

# Appreciative Inquiry | Overview and Guide

Appreciative Inquiry, also known as AI, is an invaluable method for fostering growth and positive change within museum environments. By concentrating on the positive aspects and potentials of the institution, it facilitates a constructive and proactive approach towards envisioning and realizing a vibrant future.

## Appreciative Inquiry Model: Four Phases

### 1. Discovery: Unearth the Positive

In the Discovery stage, the aim is to find out what's really shining in the museum. It's a kind of treasure hunt, looking for the things that make people's eyes light up. This could be through asking visitors, volunteers, local teachers, artists, or other members of the community about their experiences. Surveys, interviews, or group chats can be useful tools here.

Key questions for this phase could include:

- What aspects of the museum are most valued?
- Are there any noteworthy positive experiences people have had with the museum?
- What are identified as the museum's strengths?

### 2. Dream: Envision a Brighter Future

Armed with the knowledge of what's working well, the Dream phase encourages stakeholders to imagine the museum's future, shaped by its strengths.

Consider these questions for dreaming:

- What enhancements or additions would stakeholders like to see at the museum?
- How do they envision the museum's evolution in the future?
- What are their ideas for the museum to better integrate with the community?

### 3. Design: Plot the Course

The Design phase is about creating a roadmap to the desired future. This stage translates the visions from the Dream phase into concrete, actionable strategies and initiatives.

Thought-provoking questions for this phase are:

- How can the museum capitalize on its strengths to fulfill these visions?
- What new initiatives or programs would further deepen community engagement?
- What resources are necessary to facilitate these developments?

#### **4. Destiny: Manifest the Dream**

In the Destiny phase, the plans are set in motion. The strategies and initiatives designed earlier are now implemented, but this stage is also about reflection, learning, and adaptation, ensuring that the museum is progressing towards its goals.

Reflective questions for this phase include:

- How are the newly introduced initiatives influencing community engagement?
- What successes can the museum celebrate, and what can be learned from them?
- How can the museum modify its strategies based on the feedback received?

Appreciative Inquiry, through its process of Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny, fosters a spirit of dialogue and collaboration, helping museums grow in alignment with their community's needs and aspirations. It's an empowering approach that celebrates successes, invites dreams, and proactively designs a future where both the museum and its community thrive.