

INNOVATION & RESILIENCE REFLECTION GUIDE

This is a tool to reflect on your own organization's work as you consider whether affiliating with the Smithsonian is right for your organization. The questions are meant to serve as prompts for internal discussion and reflection but you'll also find highlighted sections that signal information relevant for the Affiliate application process. If you choose to apply, the guide and your answers can serve as a reference for your team as you complete your application.

I. THE FOUNDATION

In what ways is your organization already embracing innovative mindsets and practices?

Building a Culture of Innovation

How does your organization currently cultivate an internal culture of innovation? How do you encourage resilience among your team?

Responding to Change

What is one major challenge your organization has faced recently? Were you able to adapt and generate new approaches? If so, what worked + what didn't? If not, what barriers might be getting in the way of developing and implementing innovative solutions?

Putting ideas into Action

In what ways has your team leveraged innovative strategies, such as new communication systems, digital programming or reimaged processes in the past few years to better meet your mission or serve your community? What new approaches or offerings are you most proud of?

II. THE VISION

How can you use innovative technologies + processes to deepen your impact? Refer to examples in the Learning Excursion for inspiration.

Identifying Opportunities for Innovation

What are aspects of your organization you think could benefit from more innovative approaches? How would you approach generating new, innovative, and more effective solutions (processes, technologies, systems, offerings)?

Embracing technology as a tool for impact

How do you imagine using digital programming to increase your impact + better serve your communities?

How could innovative technologies such as apps, podcasts, 3D digitization, AR + VR enable deeper learning + storytelling in your work? How might they increase accessibility or present content in more inclusive ways?

How could your team leverage digital tools to improve or enhance communication with your communities in the future?

III. THE BUILDING BLOCKS

Reflect on the assets, resources, and support you would need to realize your vision.

Celebrating Strengths

What internal and external resources are you already using to help you cultivate and sustain an innovative approach to the work? Note: Use the answer to this to prepare your Statement of Purpose.

Identifying Opportunities

What areas do you need support with? How might Smithsonian resources and/or expertise help move your vision forward? Note: Use the answer to this to prepare your Statement of Purpose.

Activating Peer Support

In what ways would you want to engage the Affiliate network to support your work? What areas would you like thought-partnership on? What resources would you like to receive from or share with the network? Note: Use the answer to this to prepare your Statement of Purpose.