## Civic Vision

*i.e. How the museum expresses empathy externally through its civic role.*

An “anchor institution” of civil society (like universities, libraries, etc.): Exercises “soft power” (influence for social good) in community.

- **Regressive (Lowest Maturity)**
  - Identifies as independent, stand-alone player
  - Indifferent to/unaware of issues within community
  - Focused on core subject matter only

- **Emergent (Low Maturity)**
  - Interested in being more relevant to civic life in the community
  - Willing to reassess mission and vision
  - Lacking required resources or clear direction

- **Planned (Medium Maturity)**
  - Acknowledges role as anchor institution in community
  - Ensures mission and vision reflect civic role
  - Explores authentic ways to be part of its community and allocates project resources to do so

- **Proactive (Advanced Maturity)**
  - Embraces and internalizes role as an anchor institution in community
  - Key civic player with responsibilities and influence used for growth and social justice
  - Exercises soft power in the community with dedicated staffing and project resources

## Institutional Body Language

*i.e. How the museum embodies empathy through staffing, policies, workplace culture and structure, etc.*

Aware of unconscious & unintended messages of white privilege communicated by building, administration, staff, hiring practices, collections, advertising, etc. Values intersectional cultural competency at all levels of staff and governance.

- **Regressive (Lowest Maturity)**
  - Museum culture embodies privilege (racial, cultural, social, etc.)
  - Governors, leaders, employees, exhibits, collections, etc. are predominantly single demographic (usually white) reflecting that of founders
  - Unaddressed issues of pay (unpaid labor, low wages, wage disparity) and employment equity in hiring practices

- **Emergent (Low Maturity)**
  - Token “community coordinator” is hired, or a “diversity function” is added to someone’s job to attract “diverse” audiences
  - “Diversity” initiatives consist of short term “outreach” programs or only overlap with “ethnic” holidays
  - Some labor practices amended to create more equitable working conditions
  - No substantial change in internal culture in terms of board, staffing, collections, exhibitions, programming

- **Planned (Medium Maturity)**
  - Enacts formal policies through staff collaborations with community partners, advisory committees, experts on inclusion, equity, etc.
  - Assesses and reorganizes board, staff, collections, exhibits and programs—its entire ethos—to reflect its community
  - Hiring practices examined for bias; efforts made to address staff concerns
  - Parity in representation are prioritized as the responsibility of all staff
  - Changes from a place of white privilege to a place where all feel welcome

- **Proactive (Advanced Maturity)**
  - Internalized awareness of privilege communicated by building, leadership, staffing, collections, advertising, etc.
  - Workplace culture reflects inclusive environment with participation from staff of diverse thought, experience, and cultural competencies at all staff levels
  - Fully resembles the complex and intersectional community’s evolving demographics and values
  - Recognizes and supports need for staff self-care to limit burnout
  - Enacts long range plan to ensure sustainability of this transformation

---

Empathetic Museum Contributors: Gretchen Jennings, Stacey Mann, Janeen Bryant, Matt Kirchman, Rainey Tisdale, Elissa Frankle, Jim Cullen, Jessica Konigsberg, Alyssa Greenberg, and many others who have generously shared their time and expertise. Special credit and thanks to Jim Cullen for contributing and incorporating the Maturity Model framework.
### Community Resonance

**i.e.** How the museum values, relates to, and serves its diverse communities.

- Concerned with “attracting wider audiences” to expand audience base
- Uninterested in investigation of institutional connections to exclusion, racism, sexism, oppression, white privilege, etc.
- Perception that community issues have little connection to museum

**Persistent awareness of surrounding community; forges strong, trusted connections with all (often underrepresented) segments of community in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status.**

- Authorizes research into the history of its building, location, collections in relation to racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege
- Examines its relationship with previously ignored or excluded communities
- Community connections focus on execution of the museum’s mission and vision; relationship is predominantly one way, serving the museum’s needs; involves cultural appropriation

- Solicits help from experienced facilitators and community partners to address engagement issues from an intentional, structural perspective
- Revisits institutional policies (staffing, collections, exhibitions, programming, etc.) to prioritize internal transformation
- Secures partnerships with other anchor institutions and local organizations more fully integrated with community issues

- Acknowledges complicity in legacy of exclusion, racism, oppression, cultural appropriation and privilege
- Implements plan to reverse these connections; seeks reconciliation with affected communities
- Nurtures reciprocal, community-driven relationships with local organizations that link the museum and its mission to local/national/global issues relevant to the surrounding community

### Timeliness & Sustainability

**i.e.** How, why, and when the museum responds to community issues and events in a sustainable way.

- Rarely acknowledges or responds to local, national, or global events.
- Programs are reactive, one-offs and not sustained; do not emanate from prior planning.

**Able to respond to unexpected issues affecting its community due to continuous and sustained relationships & role as anchor institution.**

- Responds and can reallocate committed resources as a plan deviation
- Aware that one-off, unsustained responses do not build lasting community engagement

- Plans strategically for the future and engages periodically with stakeholders (internal/external) so that appropriate community/national/global issues can be addressed
- Allocates resources to provide responses that are flexible and sustainable

- Plans strategically; reciprocal relationships with community members enable museum to anticipate and respond in a timely way
- Rarely blindsided, highly nimble and flexible; resources already allocated
- Community resources and programs are fully funded and protected in budget

### Performance Measures

**i.e.** How the museum measures success in empathetic practice.

- Traditional measures focus on outputs, attendance and revenues
- Metrics rarely reported to internal/external stakeholders or the local community

**Values and commits resources to regular assessment of public impact; shares this with the public.**

- Traditional measures supplemented by attempts to gauge community collaboration and impact
- Museum reports to internal stakeholders annually

- Community impact and effectiveness as anchor institution are included in outcomes to be measured
- Museum reports to internal and external stakeholders annually

- Museum continuously assesses and redefines its public value impact
- Commits resources to continued impact assessment along with attendance and revenue
- Reporting is increasingly transparent and widespread

---

Citation: Jennings, G., Mann, S., Cullen, J., et.al. (2016). *Empathetic Museum Maturity Model*. http://www.empatheticmuseum.com/maturitymodel