Bilingual Initiative: Language Inclusivity at the Dallas Museum of Art

Melissa Brito
Manager of Access Programs and Resources
Access Programs and Resources at the DMA
Setting up for Success

• Establish a diverse group include representatives from all levels of departments.
• Establish a platform for addressing grievances and leveraging them as opportunities for growth.
• Aspire for ambitious goals, yet recognize the limitations beyond the group’s influence.
• Certain projects may require financial support to proceed.
• Securing buy-in from museum staff across various departments is crucial.
• Practice patience as changes unfold and initiatives progress.
Know Your City

• Find your city’s population report.
• Gather your baseline date on the general visitor experience.
• Present these findings to the group.
• Create Advisory Groups
• Find gaps within your current data.
Creating Action Items

- Organize workshops aimed at generating necessary action items.
- Establish categories to differentiate their impact, to facilitate a rating system for prioritization.
- Prioritize action items based on their significance and potential impact.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Family Friendly</th>
<th>Welcoming/Accessible</th>
<th>Increase Attendance</th>
<th>External Score</th>
<th>Psychological Safety</th>
<th>Responsible Department</th>
<th>Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More space around 3D works to view (agency); Family space (i.e. outdoor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Design &amp; Interpretation</td>
<td>Accessibility/Mobility/Seating</td>
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<td>space flow indoors, more in gallery space for groups to interact, allowing</td>
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<td>for more open space and seating in galleries (belonging); Design seating/</td>
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<td>place objects so people can look closely and walk around; Support a range</td>
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<td>of mobility needs: youth (strollers), grandparents (walkers/wheelchairs),</td>
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<td>light weight mobile seating in the galleries (family friendly)</td>
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<td>Seating (i.e. stool rack on every level, add benches, family friendly</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Design &amp; Interpretation</td>
<td>Accessibility/Mobility/Seating</td>
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<td>seating, and more social seating spaces) (belonging); Opportunities for</td>
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<td>rest throughout the museum (belonging); Create Re-charging stations</td>
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<td>(belonging); Creating family friendly spaces and facilities throughout</td>
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<td>the building (belonging)</td>
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<td>Better family friendly food options and price points (family friendly)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sodexo/Accounting</td>
<td>Amenities</td>
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<td>Marketing Placement (neighborhoods, media outlets, and placement of</td>
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<td>information in the museum) (belonging)</td>
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<td>Opportunities for community dialogue/input on exhibitions and programs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>MarComm</td>
<td>Bilingual Marketing Content</td>
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<td>(belonging); Consult community stakeholders regarding the display of</td>
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<td>works (i.e. Arts of the Americas Advisory Group).</td>
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<td>Feature the Latinx community; and nuance within Latinx community</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Multiple Departments</td>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
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<td>(belonging)</td>
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<td>Create institutional culture that is family-friendly and supports work/life</td>
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<td>balance for all (not just those with)</td>
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<td>Graphic on Facade-show families in the museum (family friendly); Family</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>MarComm</td>
<td>Inclusivity/Representation</td>
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<td>festival banner (family friendly)</td>
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<td>Test and images that welcomes/includes a broader range of people (agency)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Curatorial</td>
<td>Inclusivity/Representation</td>
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<td>Large print labels (agency)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MarComm</td>
<td>Interpretive Content</td>
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<td>Add a family membership (also define parameters for definition of family)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Membership Opportunities</td>
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<td>not all families look the same; recognize diversity within concepts of</td>
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<td>family, (family friendly)</td>
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<td>Safe spaces for inter-staff relations/addressing neg. visitor exchange</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Psychological Safety</td>
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<td>(belonging); Support, Conflict resolution training (focus on power</td>
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<td>dynamics); Clear workplace expectations for Staff Interaction (HR,</td>
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<td>Hotline, etc.; Process for reporting; Review Board Ethics Statement</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Recognition/Reckoning</td>
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<td>Self-definition as a museum; defining what we stand for</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Recognition/Reckoning</td>
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<td>(belonging) go beyond mission statement, are we making value driven</td>
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<td>decisions? All decisions should reflect core values, more transparent</td>
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<td>communication that is supported by core values.</td>
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<td>Welcome visitors in multiple languages; Welcoming building/space</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Design &amp; Interpretation</td>
<td>Welcoming/Creating Access</td>
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<td>Create access points via kids and parents (i.e. entry point via class</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Education/Programming</td>
<td>Welcoming/Creating Access</td>
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<td>visit then extend to students’ families) (family friendly)</td>
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Culture does not change because we desire to change it. Culture changes when the organization is transformed – the culture reflects the realities of people working together every day.” Frances Hesselbein

- Some initiatives have begun, and still in progress.
- Several projects were temporarily put on hold due to staff turnover. However, the arrival of new staff members has brought fresh ideas and perspectives into our initiatives.
- Numerous new processes have been integrated into our workflows.
- We’ve embarked on new projects that were beyond our imagination.

5 Year Impact
Thank you!
Using research and evaluation to integrate Spanish language in a museum setting

Presented by Dr. Eleanor Hill
Senior Evaluation Researcher
Denver Museum of Nature & Science
May 18th 2024
Access

Inclusion and belonging

The whole museum experience

Content creation as well as translation
1. Bilingual positions
   - Introduced in 2018
   - Staff in bilingual positions are paid a differential

2. Exhibits & programming
   - One fully bilingual permanent exhibit
   - Bilingual temporary exhibits
   - Spanish planetarium show
   - Día del Niño
   - Schools, fairs & festivals

3. Language Accessibility Committee
   - Established in 2022
   - Bilingual and non-bilingual staff
   - Representation from across the Museum
   - Focus on making the Museum accessible in Spanish
Thirty-six staff members were interviewed to learn:

- What translation services were needed across departments
- Positive experiences in the translation process
- Areas for improvement
1. Clear guidelines and processes
   “I don’t know that there's a clear process that's been given to us as far as what we need to have translated”

2. Generation of bilingual and bicultural content
   “It's not just about creating something in English and then translation ... [it’s] the process of imagining a program or an experience that will work for Spanish speakers, not just thinking about can we translate it.”

3. Complete guest experience
   “Can we look at different processes or experiences from beginning to end and all the components that are needed to make a consistent experience for a guest who's more comfortable with Spanish.”
Community needs assessment

316 respondents from English speaking households & 302 respondents from Spanish speaking households to a survey focused on:

- Do people want content in Spanish?
- Why do people want content in Spanish?
- How would people like to access Spanish content?
Half of respondents from Spanish speaking households are more likely or will only visit a museum if content is available in Spanish.
Why would you like to access museum content in Spanish? (n = 149)

The biggest reasons respondents from Spanish speaking households wanted museum content in Spanish are because they would **enjoy it** and it would make them **feel like they belong**.

- 65% would enjoy accessing museum content in Spanish.
- 48% would feel like they belong.
- 37% have Spanish as their primary language.
- 31% might visit museums with someone who speaks Spanish.
- 1% have other reasons.
Respondents from Spanish speaking households were most likely to say they would like to access Spanish content for permanent and temporary exhibits through a Spanish speaking staff member or volunteer guide, a Spanish booklet, and exhibit panels and labels in Spanish.

Please indicate for each of these how you think they should be made available in Spanish. Permanent and temporary exhibits (Select all that apply) (n = 289).
1. **Bilingual exhibit signage**
   - The goal
   - Takes time & resources

2. **Spanish guides**
   - A “secondary mechanism” while we work towards the goal
   - Written, audio, QR codes, paper
   - Could be applied to other languages

3. **Noches en Español**
   - Test Spanish guides
   - Test Spanish movie
   - Test additional staff & volunteers on the floor
   - Test staffing model
Contact:
Eleanor.hill@dmns.org

Resources:
A Layered Presence
Artist-Forward & Bilingual Interpretation

Kerry Butcher, Interpretation Associate
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

AAM Conference
May 2024
Kansas City, Kansas
8% of residents

Spanish as a First Language in Kansas City

Kansas City, Missouri
3% of residents
22 local artists

Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay

Multigenerational Variety of artistic backgrounds
I don’t want my voice to be lost in the translation process

Has the museum translated content into Spanish before?

While I can speak Spanish, I’m not as skilled or comfortable in writing or reading it

Finding a translator

Identify project goals with translator

English editing and review with artists

Spanish translation & editing review

Artists review and finalize text
Ghosts, memories, and imaginary homelands, 2023
Video (3 minutes and 50 seconds)
Courtesy of the artist

“Ghosts, memories, and imaginary homelands is a melancholy introspection of specific moments of my immigrant story. There are ghosts in past moments—ghosts of ourselves left in our absence, our memories, our past homes—ghosts are born from decision, and in the immigrant experience, these ghosts become personified. This work uses these themes through the act of visual bricolaje (do-it-yourself) to present memories of homes, drawings, audio, and family photos as I attempt to find closure in my fragmented past.”

Fantasmas, memorias y patrias imaginarias es una introspección melancólica de momentos específicos en mi historia de inmigrante. Hay fantasmas en momentos pasados—fantasmas de uno mismo dejados en nuestra ausencia, nuestras memorias, nuestros hogares pasados—los fantasmas nacen de una decisión, y en la experiencia del inmigrante, estos fantasmas se personifican. Esta obra utiliza estos temas mediante un bricolaje para presentar memorias de hogares, dibujos, audio y fotos de familiares, mientras trato de pasar la página de mi pasado fragmentado.”

KIKI SERNA
Mexican American, born 1993

Hueco, 2023
Fresco painting on NFL Raiders cap, plaster and soil on Nike Cortez, ink on canvas, Cheetos Flamin’ Hots packaging, hairnets, mirrors, mylar, silk and wax flowers, candles, and broken glass
Courtesy of the artist

“Un hueco. An arched doorway of my childhood home with mint-colored walls as my canvas.

Outside, a guerra, chollillos y gris. This side versus that side. ‘Fallecieron.’ Sometimes it was just a random tragedy, pero siempre someone’s son... Estos huecos, staining. Anointed with ‘hot chips’ residue. ¿Qué ves? At 27th and Bellevue, peering into something distant. A block that was once hot. Someone’s hijo died there.

Y yo, aquí. Recalling where we call home, in search of flores to fill our pain.”

Rodolfo Marrón III
Chicano, Mexican American, born 1989

Hear how Marrón’s work recalls memories of his family home.

“Un hueco. Una entrada arqueada de mi hogar de infancia de paredes color menta como mi lienzo. Afuera, una guerra, chollillos y gris. Este bando contra ese bando. ‘Fallecieron.’ A veces era solamente una tragedia al azar, pero siempre el hijo de alguien...

Estos huecos, manchando, Ungido con residuo de ‘hot chips.’ ¿Qué ves? En la 27th y Bellevue, mirando algo lejano. Una cuadra que alguna vez estuvo caliente. El hijo de alguien murió ahí abajo.

Y yo aquí. Haciendo memoria de lo que llamamos casa, en búsqueda de flores para llenar nuestro dolor.”

Serna reflects on the complexities of her immigrant experience.
Deeper Engagement

Artist interviews (Smartify)

Opening celebration & closing reception

Programming opportunities
"It made me think of how others see the world we all live in"

"It really caused me to pause, contemplate, and think"

"Made a connection to some of the pieces and gained perspectives on others"
• Move at the speed of trust
• Embrace unknowns
• No one size fits all approach
• Document your process
kbutcher@nelson-atkins.org
www.nelson-atkins.org
Museo de las Americas

Presenters:
Julietta Dasilva, Community Engagement Manager
Sean Truijillo, Programs & Interpretation Manager

We are a community driven museum cultivating belonging and inclusion through the Spanish language.
Celebrating Art & Culture

Museo was founded to represent all the Americas

* Mission & Vision
  * Serve the community

* Core pillar:
  Incorporation of Spanish language
Our Social & Cultural Responsibility

- Embracing Diversity
- Building Bridges
- Fostering Community
What We Will Talk About

- Adults + Spanish Conversation Club
- Youth + Summer Camp
Did you know....

As of 2020, Hispanics and Latinos of any race made up 21% of Colorado’s population

11% of Hispanics and Latinos in Colorado speak Spanish

Member Feedback Survey

need: a space to practice Spanish con comunidad
Spanish Conversation Club

A welcoming space to practice Spanish, celebrate culture, and connect with community.

🌟 Building Community
We meet bi-monthly and our meet-ups constantly reach maximum capacity

🌟 Program set up:
- Monthly theme
- Ice Breaker Question - Spanish Level discussed here!
- Break out into small groups for a structured activity that helps different language skills
The majority of Colorado’s Hispanic and Latino population is under 18 (~35%)

Nearly 40,000 migrants, mostly from Venezuela, have arrived in Denver over the past year

We make special programs to help these kids and their families feel welcome as neighbors
Some statistics:

- 90% of our students go to dual-language immersion schools
- 7 out of 8 of our Creative Workshop Maestras (Educators) are bilingual
- Half of our booked workshops are Bilingual
- 70% of our students are Bilingual/Spanish-Speaking
- 3 of 4 of our Summer Camp Maestras (Educators) are teaching bilingual classes
Youth Education Programs

Cultural Workshops & Tours
Hands-on, Immersive Learning Experiences
4,000 students served annually (K-12)

Lxs Jovenes Leadership Lab
Empowering Youth Through Art and Technology
3 - 15 student cohorts annually (11-15 yr)

Summer Arts & Culture Camp
Multidisciplinary Integrated Arts Experience
up to 65 students every summer (4-11 yr)
15 years of Summer Camp

• multidisciplinary programing (visual art, theater, dance, music) since 2009

• every year we focus programming on a particular country in latin america
Thank you for listening! Reach out for any questions.

WEBSITE
museo.org

SOCIAL MEDIA
@museodenver