

Our Mission

Common Ground Research Networks aims to enable all people to participate in creating collaborative knowledge and to share that knowledge with the greater world. Through our academic conferences, peer-reviewed journals and books, and innovative software, we build transformative research networks and provide platforms for meaningful interactions across diverse media.

Our Message

Heritage knowledge systems are characterized by vertical separations—of discipline, professional association, institution, and country. Common Ground identifies some of the pivotal ideas and challenges of our time and builds research networks that cut horizontally across legacy knowledge structures. Sustainability, diversity, learning, the future of the humanities, the nature of interdisciplinarity, the place of the arts in society, technology's connections with knowledge, the changing role of the university—these are deeply important questions of our time which require interdisciplinary thinking, global conversations, and cross-institutional intellectual collaborations. Common Ground is a meeting place for these conversations, shared spaces in which differences can meet and safely connect—differences of perspective, experience, knowledge base, methodology, geographical or cultural origins, and institutional affiliation. We strive to create the places of intellectual interaction and imagination that our future deserves.

Our Media

Common Ground creates and supports research networks through a number of mechanisms and media. Annual conferences are held around the world to connect the global (the international delegates) with the local (academics, practitioners, and community leaders from the host research network). Conference sessions include as many ways of speaking as possible to encourage each and every participant to engage, interact, and contribute. The journals and book imprint offer fully-refereed academic outlets for formalized knowledge, developed through innovative approaches to the processes of submission, peer review, and production. The research network also maintains an online presence—through presentations on our YouTube channel, quarterly email newsletters, as well as Facebook and Twitter feeds. And Common Ground's own software, **Scholar**, offers a path-breaking platform for online discussions and networking, as well as for creating, reviewing, and disseminating text and multi-media works.



Founded in 2008, the Inclusive Museum Research Network is dedicated to the concept of independent, peer-led groups of scholars, researchers, and practitioners working together to build bodies of knowledge related to topics of critical importance to society at large. Focusing on the intersection of academia and social impact, The Inclusive Museum Research Network brings an interdisciplinary, international perspective to discussions of new developments in the field, including research, practice, policy, and teaching, brought together by common concern for the future role of the museum, and how it can become more inclusive.

Conference

The annual conference is built upon three key features: Internationalism, Interdisciplinarity, and Inclusiveness. Conference delegates include leaders in the field, as well as emerging artists and scholars, who travel to the conference from all corners of the globe and represent a broad range of disciplines and perspectives. A variety of presentation options and session types offer delegates multiple opportunities to engage, to discuss key issues in the field, and to build relationships with scholars from other cultures and disciplines.

You have already begun your engagement in the Research Network by attending the conference, presenting your work, and interacting face-to-face with other members. We hope this experience provides a valuable source of feedback for your current work and the possible seeds for future individual and collaborative projects, as well as the start of a conversation with research network colleagues that will continue well into the future.

Publishing

The Inclusive Museum Research Network enables members to publish through two media. First, network members can enter a world of journal publication, unlike the traditional academic publishing forums—a result of the responsive, non-hierarchical, and constructive nature of our member based peer review process. *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum* provides a framework for member based double-blind peer review, enabling authors to publish into an academic journal of the highest standard, but also to participate in the validation of knowledge that is produced by the research network. The second publication medium is through the book imprint, where we publishing cutting edge books in print and electronic formats.

We encourage you to submit an article for review and possible publication in the journal. In this way, you may share the finished outcome of your presentation with other participants and members of the network. As a member of the research network, you will also be invited to review others' work and contribute to the development of the research network knowledge base as a Reviewer. As part of your active membership in the network, you also have online access to the complete works (current and previous volumes) of journal and to the book imprint. We also invite you to consider submitting a proposal for the book imprint.

Membership

As an Inclusive Museum Research Network member you have access to a broad range of benefits, tools, and resources:

- Digital subscription to the *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum* for one year.
- Digital subscription to the book imprint for one year.
- One article publication per year (pending peer review).
- Participation as a reviewer in the peer review process, with the opportunity to be listed as a Reviewer.
- Subscription to the e-newsletter, providing access to news and announcements for and from the Research Network.
- Option to add a video presentation to the research network YouTube channel.
- Free access to the Scholar social knowledge platform, including:
 - ◊ Personal profile and publication portfolio page;
 - ◊ Ability to interact and form communities with peers away from the clutter and commercialism of other social media;
 - ◊ Optional feeds to Facebook and Twitter;
 - ◊ Complimentary use of Scholar in your classes—for class interactions in its Community space, multimodal student writing in its Creator space, and managing student peer review, assessment, and sharing of published work.





On the relation of museum to its communities of users

Theme 1: Visitors

- Visitor diversity in the inclusive museum
- Defining museum stakeholders and measuring participation
- The politics of heritage: national, regional, ethnic, diasporic, and first nation identities
- Multilingualism: accessibility for small languages and cultures
- Gender and sexual orientation in the museum
- Disability access in the museum
- Competing cultures: high, folk, popular, techno-scientific
- Public trust: re-establishing the bases of 'authority'
- Defining the 'education' and 'communications' roles of museums
- Pedagogy as presentation or dialogue: how the museum relates to its visitors
- The ubiquitous museum: towards the anywhere anytime learning resource
- Competing pleasures: museums against or with 'entertainment' and 'edutainment'
- Cross connections: with schools, with universities
- Sponsorship and philanthropy: logics and logistics
- The economics of admissions
- Memberships: changing roles and demographics
- Voluntarism and professionalism: calibrating the mix
- Government stakeholders (local, state, national, transnational): museums in politics and navigating government funding and policies

On the practices and processes of collecting and curating

Theme 2: Collections

- The changing work of the curator
- Exhibition didactics: the dynamics of visitor learning
- The idea of 'heritage': changing conceptions of what counts
- Authenticity, decontextualization and recontextualization of objects-on-show
- Custodianship and community assets: meanings and purposes for the museum
- Representing social and cultural intangible heritage
- The 'ethnographic' and the 'anthropological': framing first peoples and other 'traditions'
- Technologies in the museum
- Arts in the museum
- Environment in the museum
- The process of acquisition: competing demands and limited resources
- Conservation, preservation: negotiating changing priorities
- Artifacts: what are the objects of the museum?
- Places for amateurism: barefoot repositories and the self-made museum



On museums as repositories and communicators of culture and knowledge

Theme 3: Representations

- Museums as knowledge makers and cultural creators
- Architectonics: designing buildings and information architectures
- Research and investigation in the museum
- Measuring knowledge 'outputs'
- Intellectual property: commons versus commercialism?
- Knowledge management paradigms and practices
- 'Neutrality', 'balance' and 'objectivity'; or 'narrative' and 'politics'? The knowledge rhetorics of the museum
- Knowledge frames: modern and postmodern museums
- Cross connections: with libraries, with galleries, with educational institutions, with arts centers
- The digitization of everything: from collection objects to media representations
- The virtual museum
- Online discoverability and public access
- Museums in and for the knowledge society: preserving heritage 'born digital'
- New literacies: changing the balance of creative agency in the era of the Internet and new media
- Addressing the digital divide
- Digital disability access
- Cataloguing, metadata, discovery and access
- Internet standards, semantic publishing and the semantic web



Visitors

No longer the universal individual citizen of our recent modern aspirations, visitors of today are recognizably diverse. The dimensions of this diversity are material (class, locale, family circumstances), corporeal (age, race, sex and sexuality, and physical and mental characteristics) and symbolic (culture, language, gender, family, affinity and persona). These are the gross demographics, the things that insist on our attention. But if we take the time to look more closely at today's public, it is qualified by intersections and layers of identity which immediately turn the gross demographics into sometimes dangerous oversimplifications. The paradox of today's public is that, in an era of globalization, cultures are diverging: dispositions, sensibilities, values stances, interests, orientations, affinities and networks.

So how can one speak to audiences? How does participation work? How can we create meanings which are germane? 'Inclusivity' names a paradoxically two sided answer. One side is to recognize particularity. What and who should be represented in the museum? What is it to be comprehensive? What is canonical or definitive? To answer these questions today, we need to move beyond the divisions of high as opposed to popular culture, the techno-scientific as opposed to the everyday, the national-modern as opposed to the ethnographic-traditional. No longer can we solve the problem of difference, of 'us' and 'them', by dividing people and their objects into separate categories and separating them in spaces unto themselves. We need to anticipate the particularities of visitors.

The other side of this answer requires us not just to catalogue of differences, to check them off from a list of potential points of dissonance. Perhaps we also need to create a new and paradoxical form of universality, the universality of inclusivity. How do we create a museum where the text is open, where every visitor is allowed the space to create their own meanings, where no visitor is left out? The answer in part is in to devise new...

Forms of Engagement

What is the role today of the reader, the viewer, the audience, the citizen, the customer, the patron? Our recent modernity was premised on relatively passive readers, viewers and audiences; relatively compliant employees and dependent citizens; and relatively appreciative customers and patrons. To take just a few touchstones of change, the new media transform readers, viewers and audiences into users, players and characters. Workers are supposed to personify the enterprise and citizens to assume responsibility for themselves. Customers are always right—for their differences, products and services have to be customized. So too, the quirks of patrons must be patronized.

The change represents an evening up of balance of agency and a blurring of roles, between the person in command and the person consenting, between producers and consumers of knowledge, and between creators and readers of culture.

In museums, more than simply 'interaction', visitors need to place themselves in the exhibition, to belong in the space and to join the cultural dialogue. For museums, this is the basis for a new communicative frame of reference and a new pedagogics. This will be made possible at least in part through the new...



Modalities of Representation

The emerging communications environment—in which image, sound and word are all made of the same digital stuff—affords new openings for museums, and new challenges.

Not only are museums challenged to preserve heritage which is increasingly 'born digital'. It is also the case today that there is no collectable object, no site-specific experience, which cannot be reproduced and made available to 'visitors' at the ends of the earth through digital means of representation.

This creates unique challenges in the realm of intellectual property. It raises new practicalities of relating to visitors who are more diverse than ever. It presents a new task for museum workers to explore the communicative affordances of the 'multiliteracies' of digital representation.

In meeting these challenges, museums are destined to reflect their changing world, and also—at times provocatively, riskily—change that world. The Museum Conference, Journal, Book Imprint and News Weblog provide a forum for the discussion of these and other fundamental questions which will surely determine the changing shape and future role of museums.



Conference History

Founded in 2008, the International Conference on the Inclusive Museum brings together a community of museum practitioners, researchers, and thinkers. The key question addressed by the conference: How can the institution of the museum become more inclusive? In this time of fundamental social change, what is the role of the museum, both as a creature of that change, and perhaps also as an agent of change?

The International Conference on the Inclusive Museum is built upon four key features: Internationalism, Interdisciplinarity, Inclusiveness, and Interaction. Conference delegates include leaders in the field as well as emerging scholars, who travel to the conference from all corners of the globe and represent a broad range of disciplines and perspectives. A variety of presentation options and session types offer delegates multiple opportunities to engage, to discuss key issues in the field, and to build relationships with scholars from other cultures and disciplines.

Past Conferences

- 2008 - National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, Netherlands
- 2009 - University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
- 2010 - Yildiz Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2011 - University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2012 - University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados
- 2013 - National Art Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2014 - The Autry National Center, Los Angeles, USA
- 2015 - The National Science Museum, New Delhi, India
- 2016 - National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati, USA
- 2017 - Manchester Museum, Manchester, UK

Plenary Speaker Highlights:

The International Conference on the Inclusive Museum has a rich history of featuring leading and emerging voices from the field, including:

- **Lonnie G. Bunch, III**, Founding Director, Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture, Washington, D.C., USA (2012)
- **Alissandra Cummins**, Director, Barbados Museum and Historical Society, Bridgetown, Barbados (2008, 2009, 2010, 2012)
- **Hans-Martin Hinz**, President, The International Council of Museums, Paris, France (2009, 2010, 2013)
- **Sonwabile Mancotywa**, CEO, National Heritage Council of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa (2010)
- **Elizabeth Silkes**, Executive Director, International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, New York, USA (2013)
- **W. Richard West, Jr.**, Founding Director, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, D.C., USA (2008)



The Inclusive Museum | About the Conference

Past Partners

Over the years the International Conference on the Inclusive Museum has had the pleasure of working with the following organizations:



Autry National Center of the American West, Los Angeles, USA (2014)



Barbados Museum, Bridgetown, Barbados (2012)



Commonwealth Association of Museums, London, UK (2011–2014)



Commonwealth Foundation (2012)



Danish Institute for Human Rights, Copenhagen, Denmark (2013)



Faculty of Art and Design, Department of Art, Art Management Division Museum Studies Graduate Program, Yildiz Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey (2009)



ICOM (2008–Present)



International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, New York City, USA (2013)



International Curators Forum, London, UK (2012–2013)



Iziko Museums, Cape Town, South Africa (2011)



Museum of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark (2013)



Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum (National Museum of Natural History), Leiden, The Netherlands (2008)



Past Partners



National Gallery of Denmark,
Copenhagen, Denmark (2013)



National Museum of Ethnology,
Leiden, The Netherlands (2008)



National Museum of Natural History,
Leiden, The Netherlands (2008)



National Underground Railroad
Freedom Center
Cincinnati, USA (2010)



Turkish Ministry of
Culture and Tourism,
Istanbul, Turkey (2010)



University of Queensland,
Brisbane, Australia (2008–2010)



University of Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg, South Africa (2011)



University of the West Indies,
Kingston, Jamaica (2012)



Whitworth Art Gallery
Manchester, UK (2017)

Become a Partner

Common Ground Research Networks has a long history of meaningful and substantive partnerships with universities, research institutes, government bodies, and non-governmental organizations. Developing these partnerships is a pillar of our Research Network agenda. There are a number of ways you can partner with a Common Ground Research Networks. Contact us at support@onmuseums.com to become a partner.



Conference Principles and Features

The structure of the conference is based on four core principles that pervade all aspects of the research network:

International

This conference travels around the world to provide opportunities for delegates to see and experience different countries and locations. But more importantly, the Inclusive Museum Conference offers a tangible and meaningful opportunity to engage with scholars from a diversity of cultures and perspectives. This year, delegates from over 50 countries are in attendance, offering a unique and unparalleled opportunity to engage directly with colleagues from all corners of the globe.

Interdisciplinary

Unlike association conferences attended by delegates with similar backgrounds and specialties, this conference brings together researchers, practitioners, and scholars from a wide range of disciplines who have a shared interest in the themes and concerns of this research network. As a result, topics are broached from a variety of perspectives, interdisciplinary methods are applauded, and mutual respect and collaboration are encouraged.

Inclusive

Anyone whose scholarly work is sound and relevant is welcome to participate in this research network and conference, regardless of discipline, culture, institution, or career path. Whether an emeritus professor, graduate student, researcher, teacher, policymaker, practitioner, or administrator, your work and your voice can contribute to the collective body of knowledge that is created and shared by this research network.

Interactive

To take full advantage of the rich diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives represented at the conference, there must be ample opportunities to speak, listen, engage, and interact. A variety of session formats, from more to less structured, are offered throughout the conference to provide these opportunities.



Plenary

Plenary speakers, chosen from among the world's leading thinkers, offer formal presentations on topics of broad interest to the community and conference delegation. One or more speakers are scheduled into a plenary session, most often the first session of the day. As a general rule, there are no questions or discussion during these sessions. Instead, plenary speakers answer questions and participate in informal, extended discussions during their Garden Conversation.



Garden Conversation

Garden Conversations are informal, unstructured sessions that allow delegates a chance to meet plenary speakers and talk with them at length about the issues arising from their presentation. When the venue and weather allow, we try to arrange for a circle of chairs to be placed outdoors.



Talking Circles

Held on the first day of the conference, Talking Circles offer an early opportunity to meet other delegates with similar interests and concerns. Delegates self-select into groups based on broad thematic areas and then engage in extended discussion about the issues and concerns they feel are of utmost importance to that segment of the community. Questions like "Who are we?", "What is our common ground?", "What are the current challenges facing society in this area?", "What challenges do we face in constructing knowledge and effecting meaningful change in this area?" may guide the conversation. When possible, a second Talking Circle is held on the final day of the conference, for the original group to reconvene and discuss changes in their perspectives and understandings as a result of the conference experience. Reports from the Talking Circles provide a framework for the delegates' final discussions during the Closing Session.



Themed Paper Presentations

Paper presentations are grouped by general themes or topics into sessions comprised of three or four presentations followed by group discussion. Each presenter in the session makes a formal twenty-minute presentation of their work; Q&A and group discussion follow after all have presented. Session Chairs introduce the speakers, keep time on the presentations, and facilitate the discussion. Each presenter's formal, written paper will be available to participants if accepted to the journal.



Colloquium

Colloquium sessions are organized by a group of colleagues who wish to present various dimensions of a project or perspectives on an issue. Four or five short formal presentations are followed by a moderator. A single article or multiple articles may be submitted to the journal based on the content of a colloquium session.



Focused Discussion

For work that is best discussed or debated, rather than reported on through a formal presentation, these sessions provide a forum for an extended “roundtable” conversation between an author and a small group of interested colleagues. Several such discussions occur simultaneously in a specified area, with each author’s table designated by a number corresponding to the title and topic listed in the program schedule. Summaries of the author’s key ideas, or points of discussion, are used to stimulate and guide the discourse. A single article, based on the scholarly work and informed by the focused discussion as appropriate, may be submitted to the journal.



Workshop/Interactive Session

Workshop sessions involve extensive interaction between presenters and participants around an idea or hands-on experience of a practice. These sessions may also take the form of a crafted panel, staged conversation, dialogue or debate—all involving substantial interaction with the audience. A single article (jointly authored, if appropriate) may be submitted to the journal based on a workshop session.



Poster Sessions

Poster sessions present preliminary results of works in progress or projects that lend themselves to visual displays and representations. These sessions allow for engagement in informal discussions about the work with interested delegates throughout the session.



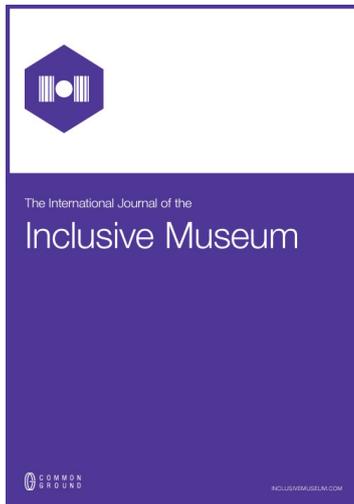
Virtual Lightning Talk

Lightning talks are 5-minute “flash” video presentations. Authors present summaries or overviews of their work, describing the essential features (related to purpose, procedures, outcomes, or product). Like Paper Presentations, Lightning Talks are grouped according to topic or perspective into themed sessions. Authors are welcome to submit traditional “lecture style” videos or videos that use visual supports like PowerPoint. Final videos must be submitted at least one month prior to the conference start date. After the conference, videos are then presented on the community YouTube channel. Full papers can based in the virtual poster can also be submitted for consideration in the journal.



Virtual Poster

This format is ideal for presenting preliminary results of work in progress or for projects that lend themselves to visual displays and representations. Each poster should include a brief abstract of the purpose and procedures of the work. After acceptance, presenters are provided with a template, and Virtual Posters are submitted as a PDF or in PowerPoint. Final posters must be submitted at least one month prior to the conference start date. Full papers can based in the virtual poster can also be submitted for consideration in the journal.



About

The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum addresses the key question: How can the institution of the museum become more inclusive? The journal brings together academics, curators, museum and public administrators, cultural policy makers, and research students to engage in discussions about the historic character and future shape of the museum.

The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum is peer-reviewed, supported by rigorous processes of criterion-referenced article ranking and qualitative commentary, ensuring that only intellectual work of the greatest substance and highest significance is published.

Editor



Amareswar Galla, Executive Director, International Institute for the Inclusive Museum, Hyderabad and Sydney; Chairperson, ICOM Cross Cultural Task Force, Paris, France

Indexing

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onmuseums.com

Reviewers

Articles published in *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum* are peer reviewed by scholars who are active members of The Inclusive Museum Research Network. Reviewers may be past or present conference delegates, fellow submitters to the journal, or scholars who have volunteered to review papers (and have been screened by Common Ground's editorial team). This engagement with the Research Network, as well as Common Ground's synergistic and criterion-based evaluation system, distinguishes the peer review process from journals that have a more top-down approach to refereeing. Reviewers are assigned to papers based on their academic interests and scholarly expertise. In recognition of the valuable feedback and publication recommendations that they provide, reviewers are acknowledged as Reviewers in the volume that includes the paper(s) they reviewed. Thus, in addition to *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum's* Editors and Advisory Board, the Associate contribute significantly to the overall editorial quality and content of the journal.



Call for Books

Common Ground is setting new standards of rigorous academic knowledge creation and scholarly publication. Unlike other publishers, we're not interested in the size of potential markets or competition from other books. We're only interested in the intellectual quality of the work. If your book is a brilliant contribution to a specialist area of knowledge that only serves a small intellectual community, we still want to publish it. If it is expansive and has a broad appeal, we want to publish it too, but only if it is of the highest intellectual quality.

We welcome proposals or completed manuscript submissions of:

- Individually and jointly authored books
- Edited collections addressing a clear, intellectually challenging theme
- Collections of articles published in our journals
- Out-of-copyright books, including important books that have gone out of print and classics with new introductions

Book Proposal Guidelines

Books should be between 30,000 and 150,000 words in length. They are published simultaneously in print and electronic formats and are available through Amazon and as Kindle editions. To publish a book, please send us a proposal including:

- Title
- Author(s)/editor(s)
- Draft back-cover blurb
- Author bio note(s)
- Table of contents
- Intended audience and significance of contribution
- Sample chapters or complete manuscript
- Manuscript submission date

Proposals can be submitted by email to books@cgnetworks.org. Please note the book imprint to which you are submitting in the subject line.



Call for Book Reviewers

Common Ground Research Networks is seeking distinguished peer reviewers to evaluate book manuscripts.

As part of our commitment to intellectual excellence and a rigorous review process, Common Ground sends book manuscripts that have received initial editorial approval to peer reviewers to further evaluate and provide constructive feedback. The comments and guidance that these reviewers supply is invaluable to our authors and an essential part of the publication process.

Common Ground recognizes the important role of reviewers by acknowledging book reviewers as members of the Editorial Review Board for a period of at least one year. The list of members of the Editorial Review Board will be posted on our website.

If you would like to review book manuscripts, please send an email to books@cgnetworks.org with:

- A brief description of your professional credentials
- A list of your areas of interest and expertise
- A copy of your CV with current contact details

If we feel that you are qualified and we require refereeing for manuscripts within your purview, we will contact you.