

Back to Basics:

Revisiting the Essentials of Visitor Studies and Evaluation

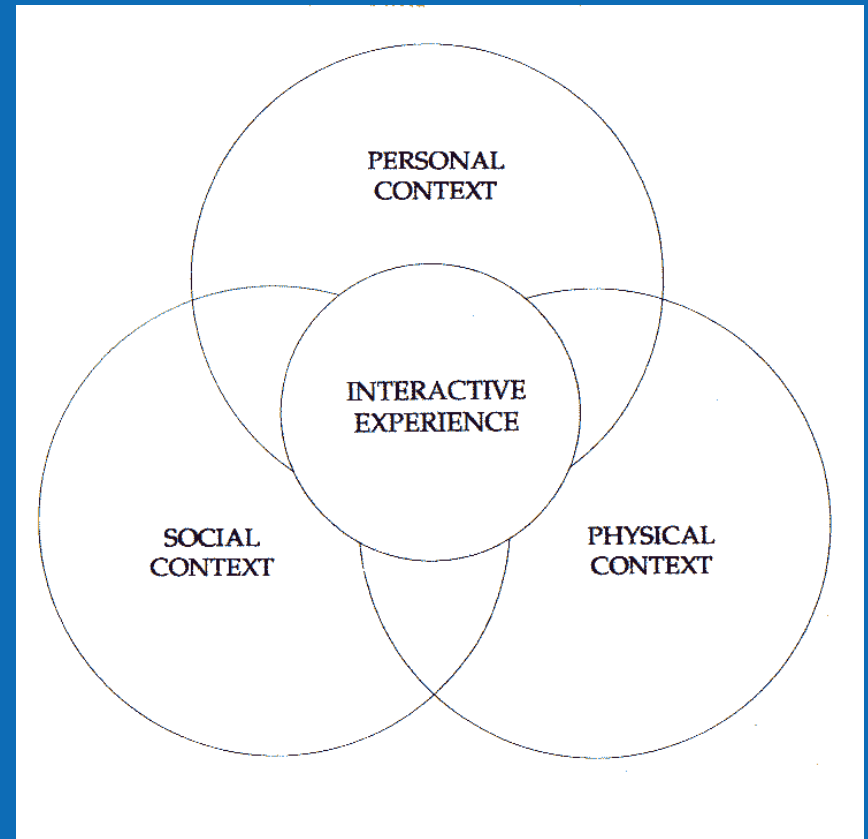
Jenni Fuchs, Visitor Studies Group Chair
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Introduction to evaluation stages

Visitor Experiences

- Individual experiences based on individual physical, social & personal contexts
- Need to understand contexts in order to create rewarding experiences for visitors



Benefits of Visitor Studies

Internal Benefits

- Exhibitions
- Learning & Programmes
- Marketing
- Visitor Services

External Benefits

When to Evaluate?

Evaluation can provide you with information at three different stages of a project:

- Before
- During
- After

Before (Front-end Evaluation)

→ Where do we want to be?

- **WHEN?**

Typically occurs during the initial planning phase of a project development.

- **WHAT?**

Provides information about visitors' interest, expectations, attitudes, state of knowledge & understanding of proposed topics, in relation to a project.

During (Formative Evaluation)

➔ Are we getting there?

- **WHEN?**

Takes place while a project is being developed.

- **WHAT?**

Provides feedback about the effectiveness of a project and its components – feedback which allows project developers to make informed decisions as they continue to develop the project.

After (Summative Evaluation)

→ How well did we succeed?

- **WHEN?**

Conducted after a project is completed.

- **WHAT?**

Seeks to determine the extent to which project goals were met.



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