost was cheaper for the budget that we had to attend. Those talks were really interesting to us, especially the Indigenous Luncheon but we were unable to attend. Maybe even having a row of chairs in the back would allow people interested in the talks to hear those presentations.

The affinity luncheons were too expensive for my institutions to support, so I found them inaccessible.

Being locked behind a paywall makes networking and career development inaccessible.

Very good networking event.

I wish these things were included in the ticket price.

The high price tag for luncheons made it difficult for anyone on my team to attend/be able to network.

This was my favorite activity.

Opening Reception

The lead from Speed Networking to the reception was helpful

Had time to dedicate to seeing the exhibit space

Easier format to have longer conversations

WMA [had a] very strong showing.

More food would be great.

Exhibit Hall Closing Reception

This was a really great way to meet people, through the roundtables– I wish this had happened earlier.

More interactive tables! The Kumeyaay craft table was awesome for learning and connecting.

Enjoyable.

Again, no one seemed to be there.

Morning Coffee Before Sessions

Nice to have that available for everyone

Really, this is only helpful on the first day. I do believe coffee/refreshments should be provided throughout, but the first day's morning coffee is really the only one people truly gather at.

Regardless, coffee is needed.

A non-dairy milk would be great

Not as helpful for networking but the coffee is appreciated!

Would be nice to have some small food provided during morning coffee as I prioritized getting food over the coffee klatches just so I could make it through the sessions. Maybe also find a way to have some structure or activities or guiding discussions for folks who are shy but want to connect over coffee.

Morning coffee and all breaks should have been in the exhibit hall.

Speed Networking

A bit awkward, but great way to meet a lot of people quickly.

It was very loud in the room where the speed networking took place, so it was difficult to hear each other. It made it difficult to understand and make connections.

Perhaps could be spaced out more/alterd slightly.

Way too loud in room. Spread out in a larger room to avoid yelling!

It was hard to reconnect with people after we moved on from the event.

I sadly missed this because it overlapped with a tour

While I did get to connect with a few people I met then, it was a very loud and overwhelming experience in the small room.

I was not aware of this event

It took place at the same time as the off-site tours

Other

SO thankful to come and be a scholarship awardee, but I still a very expensive event.

The hotel setup helped us bump into each other more.

Enjoyed the Sunday 2:00-4:00 PM roundtables, poster sessions, and activity stations - was able to have great conversations

The programs during the Exhibit Hall Closing would be meaningful to have throughout the conference, such as part of the networking breaks.

Evening events were the best for networking in my opinion.

I wish all more networking opportunities were included in the ticket price.

I loved the Kumeyaay craft station during the poster session. I would love to see more of this kind of interaction! It was a great way to connect with others in a more organic way.

Question 10 asked the survey takers to let WMA know if/how the Exhibit Hall served their interests during the Annual Meeting. 36 answered, and 61 skipped.

These were some of the key responses.

There was a variety of collections of objects, whether it was exhibition display, cataloging, or traveling shows.

Yes, it did. I was able to meet with exhibitors to see what type of services they offered.

It was definitely useful to have a gathering space for attendees during break times! I'm very introverted and it's hard for me to just walk up to someone and talk to them, so unless I saw someone I knew, I used the time to peruse the Silent Auction items. I did feel sorry for the Exhibitors though, as I think most folks spoke with them at the first one or two breaks and they were left alone the rest of the time. Since I work in Education, none of them pertained to me and I'm guessing may not have been relevant to many of the attendees.

It was a nice hub area where I talked to a number of people I connected with.

Somewhat. Would have liked to have seen more publishers, archival supply companies, and digitization companies.

I got to connect with a few exhibitors. A diverse group - seems like some very specialized exhibitors are only going to have a few people for whom they are relevant.

The exhibitors present are current vendors we work with and also allowed us to meet new vendors we can work with. Great list of exhibitors!

Really enjoyed the final day in the exhibit hall with the activities - great send-off.

One - It was strange to hear speakers during the breaks. This took time/attention away from networking. Two - Refreshments/lunch was not always ready in time for the breaks. It was a repeated occurrence to find staff setting up tables or the refreshment table after the allotted start time.

The exhibit hall seemed like a misleading term, as I assumed it would include informational exhibits rather than business booths.

I wasn't very focused on the exhibitors, but the information that I got from the few that I interacted with was helpful. There are a few things that I am planning to tell my museum about.

There were very few booths and they all revolved around collection/fine art

No, I would have loved to see more exhibit-related booths - it was very collections-focused

The exhibit hall was largely used as a space to get water and coffee between sessions. More standing tables would have been nice.

The poster sessions and information stations were great!

Not really, as an education person I did not find anything very useful there.

It was a good space. Keeping people in one space with food and refreshments is key for networking

I am Used to AAM so the smaller exhibit hall was initially a disappointment, but I found it easy to talk to everyone and later decided it was a more sane environment than AAM

ALL breaks should have been with the exhibitors. Morning coffee should have been with exhibitors. Exhibitors pay a lot of money to be at conferences (booth fee, flights, hotel, taxi, car rental, etc.) and they need as much face time as they can get. Also, the original schedule for the exhibit hall had that it opened at 10:15 am. However, no one came in despite there being time between sessions. Another missed opportunity. Then I saw that it had been changed to lunch with the exhibitors. It would be helpful to know as soon as the schedule is finalized if there have been changes made to the exhibit hall schedule. Were there any regular announcements made to encourage attendees to visit exhibitors? Next time, it might be worth considering having a bingo card or some kind of gimmick to facilitate face time with exhibitors. Lastly, I would recommend reaching out to exhibitors for future conferences on how best to schedule the exhibit hall.

It was just ok TBH. Would love to see some book reps or publishers.

There were too few exhibitors, and the regional museum and archives groups were not well represented.

—

Up next, the survey asked if people attended the Special Screening of *Nya'waap Illyuw Uuchyuwp, Our Way of Knowing?* If so, how did they find it valuable? 42 people answered, and 55 skipped.

Here are some of the responses who were in attendance.

Yes! I'm on the DEI committee at my museum and we're working to forge a relationship with our local tribe. So, I am interested in learning more about the beliefs and values of indigenous cultures. It was very interesting to see how one Cultural Center is presenting this to their audiences.

I did. The video itself was very interesting and the Q&A session afterwards was helpful as well. It was beneficial to hear from Laurie Egan-Hedley on how the Barona Cultural Center worked with the Kumeyaay community to create the video.

It was great— a highlight of the event.

Yes! It was extremely valuable. More time for Q&A would have been great.

Yes, I did attend. Having screenings like this definitely inspires us to see what more can we include in our exhibits and possible screenings we can have in our space.

I did. I enjoyed it a lot. I actually think having more film screenings would be nice. It was a pleasant activity after a long day.

yes. I liked seeing the "end result" of the collaboration, and how it's being used. The film itself was very well done, and I enjoyed learning about the storytelling history as well.

I found it a valuable addition to the conference, both as a contrast to discussion-heavy sessions and as an example of indigenization in museums.

Yes, it was a very insightful screening and a very refreshing program that made me aware of a whole new culture.

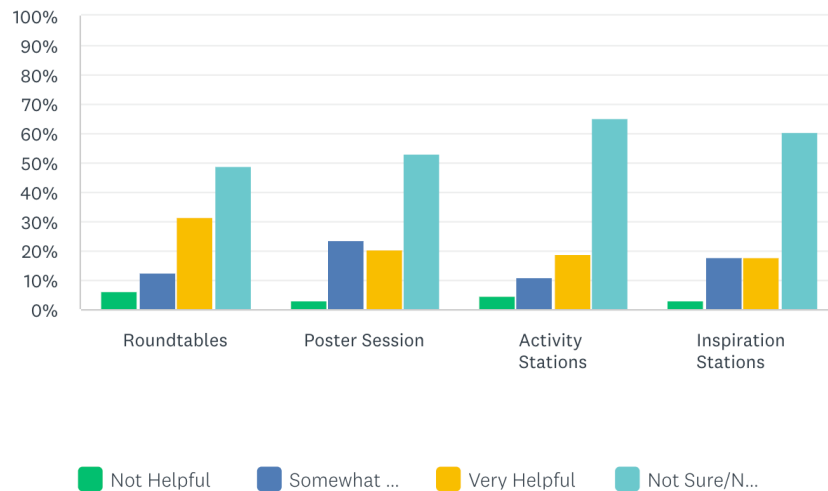
Yes! I found it very valuable to see the movie and thought it was incredible. I would rather have heard from Kumeyaay community members who were part of this work and would have liked to learn more about the community interactions and partnerships going on to create the film. It felt strange to have two folks who did not introduce themselves as Native or Kumeyaay specifically be talking about this project without the voices of the actual community there.

—

The fourth portion of the survey focused specifically on the Sunday Afternoon Exhibit Hall Activities (Poster Session, Inspiration Stations, Roundtables, and Activity Stations).

The question asked how much the Poster Session, Inspiration Stations, Roundtables, and Activity Stations facilitated networking. 64 answered, and 33 skipped.

Overall, 20 (32%) attendees found the Roundtables to be the most helpful, while 4 attendees (6%) found the Roundtables to be the least helpful. The majority of people seemed to not be sure about whether or not any of these activities were helpful at all.



Here's what people had to say about...

Roundtables

More of these! Intentional networking and connections.

Some tables had no participants therefore would go talk to poster presenters instead. Having it on the last day also made it difficult to make time to possibly share more ideas with colleagues throughout the conference.

These seemed more sparsely attended, and I found myself participating in discussions around posters rather than at tables.

I was confused on what was what

I think I completely missed these tables somehow.

Summaries of what the roundtables were about would have been very valuable

Poster Sessions

The layout was a bit confusing since they were so spread out. Would have been nice to have a different day.

The organization of the posters was a little disorganized, and attendees mostly walked past the poster presentations.

I wish the posters were all in one area

Descriptions would have been helpful

Activity Stations

Loved having fun on the floor!

More of these! Great for ideas and networking

Only attended the bookmarks station. was unaware of the wellness activity table. Blended in too much with Inspiration Station.

Amazing.

There was not enough space for everyone

I loved the constellation bookmark-making. Crafts are always fun!

I loved the Kumeyaay craft station during the poster session. I would love to see more of this kind of interaction! It was a great way to connect with others in a more organic way.

Inspiration Stations

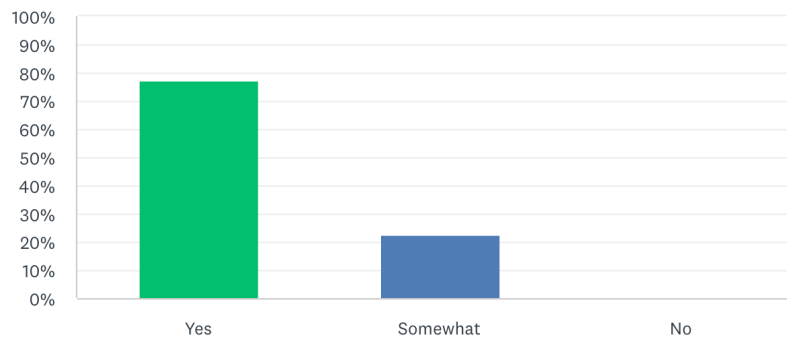
The layout was a bit confusing since they were so spread out. Would have been great to have maybe 30-minute breaks or during lunch to give people more time to interact.

I got lots of foot traffic at my table and it was a lovely networking experience!

Descriptions would have been helpful

—
The final section of the Annual Meeting survey, “You get the last word...” was back to asking more generalized questions.

First up, WMA asked if attendees felt like the 2023 Annual Meeting was diverse and inclusive. A total of 70 people answered, and 27 skipped. The results revealed that 54 (77%) thought “yes” 16 (23%) thought “somewhat” and nobody thought “no.”



Of the 70 people who answered, 24 commented:

I was able to hear from more Indigenous peoples who are also leading in their field (not just listen to a brief message), and I felt like I had a secure space to speak a little more freely, especially as a queer person of color.

There seemed to be a wide range of museum jobs/areas represented by the attendees, as well as museum types (art, history, science, natural history, gardens, etc.), geographical regions, etc. It meant that attendees were able to make connections far outside of their usual network. It also meant you could get feedback during breakout sessions, etc., from outside perspectives, which is often beneficial.

I was a first-time attendee, so not sure how diverse and inclusive the past conferences.

There was definitely an effort to include diverse sessions, but alas, the participants were not that diverse, nor the presenters.

The session presenters had many different demographics, so I heard from people that had unique points of view and experiences. For me personally, as a black person, I felt welcomed, respected, and heard, so I certainly applaud WMA for its inclusivity,

Many ideas and PsOV were encouraged and welcomed.

Last time I attended a WMA conference was over ten years ago in Palm Springs. At that time, the conference was very much focused on large institutions and showcased predominantly white professionals. This year's conference was a complete shift from that. I felt like the sessions were inclusive and covered topics that were relevant to me - an Indigenous professional working in an Indigenous institution.

Everyone is friendly - as a first timer I felt welcome. However, it can occasionally be a bit cliquey/exclusive, due to so many of members already knowing each other.

Professional conferences, by nature, operate from a point of privilege and coloniality. The environment itself was welcoming and great to see BIPOC presenters. Diversifying overall

attendance and information about how WMA is working to address inequities and inequalities within the organization/conference and throughout the field would be helpful.

Wide range of presenters, wide range of topics, wide range of attendees. Also, the conversation is open and welcoming even as really tough issues of inclusion and "hard topics" are broached.

The keynote speaker did show representation of BIPOC in the beginning of the conference and that was nice to see a person in a leadership role like her. There were sessions that just showcased no people of color, or museums that included people of color.

From the very beginning - all the business with the hotel unionizing - it felt inclusive. Hearing the support and this feeling carried through the whole weekend.

However, there was no room made for my dietary restrictions. Dessert at the opening lunch, afternoon snacks, and the entire luncheon on Sunday were provided with no regard to my predesignated diet. An apple is not dessert.

I think the scholarships helped bring in people who wouldn't otherwise be able to attend. The sessions also deeply engaged with diverse topics.

Many first-time attendees; encouraging representation from varied racial groups as well as the LGBTQ+ community.

Plenty of age diversity and some racial diversity. Also seemed like there were people from a variety of different types of museums.

I was impressed and heartened by the focus on Indigenous knowledge and community work being done. Would always love to keep seeing more. The sessions were long and it felt awkward to get up and stretch so having short built-in opportunities to stretch or move would help - also making sure everyone uses the microphones would be helpful as sometimes it was hard to hear. In some places, chairs were set up in a way that made it hard to see the presentation or the speaker(s), depending on how crowded the room was.

The opening with the Tongva elder was POWERFUL. Keep doing that.

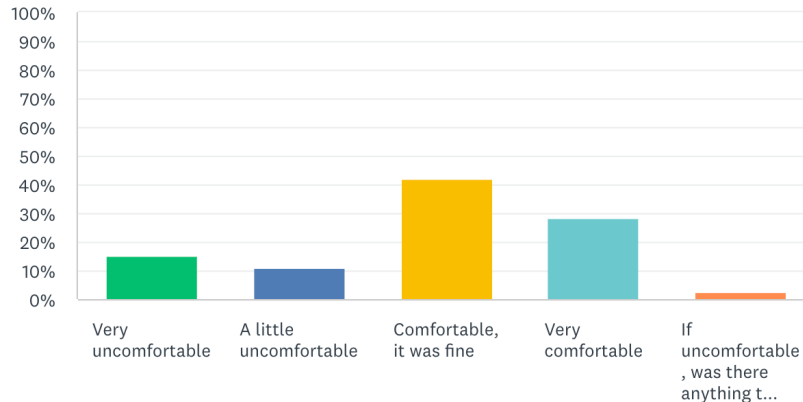
The content was. The attendees to some degree.

The sessions were diverse, but the audience base was still primarily white.

Both the attendees and content were diverse.

All sizes/types of museums were represented; clear that an effort had been made to have diverse presenters. Hard in our field to get the numbers even in terms of diversity and inclusion.

—
Next, we wanted to know how comfortable people were attending an in-person conference, post-COVID-19 pandemic. With 71 responses, 30 (42%) were comfortable; 20 (28%) were very comfortable; 11 (15%) were very uncomfortable; and 8 (11%) were a little uncomfortable.



—
To help WMA design stronger future Annual Meetings, we asked “What is one thing the Annual Meeting organizers could have done to make your experience better?” Common threads included offering some type of anchor point or gathering for EMPs and scholarship recipients to connect; more affordable Evening Events; better directional signage around the hotel; and dispersing the interactive Sunday sessions/activities throughout the conference.

Here are some of the selected comments out of 42 responses:

Although we have the "first-time attendee" ribbons, it would be great to also have some designated times for emerging professionals and first-timers to network that isn't a paid happy hour that's available every day, just in case they can't make it to the whole conference.

It would be great to have more events in the \$10-30 range. Even though attendees may be funded by their institution, oftentimes those institutions have tight travel budgets that may not accommodate \$50+ events. Having a wider range of costs for events would allow more attendees (particularly emerging museum professionals) to attend and network.

Provided decaf coffee during the coffee breaks!

Let us know about the Wifi. Even at the registration desk for the hotel, they didn't know our code.

Even better Gluten-free and Vegan options. The entrees were ok, but no dessert...

I missed having a closing event where everyone came together. This should have been included in the registration.

Would have been nice to have a platform or message board to arrange meet-ups or evening gatherings

Two things: 1. Drop the Sundays, or at least drop Sunday afternoon. Have a final great keynote on Sunday mid-morning and then send us home. Start Thursday afternoon since people travel that day anyway. 2. We don't need four mediocre evening events. Focus on one or two really good ones, with local food, music, entertainment, etc. Let people have time on Sunday to visit the other museums if they want to, but don't have people pay for four evenings.

I was a first-timer who attended the event without any colleagues and with only a few existing connections because of just how early career I am (less than a year). While networking was great, I would like to suggest some kind of anchor point for people to sit/return to who might not have existing connections. Maybe a prescribed seating area with a single WMA staff member who can give advice on sessions to attend, be someone to talk to during the breaks and be a meeting place for other first-timers.

Be more inclusive with prices and limitations people attending the conference might have. Many participants had to pay out of pocket to attend since their employer doesn't give them a budget to attend the conference.

Weave more interactive sessions into Fri/Sat and not leave them for Sunday

Gave more information about when busses were leaving, I had some issues with my tickets at registration.

Clear and proper signage. There wasn't supplementary signage noting sessions in each room or a larger WMA sign indicating rooms down the hallway. Also, I had no idea where to go for registration once I entered the hotel. 2. Moving the registration table into the main hallway. Portland's centralized table was better located.

Ensure with each evening event host that a museum staff member is present to welcome guests and that the museum store is open. PMH, Gamble House and PAM did this well, but the Autry missed this opportunity, as the store was closed and the staff presence seemed limited to security and checking tickets.

We needed more time to get dinner between the sessions ending and the evening events starting. OR, we needed to be served dinner instead of alcoholic drinks at the evening events.

There could have been more specialized networking events for specific departments (i.e. membership, visitor service, etc.)

More front of the house! Especially membership, and visitor services.

More museum tours and visits, to more than just art galleries and more available spaces in the events (all were full when i registered). Also lower price points for the additional events, this was one of the most expensive conferences that my museum attended this year.

Provided more food/snacks. I have been to other conferences that fed attendees lunch each day and snacks in the morning and evening, and it was really helpful because I didn't have to sacrifice missing out on a session in order to go out to get food to eat. Eating food contributes to community-building and better networking too!

The electronic program is not mobile-friendly. It was hard to see all of the days' choices in one place to decide what to do. Descriptions and timing of the Sunday 2-4 sessions were lacking and a lot of people had left.

Attendees should be encouraged to be greener. Have ceramic coffee cups available and encourage people to use them instead of the to-go cups... Ask catering to put out reusable utensils, glasses, plates, etc. Try to avoid plastic altogether. Encourage attendees to bring their own tote bag or provide lanyards that can be reused every year and use evergreen printed info which can then be saved and reused for next year.

Having Roundtable Discussions and Inspiration Stations available at different times throughout the conference would be great. That way people who want a break from sessions can have more intimate interactions and take a breather while still networking and learning.

Better orientation signage for folks not staying at the conference hotel

I was a scholarship winner. I was a little surprised there was not a mixer or organized meet and greet for all of us to spend some organized time with one another.

Having stated that WMA's Programs Committee worked hard to present a different, out-of-the-box conference for WMA 2023, we wanted to know if anyone noticed a difference in this year's conference. For many attendees, they stated that this was their first-time attending a (WMA) conference, so they had no previous model to compare this year to.

With that in mind, here are some of the other responses:

It was my first WMA conference, but it was different from AAM in that it was more intimate, laid-back, and homey. I also loved the WMA-lympics activity, as that was very fun and unique.

Yes. Formats were livelier, content had more variety.

I wish it were a little more out of the box! More workshops, more hands-on experiences.

It was good, and the tone is great. But it is a hotel, with windowless seminar rooms and paper plates. So how "out of the box" can it feel? Most of the unique session formats seemed like they were on Sunday, which is frustrating because by then people want to be home. But the conference is good anyway, whether or not it is "out of the box." [One really great evening event could make the whole conference feel more festive and engaging. The three I attended were flat, and they were not much more than opening the museum in the evening. Not worth \$70.]

I didn't see much of a difference from previous conferences.

I thought it was a good conference, but I don't know that I'd call it "out-of-the-box." It seemed very standard to me, in terms of the location (hotel) and the types of offerings (sessions, panels, lunches, networking events, etc.).

The 2-4 p.m. Sunday afternoon mix of options was innovative, but attendance seemed low, which is always challenging late in the day on the last day of a conference.

I believe the range of offerings and format were very good. The committee should be very pleased. I gave really good marks to 50% of the sessions I attended and good marks to another 20%.

This was my first conference, but compared to other conferences I liked how diverse the set up of the sessions were, it wasn't all presentations.

While I did appreciate an obvious attempt to switch things up, it mostly just came across as awkward and forced. Maybe it comes down to clearer expectation setting or communication? I'm not sure.

I have limited experience with museum conferences, this was about what I expected based on the program so it didn't feel like a very experimental format. But I think that may mean it was a good middle ground between the new and the familiar.

I really enjoyed WMA this year (this was my second time attending, last year in Portland was great too). I felt inspired seeing the great work people are doing, and there was more diversity in the panels in terms of topics and people from various levels of leadership and museum work. Despite my many suggestions I really think it was well-organized and enjoyed myself a lot!!

Portland and this year the schedule was easier, less exhausting somehow.

The cost of luncheons and evening events was higher and just not as good. Did not feel like I got my money's worth for the couple that I was able to attend. Museum shops and the full museum should be open and available plus food and drink. This was exacerbated by the program also encouraging local dinners before the events when adequate food was provided at the event.

The vibe at this conference was fantastic. Professional but approachable. Several people approached me to say that if they had to choose between CAM, AAM, and AASLH, this is their favorite conference.

Yes. All of the Pre-conference tour options sounded great, and it was hard to choose one! I appreciated the diverse options for that portion.

As WMA begins to plan for the 2024 Annual Meeting in Tucson, AZ, WMA wanted to know if there was anything our Program Committee and other organizers should take into consideration during the planning process." Common themes found within the responses focused on the need to shorten the standard session length or allow for a quick break to stand/stretch; mix in interactive learning opportunities between sessions; and consider the hot Arizona climate.

Here are a few more of the responses:

Have a good mix of "how to, model programs or processes, nuts & bolts" along with social/museum issues.

Anticipation of presenters cancelling (which I respect the decision of those presenters considering the labor strikes) and in those instances, making sure there is either room that's large enough for spill overs, or another time they can present if that topic (maybe virtually etc.)

I really enjoyed the smaller, intimate spaces of this conference, and appreciated the balance between seasoned professionals sharing their experiences alongside a very approachable and collaborative vibe.

Include more Indigenous presenters like the one from the Mariana Islands.

The evening trips to area museums were a great idea, but I didn't go because they were so expensive. I'm wondering if there's a way to lower the price by half. Since the program mentions having dinner "on your own" prior to the event, one way to lower the cost is to not offer food and drink, but find some other way to engage folks as they are touring the museum. Perhaps a scavenger hunt or trivia. Create some networking-type activities for those of us who have a hard time meeting people at large, loud receptions. Perhaps some type of round table event where there's a different theme to each table. Perhaps organized by job type, museum type, time in career (early, mid, or late), etc. Or perhaps some kind of trivia night where folks have to be on a small team.

As a native Arizonan, my warning is that it is going to be very hot even in September, so make sure everyone is aware and prepared for that.

There needs to be some free events in the evening. I felt, for the price of the registration, there should have been one or two events where everyone was brought together (on-site or off-site/walking distance?) and had a celebration or networking moment. Also, maybe offer an evening for the vendors to host parties/get-togethers in the evenings. I've been to other conferences and this has been really successful and fun and doesn't cost the org any extra costs.

There are a wide variety of Indigenous organizations and groups in and outside of Tucson that WMA could collaborate with. ASU in Tempe has a strong Indigenous program and iSchool (Knowledge River) that supports cultural heritage professionals that would be an ideal participant/collaborator.

Non-traditional networking activities such as trivia, board games, etc.

The effort to support labor unions with conference location is great. Now make it green. No plastic bottles, no single-use plastic cups. Put the giant program online or in an "at a glance" format. Offer

carbon offset vouchers for purchase by attendees. Find hotels and vendors that will take a sustainable approach to conferences.

Having a day where lunch was provided was great and really appreciated. It gave us the opportunity to socialize more with our peers.... Having a location where things are close enough to walk to, especially from the hotel, would be beneficial in Tucson, AZ.

I want them to know they did an amazing job and I'm really grateful to have attended. It was a great experience overall. The spirit of fun and the obvious inclusive feeling were excellent. Keep that feeling, attendees were having fun and enjoyed learning and connecting.

Temperature! Also, it would be good to check the University of Arizona calendar to try to avoid major events, as they can have a massive impact on the ability to get around Tucson easily.

U of A Center Creative Photography tour & Arizona Historical Society, Pima Air & Space Museum, Neon Sign Museum, Tucson Botanical Garden.

Please make it easier for staff to find their comparative peers in other institutions, ex. having Operations people more easily find other Operations people.

As you plan and set up, I would love for there to be a focus on accessibility during the actual conference - in terms of peoples' hunger needs, the need to move and stretch during the long sessions where everyone is seated... Making sure seats are arranged in a way that is more conducive to conversation (if appropriate during specific panels), or allows better line of sight to the speakers. Providing masks and encouraging people to stay home if sick, getting bigger rooms for happy hours.

Please ensure that the main conference area has plenty of water bottle refill stations unless you have more water available for filling bottles.

Consider the climate, water resources, and general sustainability of life in the desert community.

Strive to be greener. Members of the board should personally thank your exhibitors. Acknowledgment goes a surprisingly long way.

Keep it creative! Sitting still and listening for hours on end is really hard for lots of people. Hands-on activities, activity stations, and more variety of session structure will only continue to make the conference stronger!

For the final question, we wanted to know what other museum conferences our attendees attend, other than WMA's Annual Meetings. Out of 53 answers, 30 (57%) attend State Association conferences; 25 (47%) attend the American Alliance of Museums conference; 21 (40%) attend discipline-specific association conferences; 13 (25%) attend the National Association conference; and 11 (21%) attend Region association conferences.

More specifically, the top 3 conferences people also attend include CAM, AAM, and ACM. Others mentioned Museum Next, Museums PIALA, ASTC, AIA, NAEA, and ARCS.

