



# The Manual of Museum Learning

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## **The Manual of Museum Learning** From imusti

Museum learning is a vital component of the lifelong-learning process.

In this new edition of *The Manual of Museum Learning*, leading museum education professionals offer practical advice for creating successful learning experiences in museums and related institutions (such as galleries, zoos, and botanic gardens) that can attract and intrigue diverse audiences.

The original *Manual of Museum Learning* was published in 2007. The editors have totally rethought this new edition. This second edition focuses on the ways museum staffs (and the departments for which they work) can facilitate the experience in a way that capitalizes on their individual institutional strengths. The goal of this new edition is to provide museums with guidance in developing a strategic approach to their learning programs. There is a close connection between institution-wide strategic planning – where an institution decides what course and direction it will take for a five to seven-year period – and its approach to museum learning. One size does not fit all, and what each museum is (or aspires to be) will affect its individual approach.

Thus there are many routes for museums to take, many alternative ways for them to play this role. No one museum can be all things to all prospective learners; they will be better suited to some approaches than to others. This new edition identifies these approaches and enables museums to find the paths for which they are individually best suited, to help them identify their own unique approaches to facilitating museum learning. Each one's mission and vision, its relationships with institutional and public stakeholders, local cultural and market factors, its individual collection and programmatic strengths, its financial position – all of these things matter. This second edition aims to help each museum find the right approach to learning for its unique situation by showing them the range of museum “personalities” in terms of their being learning institutions, what constitutes each type, and what the implications are of choosing one or another approach for a particular museum.

A major theme of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *The Manual of Museum Learning* is *museum as connector*; the ways in which museums are facilitating self-directed learning by connecting people with resources. Not all will connect audiences with learning vehicles in the same way. If museum learning is affective learning, then

it is the role of the museum to connect its visitors, program participants and others who benefit from its knowledge to the learning resources that best suit the institution's strengths and matches them to the learning needs of the museum's audiences. By connecting users to the resources they are most interested in, or which best suit each individual's particular learning styles, museums are at their best when they empower individuals to design their own learning experience in ways that resonate best with each individual.

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## Editorial Review

### Review

*The Manual of Museum Learning* is certainly a practical and thoughtful resource for those working or studying in the museum arena, and others can benefit from its broad offerings, too. Any professional working in an industry or institution with parallel goals as the learning museum can profit from its foundational approach to meaningful, systemic change. (*Journal Of Museum Education*)

Based on the premise the learning within the twenty-first-century museum setting is informal, voluntary, and affective, this volume presents both theory and case studies on how to optimize that learning. Building on material in the widely held 2007 first edition, the authors explore new settings and formats for educational experiences, from school-museum partnerships to the possibilities (such as Makerspaces) made available by the digital world. By analyzing the different resources a museum has, from collections of rare and beautiful objects to interactive learning spaces, the authors enumerate the different learning spaces. Four case studies offer precise examples of the ideas being presented. The authors have a wide range of experience in the museum world, from art and textile museums to botanical gardens. They provide a panoply of approaches to enhance the visitors' experience, and to increase their understanding of the collections and exhibits they encounter. Any reader interested in improving the learning experience, for people at any stage of life, will find this volume of interest and use. Academic libraries and any others serving an education clientele should consider this volume, even if they own the first edition. Museum study programs will be most interested in this information. (*American Reference Books Annual*)

Rich in examples and hard-won experience, this fascinating book provides an invaluable survey for those administering, running, and publicizing museums, who need to attract new audiences. And if you're planning a museum, this is an admirable starting point, for the editors and contributors know of what they write and are bursting with ideas. Everyone who loves, and works with, museums should own this invaluable volume. (Brian Fagan, former museum officer, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of numerous general books on the past)

This new edition of *The Manual of Museum Learning* is a collection of visionary, innovative approaches to museum learning that explores untapped potential in innovative partnerships, community collaborations and shared intellect. (Patrice Farquharson, Associate Professor, Post University and Executive Director, West Haven Child Development Center, Connecticut)

For those interested in educational partnerships between museums and other types of organizations, this book provides an exciting survey of opportunities, as well as practical, 'how to; information from successful case studies. I highly recommend the book to anyone working in public education, whether it be a formal or informal learning institution, interested in how museums can help achieve shared educational goals. (Mariana Borrego Hoffmann, General Advisor to the CEO, Petroleos Mexicanos and Project Lead, Museo Nacional de Energia y Tecnologia (National Museum of Energy and Technology), Mexico City)

### About the Author

**Brad King** is a Vice President with Lord Cultural Resources in Toronto. He holds a PhD in History from the University of Toronto where he was a Doctoral Fellow of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Since joining Lord in 2000, Brad has led or contributed to a wide variety of museum and cultural planning projects and has been involved in some of the most interesting and ambitious projects of our time. He brings a wealth of international experience to his work, being recently active in the Arabian

Gulf, South Asian and the Caribbean regions as well as in the United States and Canada. He is the author of chapters on collections analysis (The Manual of Museum Planning, 3rd ed.), on evolving museum-school relationships (The Manual of Museum Learning, 1st ed.) and is a frequent speaker at museum and academic conferences.

The recently deceased **Barry Lord**, Co-President of Lord Cultural Resources, was internationally known as one of the world's leading museum planners. Based in Toronto but working globally, Barry brought over fifty years of experience in the management and planning of museums, galleries and historic sites to the hundreds of projects he has directed. With a B.A. in Philosophy from McMaster University followed by graduate work at Harvard University's Center for the Study of World Religions, Barry co-founded Lord Cultural Resources with his wife Gail Lord in 1981. Together they edited and wrote the world's first book on the subject, Planning Our Museums (1983) and three editions of The Manual of Museum Planning (1991, 1999 and 2012). Barry also co-authored The Cost of Collecting (1989) and The Manual of Museum Management (1997; 2nd edition, 2009), co-edited two editions of The Manual of Museum Exhibitions (2002 and 2014), and edited the first edition of The Manual of Museum Learning (2007). Barry co-authored Artists, Patrons, and the Public: Why Culture Changes with Gail in 2010. His most recent book, Art and Energy: How Culture Changes was published by the American Alliance of Museums in 2014.

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