

CrossRef DOI of original article:

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Language: English

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Received: 1 January 1970 Accepted: 1 January 1970 Published: 1 January 1970

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## 5 Abstract

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7 **Index terms—**

8 After many years of discussions, the qualifiers "accessible," "inclusive," and "diversity" were added to the  
9 definition bringing light to changes (and challenges) in the social role of museums. After approximately 50  
10 minutes of presentation by the panelists, the audience was invited to ask questions and share experiences. Faced  
11 with the emerging issue of accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities, we asked the following questions:  
12 "When you talk about inclusion and diversity, are you also thinking about people with disabilities and how  
13 your programs target these audiences?" Regarding this first question, the professional who works for SMG  
14 answered that "inclusion means everyone," suggesting that they consider people with disabilities in the science  
15 capital framework. She informed to the audience that the SMG has a staff member that is head of access and  
16 inclusion, responsible for mitigating barriers that people have to engage at any level, not only for disability but  
17 also emotional or intellectual. The Danish professional commented that, in his institution, still there's no staff  
18 responsible for addressing specifically the theme of inclusionan issue that needs to be transformed by changing  
19 the organization's mindset. Lastly, addressing the Canadian context, the professional refers to the Accessibility  
20 Act of Canada and states that her museum compels it, promoting different accessibility practices. Still, even  
21 before the Act, they already worked with an inclusion, diversity, and accessibility framework.

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## 1 II. SCIENCE CAPITAL AND SCIENCE MUSEUMS -THE 23 SESSION

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Specifically for the professor developing the "Science Capital" concept, we also asked: "How does the equity  
25 compass address people with disabilities? Do you know any other research (apart from Heck's 1 ) that addresses  
26 people with disabilities, equity compass, and science capital?" She explained that the Equity Compass was  
27 developed to be used across any form of intersectional injustice. It means it can be used in a disability context  
28 or perspective, as well as gender or race. She considered that it might be helpful to work on specific case studies  
29 about particular areas -in special people with disabilities, given that intersectionality is very complex, involves  
30 different societal issues, and people can forget some of them. She concluded by saying she currently leads a  
31 project called "Making Spaces" 2 , funded by Lloyd's Register Foundation. One of the project's partners is an  
32 adaptive designer based in New York who works with people with disabilities. So, she hopes the group will have  
33 more exciting case studies in the future. Finally, she did not mention or refer to any other research that has  
34 applied the Equity Compass to this particular area.

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Science Capital and Science Museums: Review of a CIMUSET Session in the General Conference of ICOM  
36 2022

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## 2 III.

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DISCUSSION AND CHALLENGES Following up on the panelists' answers, a practitioner from the audience  
39 -who works in a science center in Pakistan -commented that her institution had undergone an audition process  
40 highlighting the importance of being more accessible. She clarified that apart from complying with local policies,  
41 they also aim to be broad their inclusive practices; however, it has been challenging for them for many reasons,  
42 such as institutional change and professional training and expertise.,

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Through this productive discussion, we could perceive that the challenge was not only in the Pakistani case.  
44 With the insights from the panelists and other people from different parts of the globe that were in the audience, it  
45 became evident that accessibility, inclusion, and diversity incorporated in the new definition of museums are still

46 a process under development in practice and theory. From our point of view, the CIMUSET session demonstrates  
47 that institutions recognize the theme's relevance, and some try to combine it with the ideas of "science capital"  
48 and "equity compass." However, when questions and discussion came, the responses predominantly focused on  
49 theory and the need for an organizational change-as Reich (2014) had already stated in her Ph.D. thesis. There  
50 is little concrete evidence of practice -especially regarding including people with disabilities.

51 Either incentivized and based on literature or demanded by international conventions and national laws and  
52 policies, these science museums are still crawling towards more practical and concrete actions towards the new  
53 museum's qualifiers. The CIMUSET section was undoubtedly a success and served as a strong and promising  
54 starting point. While it brought to light weaknesses and sensitive topics to discussion, there are lessons to be  
55 learned, opportunities to be explored, and an entire field of practice and research to be further explored and  
56 developed in the coming years.

57 The 2022 CIMUSET session during the ICOM conference demonstrated that the issue of accessibility can  
58 be further explored, with an interest in investigating and improving practical actions to make museums more  
59 accessible and inclusive to everyone. In this perspective, it is essential to mention that this topic is becoming  
60 increasingly relevant, to the point where it will be the focus of the next CIMUSET Conference taking place in  
61 2023 in South Korea, titled "Enhancing Accessibility to Museums." The upcoming meeting will provide a valuable  
62 opportunity to further advance in this area, share experiences, discuss challenges, and promote the development  
63 of guidelines and best practices.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://m4kingspaces.org/about/> 1 See Heck[2022]

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## ABSTRACT

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TION

What are the potentials and challenges for science museums to promote equity and justice

from a science capital perspective? That was the

theme of one of the CIMUSET sessions during the

ICOM Conference in 2022. This review presents

highlights from the panelists' presentations and

the  
demonstrates

discussion

afterward. The session  
that museums recognize

accessibility, inclusion, and diversity as relevant

and urgent themes to be addressed. However,

there is little concrete evidence of practice -

especially regarding including people with

disabilities. At the same time, the discussion

highlighted weaknesses and sensitive topics,

lessons learned, opportunities to be explored,

and a field of practice and research to be

deepened and broadened.



64 .1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

65 Jessica Norberto Rocha thanks National Council for Scientific and Technological (CNPq) for the Productivity  
66 Grant in Science Communication field and the Carlos Chagas Filho Foundation for Research Support of the  
67 State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ) for the grant Young Scientist of Our State. Gabriela Heck acknowledges  
68 the financial support provided by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel -Brazil  
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