

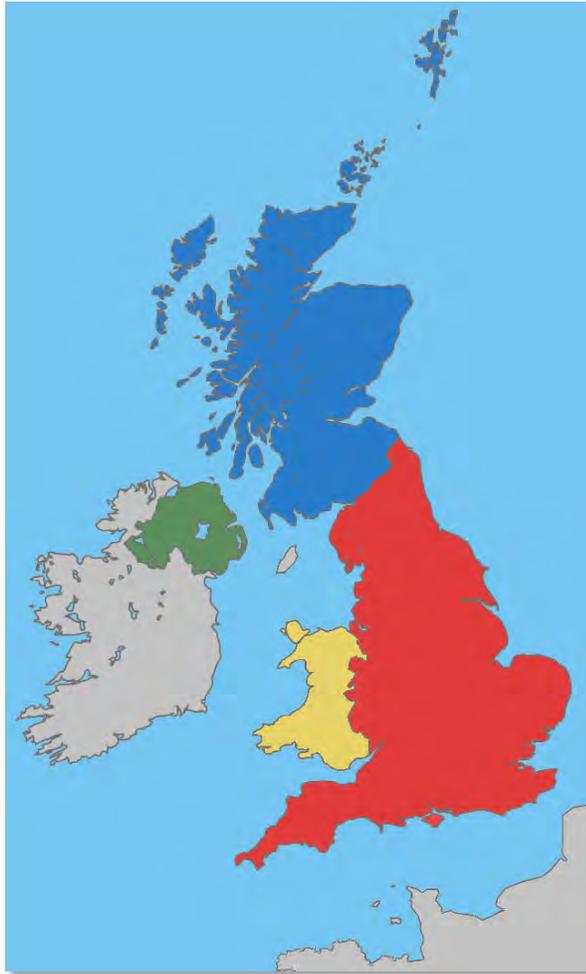
Museum Participation

Owain Rhys

Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales

FARO 9 November 2018

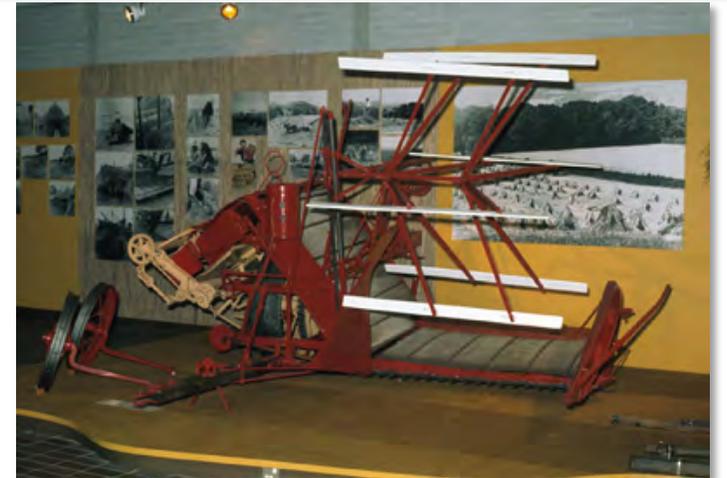
Introduction



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Background to St Fagans

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Oriel 1



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Redevelopment



New way of working

Passive



For

Active



By

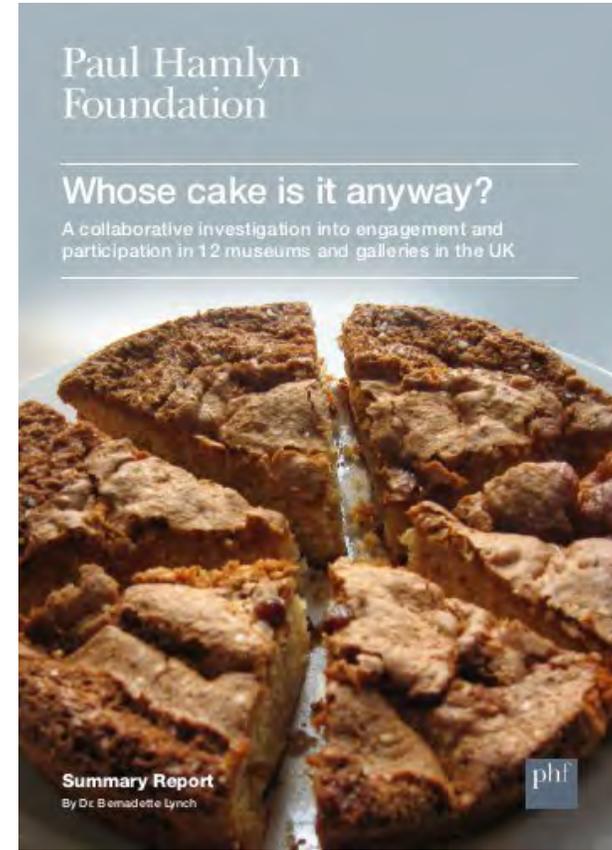
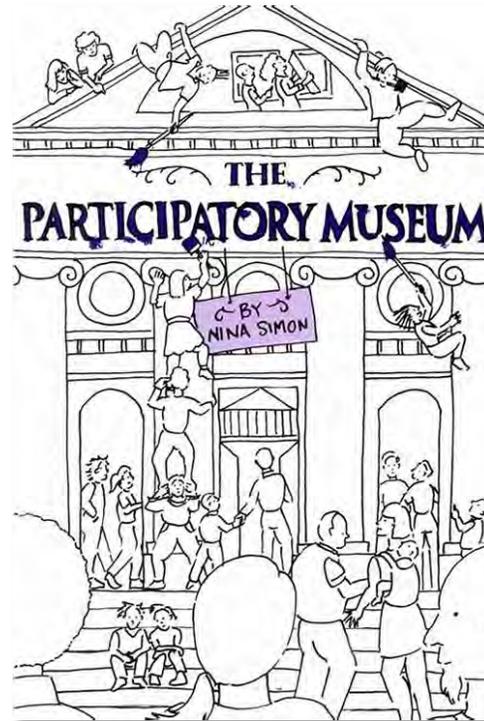
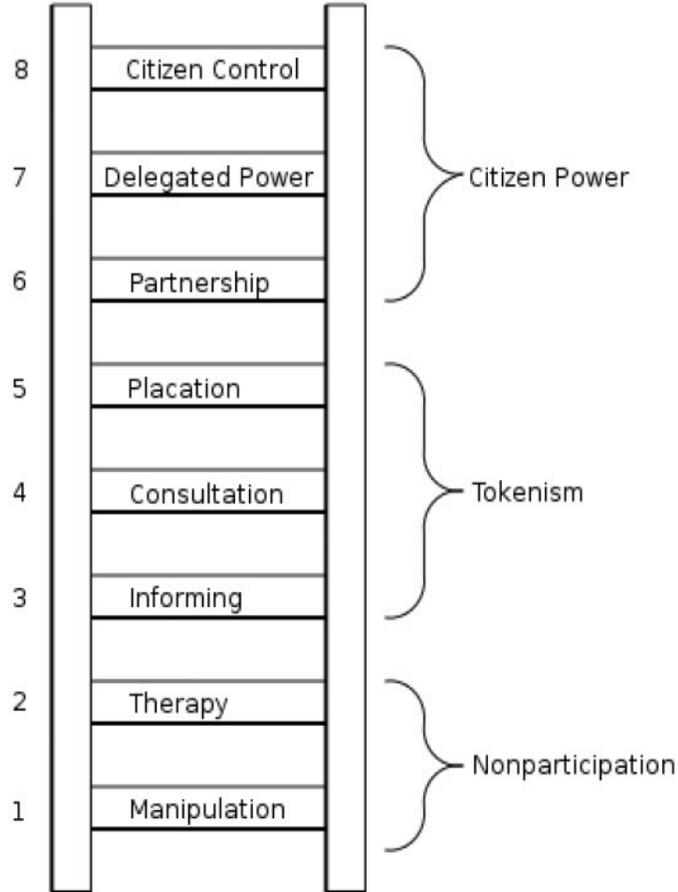


Participatory



With

What is participation?



Nina Simon *The Participatory Museum*

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I define a participatory cultural institution as a place where visitors can create, share, and connect with each other around content.

Create means that visitors contribute their own ideas, objects, and creative expression to the institution and to each other.

Share means that people discuss, take home, remix, and redistribute both what they see and what they make during their visit.

Connect means that visitors socialize with other people—staff and visitors—who share their particular interests.

Around content means that visitors' conversations and creations focus on the evidence, objects, and ideas most important to the institution in question.



Our Museum: Paul Hamlyn Foundation

www.ourmuseum.org.uk

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- Initiated by *Whose cake is it anyway?*
- 2012-2016
- 9 Museums and Galleries across UK
- Place community needs, values and active collaboration at the core of museum and gallery work
- Involve communities and individuals in decision-making processes
- Ensure that museums and galleries play an effective role in developing community skills and the skills of staff in working with communities
- Rooted in local needs
- Community Agency
- Capability Building
- Reflection



Volunteering at St Fagans



- Focus work on volunteering at one site (demography white, older, middle class, female, educated)
- Community partners included Diverse Cymru, Drug Aid, New Link Wales, Quest (supported employment), The Wallich (homelessness), VCS Cymru, Wales Council for Voluntary Action
- Service Level Agreement confirming mutual expectations and responsibilities between the independent organisations and St Fagans, including day rates and time commitments
- Trustees and Senior Management Team involved
- Increased volunteer numbers from 11 to 435 over the initiative
- At the end, 43% identified as unemployed
- Achieved Investors in Volunteering award
- Use initiative as pilot for further work



Volunteering at St Fagans





PARTNERIAID CYMUNEDOL

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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Torfaen and
Blaenau Gwent



NewLinkWales





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menap cymru

Hidden Now Heard
Clywed Y Cyn-Guddiedig





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ARIENNIR GAN Y LOTERI

Collections 2030



- A major research project looking at the long-term purpose, use and management of museum collections

Two main themes:

- the culture of collections - how collections can be used and what we think they are for
- infrastructure - what we need in place to make our collections effective

- Research will initially see a series of one-on-one meetings with people involved with collections around the UK
- A wider consultation with the sector will also take place this year, including an online consultation and a series of workshops

Welsh Government

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The cover features the logos for 'ystadegau ar gyfer cymru statistics for wales', 'SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS', and the Welsh Government. The title 'Well-being of Wales 2016-17' is prominently displayed. The central image shows a scenic view of rolling green hills under a blue sky. A circular diagram in the bottom right corner lists six well-being goals: 'A globally responsible Wales', 'A prosperous Wales', 'A resilient Wales', 'A healthier Wales', 'A more equal Wales', and 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language'. At the bottom, there are three smaller images: a person on a bicycle, a group of people, and a family with a dog.

The cover has a blue header with the title 'Culture and Poverty' and the subtitle 'Harnessing the power of the arts, culture and heritage to promote social justice in Wales'. The main image shows a group of children in Roman-style costumes holding yellow shields on a dirt path. The bottom section is dark blue with the text: 'A report with recommendations by Baroness Kay Andrews OBE for the Welsh Government' and 'March 2014'.

The cover features a photograph of a young girl in a pink shirt drawing at a table with various colored crayons. The bottom section is green and contains the text: 'An independent report for the Welsh Government into Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales', 'by Professor Dai Smith', and 'September 2013'.

Other Considerations

- ICOM Code of Ethics – Unfit for purpose?
- Cultural Rights
- Social Impact
- Funding

The main barriers to participation

The outcomes for the *Our Museum* programme were shaped by thinking about the barriers to participation and how to overcome them. These barriers became clearer throughout the programme.

The major reason why embedding participation can only be achieved

through a process of changing lots of things across an organisation is that the barriers to participation cut right across museums and galleries and their external relationships.

It is not just one barrier, in one place: it is lots of barriers, across the whole organisation.



If trustees, directors and senior managers give only passive, tacit support to participation, the work is not championed and can be effectively blocked. It needs active commitment and championing from the very top, and to be at the heart of the museum's mission and business model.



In an age of financial austerity, a key strategic aim for most museums is to be enterprising, to generate income, and to increase audiences. When it comes to making hard decisions, these are often perceived as conflicting with deeper community engagement and participation, which as a result can be relegated to a lesser strategic importance and left poorly resourced.



In many museums, one staff member or group is tasked with working with communities, rather than the responsibility being shared across the organisation and embedded. In this way, the work remains peripheral and never influences the way the whole organisation works.



Museums and galleries often choose to work with communities who are already known to them and who are perceived as less challenging. This is a barrier to true participation as the pool of community partners is very restricted and unrepresentative of an area's diversity.



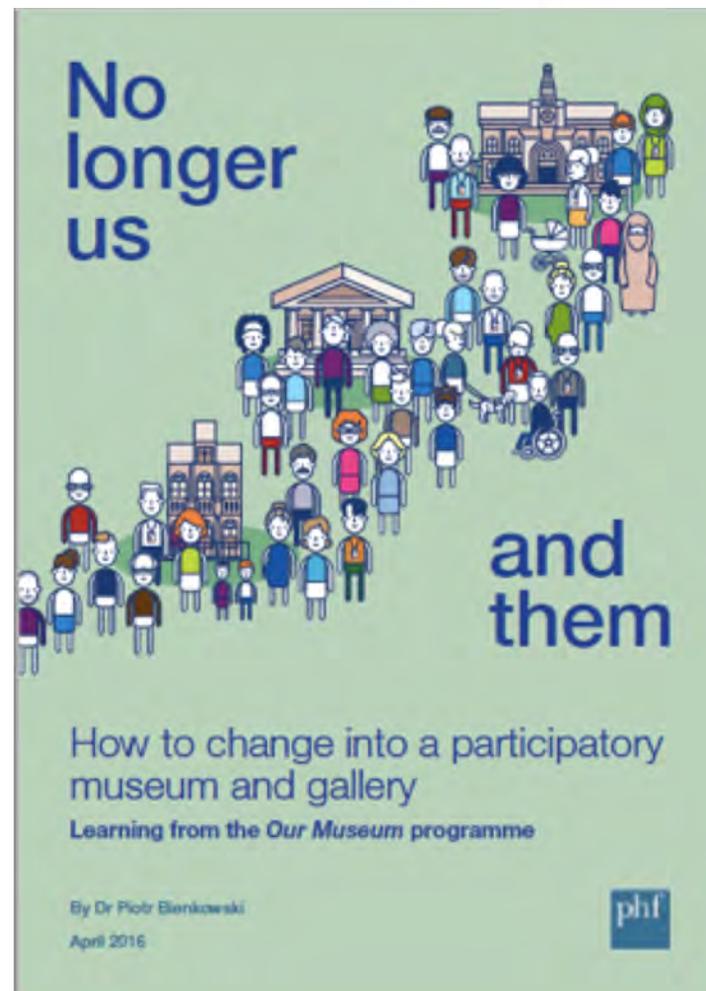
Staff resistance to participatory work can be conscious or unconscious – it can be poor understanding of community engagement, lack of interest, or issues of staff time and capacity; and staff often lack the skills to listen to and work with different communities and to share decision-making in practice.



Fear can lead to paralysis and avoidance and be a barrier to change. We have encountered fear related to financial survival, fear of participation as a perceived threat to professional expertise and status of an uncertain future, change might bring.

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Conclusions

- Concentrate on one manageable aspect of your work (e.g. volunteering), then expand to other areas
- Allow time (3-5 years)
- Involve Trustees and SMT (buy-in at higher level essential)
- Get staff training (e.g. safeguarding, vulnerable adults, drug and alcohol awareness)
- Embed work in Vision and Values, strategies, annual plan
- Embed in individual work plans (it's everybody's job)
- Allow space for reflection (stop running around!)
- Mistakes are OK!
- Use expertise of partners e.g. youth engagement, refugees and asylum seekers

How embedded is Participation now?

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EDGE self-assessment matrix

This tool allows you to assess your institution's support for public engagement. You can access a guide to how to use the tool here: www.publicengagement.ac.uk/edge-tool

You are welcome to use the EDGE tool for non-commercial educational purposes, where credit is given to the NCCPE.

EMBRYPONIC
DEVELOPING
GRIPPING
EMBEDDING

 National
Co-ordinating
Centre for
Public Engagement

THE EDGE TOOL

	FOCUS	EMBRYONIC	DEVELOPING	GRIPPING	EMBEDDING
PURPOSE	Mission	There is little or no reference to public engagement in the organisational mission or in other institution-wide strategies.	PE is referenced sporadically within the institutional mission documents and strategies, but is not considered a priority area.	PE is clearly referenced within the institutional mission and strategies and the institution is developing an institution-wide strategic approach.	PE is prioritised in the institution's official mission and in other key strategies, with success indicators identified. It is a key consideration in strategic developments in the institution.
	Leadership	Few (if any) of the most influential leaders in the institution serve as champions for public engagement.	Some of the institution's senior team act as informal champions for public engagement.	Some of the institution's senior team act as formal champions for public engagement.	The VC acts as a champion for PE and a senior leader takes formal responsibility. All senior leaders have an understanding of the importance and value of public engagement to the institution's agenda.
	Communication	The institution's commitment to public engagement is rarely if ever featured in internal or external communications.	Public engagement occasionally features in internal and external communications.	Public engagement frequently features in internal communications, but rarely as a high-profile item or with an emphasis on its strategic importance.	PE appears prominently in the institution's internal communications; its strategic importance is highlighted, and resources and strategic support have been allocated to sustain this.
PROCESS	Support	There is no attempt to co-ordinate public engagement activity or to network learning and expertise across the institution.	There are some informal attempts being made to co-ordinate PE activities, but there is no strategic plan for this work. Some self-forming networks exist, not supported by the institution.	Oversight and co-ordination of PE has been formally allocated (e.g. to a working group or committee) but there is minimal support and resource to invest in activity.	The institution has a strategic plan to focus its co-ordination, a body/ies with formal responsibility for oversight of this plan, and resources available to assist the embedding of PE. There are a number of recognised and supported networks.
	Learning	There is little or no opportunity for staff or students to access professional development to develop their skills & knowledge of PE.	There are some opportunities for staff or students to access professional development and training in PE, but no formal or systematic support.	There are some formal opportunities for staff or students to access professional development and training in PE.	Staff and students are encouraged and supported in accessing professional development, training and informal learning to develop their skills and knowledge of engagement.
	Recognition	Staff are not formally rewarded or recognised for their PE activities.	Some departments recognise and reward PE activity on an ad hoc basis.	The university is working towards an institution-wide policy for recognising and rewarding PE activity.	The university has reviewed its processes, and developed a policy to ensure PE is rewarded & recognised in formal and informal ways.
PEOPLE	Staff	Few if any opportunities exist for staff to get involved in public engagement, either informally or as part of their formal duties.	There are opportunities for staff in a handful of faculties or departments to get involved in PE, either informally or as part of their formal duties.	There are structured opportunities for many staff members to get involved in PE; but not in all faculties or departments. There is a drive to expand opportunities to all.	All staff have the opportunity to get involved in public engagement, either informally or as part of their formal duties, and are encouraged and supported to do so.
	Students	Few opportunities exist for students to get involved in PE, either informally, through volunteering programmes, or as part of the formal curriculum.	There are opportunities for students to get involved, but there is no coordinated approach to promoting and supporting these opportunities across the institution.	Many (but not all) students have the opportunity to get involved in PE and are encouraged and supported to do so. There is a drive to expand opportunities to all.	All students have the opportunity to get involved in PE, and are encouraged and supported to do so. The institution offers both formal and informal ways to recognize and reward their involvement.
	Public	Little or no attempt has been made to assess community need, or to support 'non-traditional' groups in engaging with the institution.	Some attempt has been made to analyse community need and interest; and to begin to tackle access issues to open up the institution and its activities to the public.	The institution has committed resources to assessing community need and interests, and to using this insight and feedback to inform its strategy and plans.	The institution has assessed need & resources to supporting a wide range of community groups, and to systematically seek their feedback and involvement.

Diolch!

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