



Audience Research: Focus Groups

Seattle Art Museum

February 2002

*Prepared by:
PRR, Inc.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
Lifestyle	3
Interest in Arts	3
Perception of SAM/SAAM	3
INTRODUCTION	5
LIFESTYLE (VISITORS AND NON-VISITORS)	6
Leisure Time.....	6
Attitudes Toward Downtown	7
INTEREST IN THE ARTS	7
PERCEPTION OF SAM/SAAM.....	8
VISITOR GROUPS	8
Awareness of SAM Programs	8
Expectations of Experience/ Ways to Improve SAM.....	9
NON-VISITOR GROUPS	11
Awareness of SAM Programs	11
Expectations of Experience	11
Ways to Improve SAM.....	13
FOCUS GROUP HIGHLIGHTS	16
Lifestyle.....	16
Interest in Arts	16
Perception of SAM/SAAM	16
APPENDIX A – RECRUITMENT SCREENER	18
APPENDIX B – MODERATOR GUIDES.....	20
APPENDIX C – COMPOSITION OF FOCUS GROUPS.....	28

Executive Summary

Over a period of three weeks (Dec. 5- Dec. 18), PRR conducted six focus groups. These focus groups featured moderators from the same ethnic/cultural background as the participants. The six groups were: Asian-American visitor and non-visitor, African-American visitor and non-visitor, Caucasian non-visitor and Hispanic/Latino non-visitor.

Despite the diversity of the participants across the groups there were some consistent themes among all the groups.

- The downtown location is problematic in terms of traffic, parking, and safety.
- SAM has a reputation of being elitist (or perceived to be among visitors and non-visitors) and not supporting the local arts community.
- Seattle is a diverse community and SAM must make a serious commitment to truly integrate the diversity of the community into the Museum to become successful.

Lifestyle

- A large majority of the participants said that they do not have a lot of leisure time. Quite a few said they enjoy doing outdoor activities, such as hiking, skiing, etc. Family activities, reading, and attending concerts were also mentioned.
- Time, weather, and convenience were the three most important factors in participants' decisions on how to spend their leisure time.
- While some participants indicated that they enjoy going downtown, a lot said they do not. Traffic, safety concerns, and lack of affordable parking were the major reasons for their dislike of coming downtown.

Interest in Arts

- The participants had varying levels of interest in art. However, there was a common message among the participants -- they said that their interest/participation in the arts could be heightened by greater knowledge of the arts and through a greater interaction with the artistic process.

Perception of SAM/SAAM

- Most of the non-visitor participants said that SAM is "low profile" and does not seem like a place to go when thinking about leisure time activities. Non-visitors had little knowledge of SAAM or the connection between the two museums. Most of the visitor participants indicated that they were not very impressed with the museums in relation to other art museums.

They said they usually only went when an exhibit came into town that they wanted to see, and that they wish better exhibits came to Seattle.

- SAM comes across to visitors and non-visitors alike as elitist. This is due to a number of factors such as staff attitude, presentation of itself to the community, and its role in the arts community.
- The non-visitor participants would like more education about the artworks so that they could understand the art presented at SAM. They would like to “hear the story behind the art.” Both visitors and non-visitors would like to see more local artists and more art to which they can relate.
- SAM needs greater variety in both traveling exhibits and in the exhibition of its permanent collection to help maintain continued interest in SAM. Non-visitors said they needed more variety in exhibits to draw them to SAM.
- Participants from the different ethnic backgrounds would like to see their heritage/experience highlighted at SAM, but not just during a particular month where there is a customary celebration of a particular ethnic culture. They also stressed that it must be “real.” They agreed that a more diverse staff and volunteers would make this possible.
- Participants from the different ethnic backgrounds said that outreach to their communities would be accepted more if the people who did the outreach were already involved in that community. The participants thought that education outreach efforts with children would be particularly successful, because they dictate where their parents go.

Introduction

The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) contracted LORD Cultural Resources (LORD) and PRR to conduct focus groups with six separate populations in the Seattle metro area as part of a multiple method research initiative. The purpose of the focus groups was to find ways for SAM and the Seattle Asian Art Museum (SAAM) to diversify and broaden its audience.

The focus groups involved discussions of participants' thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors toward the arts and the Seattle Art Museums in particular. The focus groups aimed to provide information needed for planning, developing and implementing a variety of marketing, promotional, public relations, and public information activities related to diversifying SAM's audience.

Specifically, the focus groups were designed to explore and understand SAM (including the downtown Museum and SAAM) in terms of:

- How participants spent their leisure time
- Attitudes toward downtown Seattle
- Awareness of SAM and its programs/exhibits
- Expectations of experience at SAM
- Ways to improve SAM
- Potential interest of specific communities in SAM
- Attitudes toward the visual arts

Participants were initially recruited through the use of an e-mail that was sent out to various community groups and organizations that served specific ethnic groups. When someone e-mailed to express an interest in the focus group they were then called and asked the questions from the recruitment screener (Appendix A). Those that qualified were then recruited for the groups. Some participants were also contacted because they filled out a form expressing interest in taking part in a focus group during the intercept surveys at SAM. Participants for the white non-visitor group were recruited through cold calling a targeted list purchased from *Experian*.

The focus groups were held on December 5th, 6th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and 18th, 2001 at PRR's focus group facilities and lasted two hours per group. There were six groups: Asian-American visitors, Asian-American non-visitors, African-American visitors, African-American non-visitors, Caucasian non-visitors, and Hispanic/Latino non-visitors. Focus group moderators were selected with the same racial/ethnic background as the participants for each group. Kim Kamolz moderated the Asian-American groups, Glenda Graham-Walton moderated the African-American groups, Rudy Garza conducted the Hispanic/Latino group, and Joel Andren moderated the Caucasian group. The moderators used either a visitor or non-visitor discussion guide (Appendix B) developed by PRR and LORD in consultation with SAM. For purposes of analysis, the groups were audiotaped and videotaped.

This a summary report for all six focus groups. Results will be divided into two major sections: visitors and non-visitors. Differences among ethnic groups and other demographic information will be noted where appropriate.

All the groups were diverse in terms of age, gender, education and income, number of children between the ages of 3-14 years living at home (for a complete breakdown of the groups see Appendix C).

The participants were, for the most part, lively and outspoken. The participants were generally very helpful and sought to give SAM staff advice about how to make the Museum better.

Lifestyle (Visitors and Non-visitors)

Leisure Time

The three most common ways to spend leisure time reported among the participants were: taking part in outdoor activities (hiking, skiing, camping, etc.), reading, and spending time with children. None of the leisure time interests were specific to ethnicity or gender. Neither were they specific to visitors or non-visitors.

A number of participants also expressed their interest in travel when they had enough time. Participants (in smaller numbers) said they like to shop, go to movies, go to concerts, attend sporting events, or volunteer in their leisure time. A common complaint among the participants was that they did not have enough leisure time.

“There’s only so much time in a day... time is the biggest factor (for choosing how to spend leisure time).” – African American non-visitor

The participants reported that there were a number of factors that influenced how they spent their leisure time. Most important among these was how well an event/activity fit into the leisure time that they had. There were many activities that the participants indicated they

enjoyed, but that they did infrequently because they rarely fit into their schedule. Therefore, participants said that the leisure time activity they were most likely to do was the activity that was most convenient.

Except for a few of the participants, few said that cost was a factor. A lot of the participants indicated that Seattle weather was often times a major factor

in their leisure time activities. Many said that when the weather was dark and rainy they did not want to leave the house.

Attitudes Toward Downtown

A majority of the participants said that they did not enjoy going downtown, even though some admitted that they go downtown quite a bit (shopping, dining, theater, etc.). There was a small minority that championed downtown and said they come downtown as often as they can, and they thought that

"We just come downtown on special occasions ... we try to stay away from downtown because we think there's a lot of interesting things we want to see, but it's the drive in, and the congestion and parking..."
-Asian non-visitor (from Bellevue)

downtown had gotten a lot more user-friendly and safe. However, the majority detailed a litany of reasons for why they don't come downtown.

The most important reason for a majority of the participants is the lack of affordable parking

downtown. Another group of participants said that the safety concerns tend to keep them away from downtown. Residents from outside Seattle also said that traffic makes going to downtown Seattle an event that must be planned and could not be done on a spur of the moment. One male participant said that he doesn't take his son (age 7) downtown because of the "riff raff."

Interest in the Arts

The Asian-American visitor group and the African-American visitor group differed in their participation and interest in the arts. The African-American visitor group was more active in the pursuit and interest of art, and held a much more lively, and informed discussion about art. They discussed Museums around the globe and debated the merits of particular artists and styles, something the Asian-American visitor group did not.

Of Asian-American visitor group participants, three said that they were active in producing art. One male participant said that he is a photographer and likes to come downtown and take photographs. Two female participants indicated that they like to paint. The other participants in the group, had interest in viewing art, but were not passionate about it.

The African-American visitor group participants were a much more engaged group than the Asian American's, although only one participant described himself as an artist. The other participants were all active members of a

community that regularly goes to art shows, discusses art, and goes to museums both domestically and abroad.

Overall, the non-visitor focus groups did not express any strong preference regarding the type of visual art they would like to see at SAM. However, members of the Hispanic non-visitor group expressed an interest in Mexican art from the 1920s to the 1950s. Some of the non-visitor participants also expressed an interest in indigenous arts and crafts (such as woven items). One Hispanic non-visitor said that SAM should also keep in mind other Hispanic cultures than those from Mexico.

Perception of SAM/SAAM

This part of the report has been divided into two sections: perception of SAM/SAAM by visitor groups and perception of SAM/SAAM by non-visitor groups. Although there are some similarities among the visitor and non-visitor groups, there are some fundamental differences between the groups. The similarities and differences between the groups will be highlighted in the following section. Discussion of the similarities between the two visitor groups and the non-visitors can be found in the non-visitor groups' section.

Visitor Groups

Awareness of SAM Programs

The two visitor groups (Asian-American and African-American) were similar in terms of how often they visited SAM and SAAM. In each group there were

"With SAM, if you go once a year, it's enough"
-Asian-American visitor

a number of people who go to the museums infrequently (once a year or less). Some of these infrequent visitors said that they were also members. There was consensus among these individuals that they only go when a special exhibit that they are interested in arrives.

There were a few participants from both ethnic groups who said that they attend almost every exhibit and oftentimes visit an exhibit more than once, because they felt the exhibit was worth an extra visit. The African-American group was more active in the local arts scene (going to/organizing gallery shows, etc.) and went to more Art Museums (other than SAM/SAAM) than the Asian-American group.

Expectations of Experience/ Ways to Improve SAM

Participants in the African-American visitors focus group said that they were disappointed in the level (regional, as opposed to world class) of the exhibitions that come to SAM. One respondent said that she was “amazed at what’s coming to Portland as opposed to Seattle.” Another participant said that she bought the *New York Times* art guide that details which exhibits are going to which cities and she said, “you see things you wish came here.”

Participants in both the Asian-American and African-American visitor groups indicated that they would like to see SAM’s approach to the art to be more interactive, more hands-on, and more educational.

The participants described a need for contextual information about the art that they were seeing. They were just as interested in learning about the artist, the artist’s life, and the artist’s influences as they were in just seeing the art. Participants said that SAM does a poor job of educating museum-goers about the art that they are seeing. One Asian-American participant said that he wanted to see more descriptions of the art because such description “makes it more meaningful.” Another participant said that the Henry Art Museum handed out helpful laminated guides that contained “a lot of information.” The participants thought that SAM should be a place to learn about art just as much as it is a place to see art.

“The more knowledge I have about it, the more excited I am about it.”
-African-American Visitor

One participant said that the virtual dig at the Sichuan exhibit was a good example of how making the exhibit interactive can enliven the museum-going experience.

Participants from both visitor ethnic groups said that it would be good if museum-goers were able to meet the artist. They felt that this would help people create a bond with the art.

Both groups also thought that SAM should show greater interest in artists from the community. They thought that highlighting local artists would have numerous positive effects for SAM. One effect would be in making SAM more interesting to local patrons. A participant from the Asian-American visitor group said that SAM should help inspire local artists and give them the pride of having their work displayed in a major museum. A couple of participants from the African-American visitor group and one of the Asian-American visitors professed that they collect art, and quite a few participants from each group said they often interact with artists.

The visitor participants said that to help make SAM more vital, it would need to reinvent itself as *the* resource for art in the city. In addition to

highlighting local artists in its exhibitions, SAM should be active in sponsoring local gallery shows, providing information (at SAM) for where to go for more art, sponsoring displays in local buildings and providing stipends for local artists.

One African-American visitor also said that SAM should develop a satellite museum in the community where kids could get involved in "people's art" and develop an interest in art. Other participants in this focus group said that "kids are interactive," and that they would feel a connection if there were more opportunities to interact with art. This is important because, as one African-American visitor said, "once you're connected, you stay connected."

One African-American participant who is also involved with the Pacific Northwest Ballet mentioned that the Ballet goes out into the community and teaches dance to kids. She said, "SAM could mimic the same sorts of practice."

Members of the African-American visitor focus group also discussed a lot about other places where art can be found in the area. One participant said he liked the Tacoma Art Museum more because they featured local artists more than SAM. A lot of the African-American participants said that they like the Frye Art Museum because it was peaceful and you felt free to move about the museum at your own pace. They said it was a place that they felt comfortable in. Another participant said he liked to take his son to the Cornish School of Art Gallery. He described the students there as being willing to talk about the art if you approached them and said they were "very helpful, very enthusiastic." One participant had a bad experience at the Pratt Fine Arts Center saying that the people there were "unfriendly" and "awful to me" when he was trying to sign up his son for classes. He said that he got the impression that people did not want him there. He then said that he got a similar feeling when he went to SAM.

The Asian-American visitors had very nice things to say about SAAM, but they admitted that they don't go there very often. The Asian-American participants said that as Asian-Americans they liked the idea of an Asian Art Museum in their hometown, they liked the layout of the building and the peaceful environment of Volunteer Park. One of the reasons why the Asian-American participants said that they do not go to SAAM often was that they are more interested in Asian history than Art. A number of the participants added that they would feel more of a connection with Asian-American art compared to just Asian Art. They said that they would like to see more perspectives on the Asian-American experience from these artists. One participant said that he preferred the Wing Luke Museum to SAAM because of Wing Luke's "community base." Another participant said that Capitol Hill was a little too "isolated" for a museum.

Both the African-American visitors and the Asian-American visitors thought that SAM should make a commitment to creating a more diverse Museum that reflects the richness of the Seattle community.

Non-Visitor Groups

Awareness of SAM Programs

Not surprisingly, the non-visitors reported that they really did not know what was in the Seattle Art Museum. Likewise there was a similar lack of knowledge about the Seattle Asian Art Museum. Participants in all the non-visitor groups said basically the same thing: that the Museum is low-profile and they do not know what they should go there to see.

There is a general lack of awareness among the non-visitors of what the special exhibits consist of and this, said a few participants, was why they did not go to the Museum. They said they did not understand what it is they would be paying to see and why it is worth it. Several of the participants said that they had considered going to some of the past exhibits (Da Vinci Codex, Ancient Sichuan Art) and a few others said they were thinking of going to the current Leibovitz exhibit because it looked interesting. However, most of the participants were not aware of how many exhibits there were a year, or what exhibits had been at SAM recently. Most of the participants said that SAM rarely showed up on their radar screen. They are aware of SAM, but said that every time they heard about (or saw an advertisement for) a new exhibit that the exhibit topic was of little interest to them. This was one reason that they had not gone to SAM.

Expectations of Experience

Two other reasons that the non-visitors had not gone to SAM were time and money. Time is an important factor to the non-visitors for a number of reasons. Some participants said that the time involved to make a trip downtown, find parking, etc. made going to SAM very inconvenient and therefore made it unlikely that they would go. Other respondents said that the times that SAM is open makes it difficult to visit. Participants were especially unhappy that SAM is open one night a week and thought it should be open more in the evenings. Some of the participants indicated that they work during the day and run errands on the weekends and said that they would be more likely to go to SAM at night. One participant said that he drove downtown from Redmond to see the Leibovitz exhibit after work on a Wednesday, only to find SAM closed at 5:30 p.m. "It pissed me off," he said. Another participant said one thing that kept her from going was that she did

not know how long it took to go through SAM. She asked, "Could I do it on a lunch break?"

The non-visitors do not know how much a visit to SAM costs, but a lot of them said they thought that it is expensive. Some of the participants guessed that the entrance fee was \$20 a person, and a few of the participants said that they did not go because it cost so much.

Participants were shown a picture of the exterior of SAM, but all of them said they were familiar with the building. In general, the participants do not like the SAM building. The non-visitors seemed very confused by the building. One participant said he drove by the building a couple of times before he knew it was the Art Museum. Other participants said that the building has a "hidden look," and "looks like a jail." One participant said it looked like there is nothing interesting inside. On the whole, the participants agreed the outside is sterile looking and needs to be livened up. A few participants said they did not like the Hammering Man sculpture and remembered there was some controversy about it in the past. A number of participants, from both the visitor groups and non-visitor groups said that they thought SAM could benefit from having a large colorful banner highlighting the current special exhibit. They said that they have seen this in many other museums in New York and Chicago and they thought it would be appropriate for SAM.

Visitors and non-visitors alike also have problems with the lobby of SAM. They said that it was a confusing, rather than inviting place. One non-visitor said that the lobby should make her "feel like I'm in a place of art." Some participants, however, said that despite the confusing nature of the lobby, they like the staircase.

Perhaps, the apparent dislike of the physical structure of SAM can best be understood by how much the participants like the SAAM structure. Both visitors and non-visitors said they like the peaceful setting of SAAM in Volunteer Park. A few participants in each of the four non-visitor groups were aware of SAAM. They felt it is much more attractive because of the open green space. A number of participants from the non-visitor groups said that they had been to the Museum in Volunteer Park as kids and have fond memories of it. When shown a picture of SAAM, the non-visitors who had not seen the building before said, that SAAM was what a museum should look like. The participants who had visited the museum before said they liked the design and layout of SAAM better and they also liked the easy access and convenient parking.

The program guide to the upcoming *Art From Africa: Long Steps Never Broke a Back* exhibit was distributed to the non-visitor participants and they were asked to comment on it. Almost none of the participants said that they liked the design and layout of the program guide. Participants said that it was "boring," "drab," "bland," "not top quality," and "not eye-catching at all". Most of the people said that they would not pick it up to read it and that if it

was mailed to them they would throw it out without reading it. Another participant said that the main problem with the brochure is that upon first and second glance they did not know that the exhibition was being promoted by SAM, and that the way the guide was designed it did not provide an association with SAM. Another participant said that the brown and gray colors were boring.

Ways to Improve SAM

The non-visitor participants indicated that there were a number of things that SAM could do to encourage them to come to the Museum. Some things that SAM could do concern the cost of the Museum. Participants said that SAM should have more free days and have more activities like the Thursday after hours program. They said that SAM should have specific "kid days," so that parents could bring their children without feeling afraid that their children might bother the adults. One parent also said that teenagers should still pay a child rate because they are still dependent upon their parents and their parents still pay for them.

The non-visitor participants also said that SAM needs to do a better job of marketing the Museum and using their advertising. The African-American non-visitors said that if SAM wants to get their attention they should advertise in local churches. The participants said that this is where a lot of African-Americans socialize and that bulletin boards and word of mouth in these churches would be fruitful. They also mentioned that they read local African-American periodicals such as *Black Employment Business Journal* and *ColorsNW*. The Hispanic non-visitor participants said that the best way to reach members of their community was through word of mouth.

All the non-visitor groups indicated that they get a lot of information off the web. They also said that they listen to NPR, read the Seattle Times/Weekly/P-I and the Stranger. In general, the non-visitors have not noticed SAM advertising in any of the above publications. A few participants said they vaguely remember seeing SAM ads, but remember nothing about them. Some non-visitor participants said that they want the advertisements to be a resource of information. When they see an advertisement, they want a description of the show, a listing of the hours, and how much it costs.

*"It's a shame that there are so many local artists who are not getting the publicity and the recognition they deserve."
-Hispanic Non-visitor*

The non-visitor groups echoed the sentiments of visitor groups that they want their trip to SAM to be a learning experience. They expressed an interest in guided tours. They felt that if they knew that they did not have to know a lot about art then they would be more inclined to go.

One thing that was heard in both the visitor and non-visitor groups, though it was by no means a consensus, was that SAM should look “outside the box” for the art in the museum. Participants in two separate groups (Asian-American visitors and Hispanic non-visitors) said that they would like to see a graffiti exhibition. An Asian-American visitor said she would like to see cartoons, and a Hispanic non-visitor discussed the motorcycle exhibition he saw at a museum in New York. The feeling of quite a few of the participants was that SAM should not feel afraid to challenge the boundaries and assumptions of art, and should try to be more creative and entertaining in their exhibitions. The non-visitors also echoed the visitors’ remarks by expressing an interest in seeing more local artists. One respondent thought it would be a good idea to have local artists display their work in the SAM plaza during art walk.

Both the African-American and Hispanic non-visitor groups said that a greater commitment to their communities may make it more likely for them to visit SAM, but they stressed that this type of commitment should not be half-hearted and should be genuine. The Asian-Americans were very pleased

“We patronize places that are interested in us, or that feel a part of ... there are very few places that African-Americans will go in downtown Seattle just because they don’t feel they belong there, and the Seattle Art Museum is one of those places. It’s next to Benaroya Hall... it’s not that we don’t have appreciation for those types of entertainment, it’s a matter of acceptance...”

-African-American Non-visitor

to have an Asian art museum in their town, but wanted to make sure that the Asian-American experience was taken in to account as well.

It was important, the participants (African-American, Hispanic) said, not to just focus on a specific culture for a month and then move on. They said that just doing African Art one month and then moving on to Mexican the next is not what they mean by

reaching out to their communities. They said that although it would be very difficult, SAM should represent Seattle’s diversity everyday in the museum.

Both visitors and non-visitors agreed that a more diverse workforce would benefit SAM. The participants said that SAM is currently very elitist and that it turns off a lot of people. One participant said that a client of hers, a corporate sponsor, withdrew its support of SAM because of the elitist attitude of the staff. It was also important to the participants that it is clear that a diverse staff is active in developing diverse exhibitions. One African-American

participant said that she would not want to see a demonstration of African dance by white women, no matter how good they are at it.

"[It is important] not to focus, but to include"

-Hispanic Non-visitor

The African-American and Hispanic non-visitor groups also said that they would like to see art come out into their communities in

the form of satellite galleries and art workshops for children. It was also important to the participants that the people who SAM brought out into their communities were "real." They said that they would probably only really accept people who are already involved in those communities and their local art scene.

Focus Group Highlights

Despite the diversity of the participants across the groups there were some consistent themes among all the groups.

- The downtown location is problematic in terms of traffic, parking, and safety.
- SAM has a reputation of being elitist (or perceived to be among visitors and non-visitors and not supporting the local arts community).
- Seattle is a diverse community and SAM must make a serious commitment to truly integrate the diversity of the community into the Museum to become successful.

Lifestyle

- A large majority of the participants said that they do not have a lot of leisure time. Quite a few said they enjoy doing outdoor activities, such as hiking, skiing, etc. Family activities, reading, and attending concerts were also mentioned.
- Time, weather, and convenience were the three most important factors in participants' decisions on how to spend their leisure time.
- While some participants indicated that they enjoy going downtown, a lot said they do not. Traffic, safety concerns, and lack of affordable parking were the major reasons for their dislike of coming downtown.

Interest in Arts

- The participants had varying levels of interest in art. However, there was a common message among the participants -- they said that their interest/participation in the arts could be heightened by greater knowledge of the arts and through a greater interaction with the artistic process.

Perception of SAM/SAAM

- Most of the non-visitor participants said that SAM is "low profile" and does not seem like a place to go when thinking about leisure time activities. Non-visitors had little knowledge of SAAM or the connection between the two museums. Most of the visitor participants indicated that they were not very impressed with the museums in relation to other art museums. They said they usually only went when an exhibit came into town that they wanted to see, and that they wish better exhibits came to Seattle.
- SAM comes across to visitors and non-visitors alike as elitist. This is due to a number of factors such as staff attitude, presentation of itself to the community, and its role in the arts community.

- The non-visitor participants would like more education about the artworks so that they could understand the art presented at SAM. They would like to “hear the story behind the art.” Both visitors and non-visitors would like to see more local artists and more art that they can relate to.
- SAM needs greater variety in both traveling exhibits and in the exhibition of its permanent collection to help maintain continued interest in SAM. Non-visitors said they needed more variety in exhibits to draw them to SAM.
- Participants from the different ethnic backgrounds would like to see their heritage/experience highlighted at the SAM, but not just during a particular month where there is a customary celebration of a particular ethnic culture. They also stressed that it must be “real.” They agreed that a more diverse staff and volunteers would make this possible.
- Participants from the different ethnic backgrounds said that outreach to their communities would be accepted more if the people who did the outreach were already involved in that community. The participants thought that education outreach efforts with children would be particularly successful, because they dictate where their parents go.

Appendix A – Recruitment Screener

Seattle Art
Museum

Focus Group Screener

Introduction: Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from PRR , a market research firm, on behalf of the Seattle Art Museum. I want to assure you that this is not a sales call.

We're conducting a study about people's thoughts and feelings about the Seattle Art Museum. Would you be interested in participating in a small group early evening discussion that would take 2 hours with about 7 other people? We would offer you a \$75 cash stipend for your participation.

- Yes (*proceed to next paragraph*)
- Maybe (*try and convince them how important their opinion is. If cannot be swayed, thank them for their time and end call*)
- No – not interested

(Q & A if needed) How do I know this is legitimate? Please call XXX at XXX, (XXX) XXX-XXXX to confirm the sponsor of this group meeting.

It is important to have a diverse group of individuals so I need to ask you a few questions now.

1. How would you describe your racial/ethnic background?
 - White/Caucasian (*If groups are filled tell them that the groups with Caucasian individuals are already filled and thank them for their time. Otherwise, proceed to next question*)
 - Black/African-American (*If groups are filled tell them that the groups with Black/African American individuals are already filled and thank them for their time. Otherwise, proceed to next question*)
 - Hispanic/Latino (*If groups are filled tell them that the groups with Hispanic individuals are already filled and thank them for their time. Otherwise, proceed to next question*)
 - Asian/ Pacific Islander (*If groups are filled tell them that the groups with Asian American/Pacific Islander individuals are already filled and thank them for their time. Otherwise, proceed to next question*)
 - Native American (*Tell them that SAM is interested in speaking with Native Americans and ask if they would be interested in participating in a meeting. If yes, go to end of screener and confirm their name,*

phone number and address. Tell them that when the date and time is set for the meeting we may be calling them.))

- Other *(Go to Q2 and regardless of their answer tell them either that we are looking for people who have or have not been to the Museum. Thank them and end call.)*

2. Have you visited the Seattle Art Museum or Seattle Asian Art Museum in the past five years?

- Yes *(proceed to question #3, if White/Caucasian or Hispanic/Latino thank them for their time and end call)*
- No *(proceed to question #4)*
- Don't know *(thank them for their time and end call)*

3. How many times have you visited the Seattle Art Museum or Seattle Asian Art Museum in the last year?

- none
- once *(go to question #5)*
- 2-3 times *(go to question #5)*
- 4 or more times *(go to question #5)*

(recruit a mix for the visitor groups)

4. Have you visited any cultural events or museums in the past five years? *(i.e. musical concert, dance production, theatre, etc.)*

- Yes *(proceed to next question)*
- No *(thank them for their time and end call)*

5. Which of the following broad ranges includes your age?

- 18-24 *(if under 18, thank them for their time and terminate)*
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and older

(recruit a mix of age levels)

Appendix B – Moderator Guides

Seattle Art Museum

Visitor Moderator Guide

Introduction (15 minutes)

Background

- Moderator introduces himself/herself, explains purpose of this discussion.

- [Explain:] A focus group is a group discussion where we can learn more about peoples' ideas and opinions (compared to a telephone or written survey).

- I have no stake in your answers. My job is to facilitate the discussion and make sure that everyone has an opportunity to express their thoughts.

- Mention facility, audio equipment (so I do not have to take notes), and observers.

- Housekeeping – Restrooms and refreshments.

- Mention ground rules.
 - There are no right or wrong answers; we're interested in your opinions and ideas.
 - One person speaks at a time. This will allow all of us to be heard by each other and by the recording equipment.
 - It is important to tell *your* thoughts, not what you think others will think, or what you think others want to hear.
 - Please turn name signs towards me

- Your ideas and opinions will be kept confidential.

- Any questions about the purpose of our focus group or the ground rules before we begin?

- Please have fun

Introductions

Let's begin by introducing ourselves. Please let me know:

- Your first names
- Where you live
- How many children aged 3-14 in your household

Lifestyle -15 min

I am interested in learning about how you spend your leisure time.

1. In what ways do you spend your leisure time?
2. When you are making a decision about what to do, what are the most important qualities or factors you are considering?
(entertainment, social, education, family, cost, transportation, length of time)
3. Do you go downtown? Why or why not?

Experience at SAM/SAAM – Visitors 60 min

I would like to learn more about your actual experience at SAM/SAAM.

1. How frequently do you go and to which museum? Are there other ways in which you participate other than as a visitor?
2. What are some reasons why you have visited either museum. What is the primary reason for visiting/participating? (probes: special exhibitions, permanent collections – historical/ contemporary, programs related to exhibitions, specific cultural events/activities, to volunteer, to serve on a committee)
3. **(THIS IS A KEY QUESTION. MAKE SURE WE COVER IT)** Describe an experience that met all your expectations and you found particularly satisfying?
4. Describe an experience that was disappointing. (What expectation wasn't met?)
5. What would you like to experience or see at SAM/SAAM but haven't? (probe: collections, programs, exhibitions, other activities)
6. **(THIS IS A KEY QUESTION. MAKE SURE WE COVER IT)** What do you like/not like about the presentation of the exhibitions at either museum? Please give specific examples.
 - a. Is there anything that could be done to make the exhibitions more engaging? (probes multiple voices, thematic exhibitions, contemporary/historical, cross-cultural, media, living artists, demonstrations, cultural programs)
 - b. Is there anything that could be done to make the experience more comfortable? (Probe for seating, size of print on displays, the need to be quite in the museum, etc.)
7. **(THIS IS A KEY QUESTION. MAKE SURE WE COVER IT)** We have spoken about the exhibitions, what about other aspects of your

- experience at either museum? E.g., Food, retail, customer service, comfort, ambience, staff, building. Are your expectations being met?
- a. For each specific issue, ask what could be done to improve the situation.
8. What would entice you to
 - a. visit SAM/SAAM more often
 - b. Become a member
 - c. Consider being a volunteer
 9. In just a few words how would you sum up your feelings about visiting SAM? SAAM?
 10. The Seattle Art Museum is very interested in learning more about what it can do to reach out to _____. What are your ideas on this?

We have heard some suggestions and would like your response to what you think is most important for the Museum to do.
 (PUT THE FOLLOWS ON FLIP CHART)

- Programs in neighborhoods
- Programs developed in partnerships with community organizations
- More exhibitions that are about specific cultures
- More art that is about or by _____ artists
- More contemporary art
- More work by American artists from my cultural group
- More promotion in community newspapers
- More diverse staff and volunteers

Interest in the Arts-- 20 min

I am interested in learning more about the different ways in which you experience or participate in the arts or culture generally, and the visual arts specifically. (NOTE TO MODERATOR – REMEMBER TO ALWAYS BRING THEM BACK TO PARTICIPATION IN MUSEUMS.)

1. In what arts or cultural activities do you participate? [probes: attending arts events, planning arts activities, advising on committees, creating/ making art). And how about museums?
2. What is your primary motivation for choosing to participate in a specific activity?
3. Where do you typically get information? (probes: radio, posters, community newspapers/radio, word of mouth) Where do you look for information?
4. As a visitor or member of the audience, what are your expectations when you attend or participate in an arts event? (probes: service, quality, value for \$, spend time with family & friends, do something fun, learn something about a particular culture)
5. Can you describe a particularly memorable experience? What made it memorable?

6. Would you like to increase your participation in the arts? What factors prevent you from increasing your participation? (as visitor, volunteer, creator/art-maker) (probes: time, information, cost, not much of appeal)
7. How would you describe your interests in the visual arts – e.g., painting, prints, sculpture, ceramics, photography, multimedia, decorative arts – in terms of
 - a. time periods
 - b. artists
 - c. culture
 - d. media (or types of art works)
8. Where do you go or do to satisfy your interest in the visual arts?

YOUR FINAL THOUGHTS

1. If SAM wants to be perceived as Seattle's art museum, what does it need to do?

I'm now going to go back and see if the client has any additional questions.

Seattle Art Museum Non-Visitor Moderator Guide

Introduction (15 minutes)

Background

- Moderator introduces himself/herself, explains purpose of this discussion.

- [Explain:] A focus group is a group discussion where we can learn more about peoples' ideas and opinions (compared to a telephone or written survey).

- I have no stake in your answers. My job is to facilitate the discussion and make sure that everyone has an opportunity to express their thoughts.

- Mention facility, audio equipment (so I do not have to take notes), and observers.

- Housekeeping – Restrooms and refreshments.

- Mention ground rules.
- There are no right or wrong answers; we're interested in your opinions and ideas.
- One person speaks at a time. This will allow all of us to be heard by each other and by the recording equipment.
- It is important to tell *your* thoughts, not what you think others will think, or what you think others want to hear.
- Please turn name signs towards me

- Your ideas and opinions will be kept confidential.

- Any questions about the purpose of our focus group or the ground rules before we begin?

- Please have fun

Introductions

Let's begin by introducing ourselves. Please let me know:

- Your first names
- Where you live
- How many children aged 3-14 in your household

Lifestyle -15 min

I am interested in learning about how you spend your leisure time.

4. In what ways do you spend your leisure time?
5. When you are making a decision about what to do, what are the most important qualities or factors you are considering?
(entertainment, social, education, family, cost, transportation, length of time)
6. Do you go downtown? Why or why not?

Perception of SAM/SAAM: Non-Visitors 45-60 min

I would like to learn more about your perceptions of the Seattle Art Museum, which includes the museum downtown at First and University and the Seattle Asian Art Museum in Volunteer Park.

Have photos of the buildings on walls and newsletter available.

1. Tell me what you have heard about the two museums. Where did you learn this?
2. Have you every considered going? For those who have considered going, why didn't you go? For those who have never considered going, why is that?
3. When you look at the newsletter and pictures of the museums, what are your first impressions? Do the museums feel welcoming? If not, why. Any suggestions for how it could be made to feel more welcoming or inviting, or otherwise change this perception (e.g. compared to other things you like to do in the city – from Paul Neal report on focus groups with 18-35 year-olds, May 2000)?
4. What do you imagine it's like for visitors inside the museums? Why? What do you imagine it would be like for you if you visited the museum? Why?
5. Is there anything the museum could do to encourage you to come to the Museum? **(FIRST LET THEM RESPOND. THEN GO TO THE PROBES BELOW.)**
 - a. **(physical probes:** cost, time open, buildings, welcome, signage, discounters)
 - b. **(social probes:** family events, social events, evening activities)
 - c. **(cultural probes:** an event held by a group you belong to, exhibitions and programs related to your cultural group, information in your language)

If the Museum could do only one thing (other than reduce admission prices or have more free days) that would get you to visit the museum, what would that one thing be?

6. The Seattle Art Museum is very interested in encouraging more _____ to visit the museum. Do you have any suggestions that the Museum could consider to make this happen?

Probes: Programs in the neighborhood

Programs in partnership with community organizations

Special events for specific communities

Exhibitions

Collections

People of color on staff and as volunteers

Cultural programs

Reduce costs, promotion

Interest in the Arts-- 30 min

I am interested in learning more about the different ways in which you experience or participate in the arts or culture generally, and the visual arts specifically. (NOTE TO MODERATOR – REMEMBER TO ALWAYS BRING THEM BACK TO PARTICIPATION IN MUSEUMS.)

8. In what arts or cultural activities do you participate? [probes: attending arts events, planning arts activities, advising on committees, creating/ making art). And how about museums?
9. What is your primary motivation for choosing to participate in a specific activity?
10. Where do you typically get information? (probes: radio, posters, community newspapers/radio, word of mouth) Where do you look for information?
11. As a visitor or member of the audience, what are your expectations when you attend or participate in an arts event? (probes: service, quality, value for \$, spend time with family & friends, do something fun, learn something about a particular culture)
12. Can you describe a particularly memorable experience? What made it memorable?
13. Would you like to increase your participation in the arts? What factors prevent you from increasing your participation? (as visitor, volunteer, creator/art-maker) (probes: time, information, cost, not much of appeal)
14. How would you describe your interests in the visual arts – e.g., painting, prints, sculpture, ceramics, photography, multimedia, decorative arts – in terms of
- time periods
 - artists

- c. culture
 - d. media (or types of art works)
15. Where do you go or do to satisfy your interest in the visual arts?

Non- Visitors who express no interest in the visual arts

I would like to understand more about your response to the visual arts. What is it about the visual arts that don't appeal to you? (probes, relevance, familiarity, knowledge of content, family history, family interests, not sure where to go, don't like what art museums offer, etc.)

YOUR FINAL THOUGHTS

If SAM wants to be perceived as Seattle's art museum, what does it need to do?

Now I'm going to go back and see if the client has any additional questions.

Appendix C – Composition of Focus Groups

SEX AGE INCOME EDUCATION KIDS?

Asian Non-visitor

male	18-24	under 20K	some college	no
female	18-24	20-34K	some college	yes
female	18-24	20-34K	some college	yes
female	25-34	35-49k	BA	no
female	25-34	100-150K	MA	yes
female	25-34	50-74K	BA	no
male	25-34	50-74K	BA	no
female	35-44	35-49K	MA	no
male	35-54	75-99K	BA	no
male	45-54	50-74K	BA	no
female	65+	20-34	some high school	no

Asian Visitor

male	18-24	under 20K	some college	no
female	25-34	100-149K	MA	yes
female	25-34	75-99K	BA	no
female	25-34	75-99K	PHD	no
female	25-34	75-99K	MA, Pro	no
female	25-34	50-74K	BA	no
female	25-35	50-74K	BA	no
male	25-36	75-99K	BA	no
male	35-44	25-49K	BA	no
male	55-64	75-100k	ma	yes

African-American Visitor

female	18-34	20-34K	some college	no
female	18-34	50-74K	BA	no
male	18-34	200-250K	Prof.	no
male	25-34	20-34K	some college	yes
male	35-44	20-34K	some college	yes
female	35-54	50-74K	BA	no
female	35-54	100-149	Prof	yes
male	45-54	20-34K	some college	no
female	45-54	75-100	MA	no

Caucasian Non-visitor

male	25-34	25-34K	BA	no
female	25-34	under 20K	BA	no
male	25-34	35-49K	some college	no
male	25-34	75-99K	MA	no

female	35-44	25-34K	BA	yes
female	35-44	35-44K	some college	yes
female	35-54	50-74K	BA	yes
female	35-54	100-149K	BA	no
male	45-54	35-49K	BA	no

African-American Non-visitor

female	25-34	50-74	H.S.	no
male	25-34	75-99	Some college	yes
female	35-44	50-74K	BA	yes
female	45-54	50-74	A.A.	no
male	45-54	50-74K	some college	no
male	55-64	20-34K	MA	no
male	65+	35-49K	H.S.	no
female	65+	under 20K	H.S.	No

Hispanic Non-visitor

male	18-24	under 20K	some college	no
male	18-24	25-34K	some college	no
male	18-24	under 20K	H.S.	no
female	18-24	20-34K	BA	no
female	18-24	under 20K	some college	no
female	18-24	under 20K	some college	no
male	18-24	20-34	BA	no
male	25-34	35-49K	H.S.	no
male	25-34	75-100K	MA	no
female	25-34	35-49	BA	yes