

Goals

- Create “data-catcher” exhibits that provide exciting learning experiences about cooperation while allowing visitors to contribute to research in social science.
- Build public awareness of the methods of social science.
- Generate valid data for academic research.
- Assess the impact of PPSR on visitors' interest, engagement, and understanding.

Fostering Public Participation in Science Research Inside Museums

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Strategies we've found effective for...

Motivating visitors to contribute their data to research

- Allow them to compare themselves to others
- Invite them to contribute to real science

Engaging visitors about their own responses

- Provide data visualizations comparing their responses to everyone else's
- Offer tools for them to analyze data from all groups based on demographic variables

Ensuring that visitors reach the debriefing station

- Environmental design that encourages a sequence
- Clear language in labels such as Start Here and Wrap Up here



This project has been approved by an IRB (Institutional Review Board) and by a panel of NSF reviewers.

Practitioner impact

- Create back-end protocols for “data-catcher” exhibits that provide exciting learning experiences while allowing visitors to contribute to academic research.
- Provide academic researchers with valid data from diverse participants.
- Establish methods for inviting and debriefing visitors who provide their data.

Contribution to theory

- Develop and test a new model for Public Participation in Scientific Research.
- Measure the effects of PPSR on engagement, interest, and understanding.

Exhibit-based PPSR model

