

# Foresight Research Report: **Museum Professionalization and Mentorship**



## Document Overview

The following research report is designed to provide an overview of key strategic issues relevant to the future of California communities and museums. We hope that this report will be of interest to California museum professionals working to improve service to their community and to plan for the future.

From the Spring of 2012 to the Summer of 2013, a team of museum professionals participating in the California Association of Museum's *Leaders of the Future: Museum Professionals Developing Strategic Foresight* training project conducted their own secondary (*desktop*) research on current conditions, trends, and plans for a *baseline forecast* that postulates the most expected future. The authors of this report include:

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This report is the first phase in the development of a baseline forecast and is intended to define the idea of "Museum Professionalization and Mentorship," explore emerging trends and possible futures, and create a framework upon which a baseline forecast could be presented. Major sections include:

- **Domain Definition:** Describes the main elements of this subject matter
- **Current Assessment:** Describes a current snapshot of the domain highlighting key stakeholders, timelines, and issues within society and museums
- **Trends/Projections:** Describes observable trends (changes over time) along with their direction and momentum
- **Plans:** Outlines stated and potential plans by leading stakeholders and outliers
- **Baseline Forecast:** Combines elements to reveal the most likely future(s) for this domain across different time horizons: 2015, 2020 and 2030

Note:

Document includes embedded bracketed [hyperlinks] for sources.

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the James Irvine foundation

The *Museum Professionalization and Mentorship* domain refers to the study of work processes—inside and outside the museum field—to explore their implications for the future of museum work.

### **Strategic Objectives: Museum Professionalization and Mentorship**

- ✓ Ensuring California museums remain relevant as institutions that maintain high professional standards, provide innovative learning opportunities, and encourage work-life balance, while serving as model workplaces that equally value staff and visitors.
- ✓ Providing context and resource materials for awareness, education, and professional training opportunities so that museum professionals can become better leaders, workers and teachers in their field and in their communities.

### **Introduction: Museum Professionalization and Mentorship**

California’s role as a center for innovation—intellectually, culturally, technologically—has profound implications for *how* museums do their work for the public. This domain group analyzed current and future trends focused on work process—inside and outside the museum field—to explore their implications for the future of museum work. Key elements of this domain report include:

- ✓ Demographics
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Flexible work and work-life balance
- ✓ Management and organizational structure
- ✓ Workplace design
- ✓ Reward
- ✓ Creativity

This report focuses on professionally trained, paid museum staff. While we acknowledge the importance of volunteers in museums and their many contributions, we will not address issues of volunteer support and management since that is a separate topic.

### **Snapshot & Current Assessment**

#### **Demographics**

While providing programming that is focused on an increasingly diverse community, behind the scenes, museum staff is primarily European American and female (currently, only 20% of museum employees are in “minority” groups). Those entering museum studies programs reflect these demographics, at 80% white, 80% female [[Source](#)]. In order to fully represent and reflect the diversity within the state, museums will have to hire more employees from “minority” groups, as well as provide more opportunities for “minority” professionals to enter the field, so visitors will see themselves represented among museum staff.

Gender demographics also impact the current working environment in California museums. While museums have traditionally been the domain of women professionals, we are now seeing the rise of women in other industries through the nation. Women now fill a majority of jobs in the U.S. including 51.4% of managerial and professional positions. Women under 30 years of age now make 8% more money, on average, than their male counterparts, and in all but three of the largest cities in the U.S. 60% of master's degrees are being granted to women [\[Source\]](#). Young women ages 18-34 also value a high paying career more than young men [\[Source\]](#), which could have implications for our field.

Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964, according to Pew) are continuing to work much longer than did their older counterparts. Some studies predict that 80% of Boomers want to work after the traditional retirement age of 65. The generation's strong work ethic that often translates into working long hours and supporting hierarchical management styles is at odds with the attitudes of many younger workers. However, these employees possess a strong knowledge base that companies and organizations want to retain; so many new options are developing for older workers ranging from part-time employment, consulting work, to volunteer positions of authority [\[Source\]](#). The median age for museum workers is 40 [\[Source\]](#).

Millennial workers (those born between 1980 and 2000, according to Pew) often exhibit the following characteristics: they don't define themselves by their work, they prefer flexibility in where and when they work, it is important to them that employers respect their work and don't micro-manage, and they want to work for companies or organizations that exhibit civic responsibility [\[Source\]](#).

Workers of the Gen-X generation (those born between 1965 and 1980, according to Pew) are stuck in the middle of the two largest generations in history. This "sandwich" effect can create a great deal of frustration for Gen-Xers, since the Boomer generation isn't leaving the work force in the same timeframe as prior generations, but the younger Millennials are already wanting to be hired and recognized. In addition, Gen-Xers find themselves in the middle of the tech revolution. They are not as enthusiastic about traditional forms of communication, such as books and newspapers, as Boomers (the American Library Association states they "don't read as much"), but oftentimes also cannot keep pace with the tech-savvy Millennials who have grown up in a world of social media. However, Gen-Xers may be the best at bridging the workplace gap between the Boomers and Millennials since they can understand the Boomers' frustration with Millennials' dependence on technology, but also understand Millennials' dislike of Boomers' workaholic tendencies [\[Source\]](#).

## **Technology**

As an epicenter of technology innovation, California is often first to feel the implications of technology in the workforce. As advances in technology increase, our reliance upon it expands. Technology provides opportunities for enhancing our productivity and efficiency. Meetings between employees on different schedules and/or in different locations are easily managed with tools such as [Skype](#) and [Go To Meeting](#). These tools make telecommuting fairly easy and allow for face-to-face interactions between employees in different locations.

Also within hiring practices, technology has played a big role. More and more companies, including museums, use Skype for first-round interviewing. It cuts down costs and is efficient for the hiring agency and the interviewee. Another company offering online screening and interviews is [HireArt](#).

In addition, technology, in particular the Internet, has provided opportunities and challenges for the contemporary California workplace. Current social networking tools provide new platforms for institutional collaboration in museums, for example the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History is using [Pinterest](#) as a tool to brainstorm among staff, volunteers and interns, who oftentimes work on different schedules or even in different locations. It has made communication easier and at the same time can serve as a tool to document the process of museum work and creativity [[Source](#)].

### **Flexible Work and Work-Life Balance**

Contemporary professionals value flexibility in schedules and work structure. Particularly here in California, where technology companies such as Google and 3M encourage their employees to take time off to explore new projects our employees expect their employers to adapt to their interest in flexible schedules and structure [[Source](#)]. Committed to attracting and retaining strong team members, many employers have reacted positively to new work models. Currently around 40% of employers offer telecommuting, while 38% of nonprofits offer job-sharing.

Family commitments also provide a catalyst for flexible work plans. One study indicated that a majority of mothers (62%) prefer to work part-time [[Source](#)]. And the increased need for adults to serve as caregivers for both children and aging parents puts additional strain on workers.

There is a current backlash to this flexible model, however, as demonstrated by [Yahoo](#) and [Best Buy's](#) termination of work from home programs (see page 9 for more details).

Work-life balance continues to be a challenge for many museum employees, as museums are still way behind their for-profit counterparts. Some museums, such as the [Smithsonian](#), have identified their commitment to work/life balance in their position descriptions.

Most nonprofits usually suffer from a shortage of staff positions to do the work required, which oftentimes results in burnout and does not promote work-life balance [[Source](#)]. In many cases in nonprofits, 'doing something good in the community' is seen as a non-material reward or benefit, which is supposed to add meaning to the lack of adequate financial compensation. This results in high turnover and in the fact that many younger museum professionals are leaving the museum field behind for good [[Source](#)].

While a small number of museums have adopted telecommuting and flexible work schedules, which can provide a benefit that does not directly impact staffing costs, we have yet to identify one that offers creative time off.

### **General Management and Organizational Structure**

Contemporary management theory has percolated down to many museums. Traditional hierarchical, top-down management structures have given way to shared-leadership models in some larger and mid-size museums, and resulted in team-based approaches to exhibition development and other programming. The paradigm of a charismatic leader—a longstanding leadership model—has been eroded through the research of [Jim Collins](#) in *Good to Great*, and the diva persona is no longer accepted in most institutions [[Source](#)]. At most small-sized museums with a less steep, hierarchical structure, a team-based approach has been used for a while. Given the number of staff, employees at smaller institutions, including executive directors, have always had to wear multiple hats and approach projects in teams.

Transparency is increasingly recognized as a powerful management tool and institutional asset by for-profit companies [\[Source\]](#). Some museums have followed, creating new tools, such as the dashboard at the [Indianapolis Museum of Art](#), to foster institutional transparency and create stronger accountability. At the same time, it can lead to better-informed employees who feel like they are a part of a bigger whole.

As an extension of this move away from more traditional hierarchical structures, some museums are abandoning standard organizational models in favor of flatter and more organic arrangements. Most notably, the [Oakland Museum of California](#) has adopted an untraditional, team based approach. A disadvantage of such a model may be confusion for those workers (such as possible Boomers) who are used to a more hierarchical model.

Within training and development, more time is spent on understanding soft skills, such as empathy and compassion, as can be seen by this class on "Inspiring Leadership Through Emotional Intelligence" offered through [Coursera](#). Workers may be increasingly valued for their human, unique value soft skills, such as [21st century skills](#), [instilling trust](#), and [emotional intelligence](#).

Museums are starting to understand the relevance of these skills, as professional development providers such as the [Getty Museum Leadership Institute](#) are taking notice and integrating this type of skill development in their trainings.

As California workers become increasingly [multigenerational](#) and ethnically diverse, whole areas of management training, development, and literature have been focused on multicultural and multigenerational training and sensitivity [\[Source\]](#). As was mentioned earlier, museums still have a long way to go in representing the diversity of California among their staff.

Museum front-line customer service workers, frequently the lowest paid and with the least seniority within most organizations, are increasingly viewed as essential to museums' success. With a new rise in visitor services, customer service staff members are being recognized for their ability to shape a customer's experience. In order to attract and engage these employees, more companies and museums are empowering these front line staff [\[Source\]](#).

## **Workspace Design**

In the corporate world, businesses are acknowledging the importance of the physical environment on workplace productivity and creative production [\[Source\]](#). As technology frees people from their desks, companies are allocating less space to traditional offices and reconfiguring how they use their office space to promote collaboration and creativity. Some companies are even releasing corporate office space for other uses, such as gyms, theaters and classrooms, as business life and personal life merge more frequently for workers [\[Source\]](#).

Traditionally, museums reserve their most attractive spaces for the public, using them as galleries, classrooms, cafes, shops and facility rental spaces. As a result, most museum workers are relegated to basements, former closets, and utility spaces in older buildings. In newer museum buildings, in which offices have been specifically designed, they often follow a traditional corporate model, with senior staff at the periphery with windowed offices and junior staff in cubicles in the middle.

## **Reward**

Reward and compensation continue to provide challenges and opportunities for California museums. Museums have leveraged individuals' [interest in purpose](#), which continues to be a strong motivator for employees to attract and retain staff. While museums, like other nonprofits, strive toward sustainability, and adopt business-minded approaches and strategy, their compensation is still based upon a charity model [\[Source\]](#).

More important than monetary compensation, work-life balance remains a critical motivator in selecting an employment opportunity. Work-life balance is still viewed to be the most important factor in determining what makes a "good" job [\[Source\]](#).

### **Creativity**

In an age in which 21st century skills are increasingly prized, employers understand the benefits of [creativity](#) and how fostering it can lead to innovation [\[Source\]](#).

Museums are just beginning to think about including creativity as a value in the profession. It is somewhat ironic that while we spend much thought about providing [creative experience](#) for our audiences, we do not make the investment and allow museum staff creative time during their workday. However, even Google who used to give their employees 20% of their work time to explore personal projects has now axed this policy [\[Source\]](#). It will be interesting to see whether other companies will follow suit.

### **Professional Training Programs**

Over the last few decades, we have seen a rise of professional training programs in museum studies. The number of these programs nationwide (the Smithsonian's [list of training programs](#) indicates that more than 90 universities throughout the United States offer at least one type of museum professional training program) suggests the burgeoning appeal of the field. In the San Francisco Bay Area, there are now three museum studies graduate programs (at San Francisco State University, John F. Kennedy University, and now the University of San Francisco). These developments have caused many in the field to question whether there is enough employment for this expanding graduate pool.

More recently, these programs have also been the subject of criticism in the field. Some criticism has been focused on how these programs help perpetuate the lack of demographic diversity in the field [\[Source\]](#). Other criticism has been focused on how these programs can exacerbate the lack of intellectual diversity in the field, question the tangible skills the programs offer, and showcase the less than dependable nature of a credential in landing a professional position [\[Source\]](#).

Another problem of these graduate programs (and not just museum studies but almost all programs) is the lack of training in human resource (HR) management. It is assumed that people will automatically know how to get along with each other, what to do when an issue arises, or how to be a good supervisor. This can especially be a problem in smaller museums without an HR department or a staff person specifically assigned to be the HR manager. Oftentimes, HR duties are reduced to doing pay roll and health benefits without paying much attention to reward and motivation for employees.

### **Mentorship**

The museum field is beginning to acknowledge the importance of professional mentorship in order to help support a new generation of professionals and to encourage succession planning. Through workshops and sessions at professional conferences and through publications, such as *Mentoring*



*Matters* by Wendy Luke and Amanda Kodek in the March/April 2008 issue of *Museum* and the very thorough master's project [Please Pass the Knowledge](#) by Virginia Isble, museums are beginning to understand the importance of mentorship in the profession. As Isble's thesis outlines, mentorship frequently takes place informally at museums and structured opportunities for mentorship in the museum field are not currently prevalent. While there have been a few structured programs, like the one offered by the [American Association for State and Local History](#), they are not actively subscribed to by museum professionals. The Museum Studies program at San Francisco State University recently launched a special interest group whose focus is mentoring among other things [\[Source\]](#).

Benefits of mentoring, explored in publications in the field, include: assisting with succession planning; strengthening the field in general; providing personal and professional benefit to mentor and mentee; diversifying the field; and bolstering institutional culture. Forces that can provide hindrances to mentorship include: lack of time; younger professionals seeking feedback from their own peer group; and concerns that mentors may feel that mentees are interested in usurping their position.

Museum consultant Linda Norris recently created her own opportunity for a structured mentorship opportunity, soliciting applications on her [blog](#). She received more than 2,000 hits to the blog post and more than three-dozen strong applications. Museum professionals interested in engaging in mentorship may similarly respond to the lack of structured mentorship opportunities in the field by creating their own opportunities.

Contemporary managers have a broad range of techniques from which to draw inspiration and best practices. In addition to mentorship, coaching continues to be viewed as a viable model for management [\[Source\]](#).

## Trends & Projections

### Demographics

The future of age demographics holds major implications for employers in California, including museums. [Millennials](#) entering the workforce have demonstrated motivations and working styles that are markedly different from Boomers or [Generation X](#), as mentioned above.

Responding to these different motivations will change the way our museums are managed. Workers will also be living and working longer and this will drive the workplace landscape for museums and other professions [\[Source\]](#). Implications for some of these shifts will be felt in the near future (see Forecasts for 2015, 2020, 2025).

### Technology

Technology has become integrated in every aspect of our work, and shifts and developments in technology will continue to change the way we collaborate with other professionals [\[Source\]](#). In some extreme cases, technology will increasingly replace workplace tasks, and roles or responsibilities previously conducted by human employees [\[Source\]](#). As a result, greater emphasis will be placed on [soft skill training](#), development.

Explorations into micro-credential platforms such as [badges](#) (a standard reward for achievement in online education), [gaming](#), and other incentive programs have applications for [motivating employees](#).



The Center for the Future of Museums, a project of the American Alliance of Museums recently launched a [pilot badging program](#) for museum professionals.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) also indicate trends for lifelong learning for professionals from all fields [\[Source\]](#). But quality of instruction, engagement between instructor and students, and student assessment will need to be developed and standardized in some manner to demonstrate professional achievement in both badging and MOOCs [\[Source\]](#).

### **Flexible Work and Work-Life Balance**

Some flexible-minded individuals have taken advantage of this new environment (what Daniel Pink calls “free agent nation”) to become super-temps, temporary workers with highly sought after skills and experience, who provide as-needed staffing [\[Source\]](#). It appears that this will be a growing trend in museum work as institutions are less likely to hire full-time staff and will bring on contract workers on a project-by-project basis.

An alternate projection could be found in the recent action taken by Yahoo CEO and President Melissa Mayer to request that Yahoo telecommuting employees come in to work regularly [\[Source\]](#). Mayer stressed the importance of face-time and in-person collaboration for innovation and success. While her action has provoked intense criticism and some support, writer Geoffrey Moore suggest that this decision represented an early and decisive action taken to re-energize and initiate turnaround for a sluggish company [\[Source\]](#).

If successful, this could be a tactic used by other leaders to transform other organizations, including perhaps museums. Several [blog posts](#) address what issues nonprofit organizations need to look out for when considering telecommuting arrangements. [Blue Avocado](#), provides assessment tools for nonprofits to consider telecommuting and flexible work situations. The [Alliance for Nonprofit Excellence](#) also provides a list of ten issues to consider in telecommuting and flextime.

### **General Management and Organizational Structure**

Outsourcing has been a trend in institutions and companies during the economic downturn. But over the past several years, a form of outsourcing that promotes empowerment has emerged, as individuals are utilizing online services to outsource personal and professional projects [\[Source\]](#). While this has yet to impact museums, it is likely to hold implications for museum operations in the future. For overextended museum workers, online services like [task rabbit](#) could provide some relief and provide opportunities for delegation (even when one might not have a staff). The museum community could create more networked opportunities for consultants and institutions—online sites or communities to provide markets for skilled contract services.

Acceptance of failure has also recently emerged as a strategy for employers and managers. Risk taking is universally understood as an essential step toward innovation. Taking risks inevitable produces failures, but can also generate successes [\[Source\]](#). Creating the space within an organization—or a life—for failure can lead people to explore new ideas, new directions and goals of which they were previously petrified, because of the possibility of failure [\[Source\]](#). As museums explore beta testing exhibitions and educational programs, prototyping them and exposing them to the public, we can endeavor ourselves to the community as the idiosyncratic and flawed is increasingly recognized as valuable [\[Source\]](#).

Game theory also is emerging as a potential model for employee motivation and development, as is touched on in the above section on technology. As gamification (*the use of game mechanics, feedback loops, and rewards to spur interaction and boost engagement, loyalty, fun and/or learning*) moves increasingly into our daily lives, it also can provide tools for managers [\[Source\]](#). It is also being used for the hiring process [\[Source\]](#). The [Institute for the Future](#) utilizes gaming in its work on a variety of topics, such as health care, energy and earthquakes. This model could be used for professional problem solving for museum workers.

## **Workspace Design**

In the business and creative sectors, employers increasingly understand the role that workplace design plays in promoting innovation and collaboration. Flexible, open studio office environments (traditional in creative companies) are now being implemented in a broad range of other fields. Workers in traditional office environments understand that collaboration is integral to their success, but they often waste time trying to identify places where they can meet with other staff. The “I” spaces of traditional work environments no longer support the “we” spaces that contemporary work demands [\[Source\]](#).

Design think tanks, such as the Stanford Design School and [IDEO](#), offer best practice models for contemporary, collaboration-friendly workspaces [\[Source\]](#). IDEO in Palo Alto, for example, has no permanent workspaces for their employees. Instead, all workspaces are temporary, allowing project teams to more successfully work in close proximity to each other for the duration of their project. Along with promoting creativity, these new designs promote teamwork and collaboration [\[Source\]](#). New workspace design also holds implications for urban planning, as employees demand offices to be located in vital spaces with local businesses [\[Source\]](#).

## **Reward**

In the San Francisco Bay Area, employers such as Google and Microsoft provide their employees with a wide range of perks, from chartered transportation to high-end cafeterias, to dry cleaning and child care services, perks that museums will increasingly be unable to ignore [\[Source\]](#) in an increasingly competitive landscape.

The [Field Museum](#) in Chicago has made an effort to increase employee wellness benefits in order to better retain their employees and decrease turnover. However, as a large museum with an HR department they are probably a frontrunner within the field. This is especially an issue for employees working in smaller museums, which cannot afford to set up a gym inside their often small spaces. Other rewards have to be thought of, such as better policies on compensatory time and working shorter hours on Fridays, for example.

Mentorship, coaching, and professional development training are not only offered as a reward for employees’ service, but are viewed as vital to businesses in a continually changing environment. Mentorship is also transforming and making more use of social media in its application [\[Source\]](#). [Big Think](#) has developed an online “mentoring” collaborative program of videos and thought experiments designed to improve both “work and life.”

During the economic downturn, when faced with limited job prospects, many recent graduates are flocking to unpaid internships. Recent lawsuits have showcased the potential institutional risks in the unpaid internship model, which could have significant implications for museums that rely upon intern staffing [\[Source\]](#). However, this is also a practice that has been exploited by larger museums in urban

centers with several universities around and an endless stream of college-educated students and graduates who are looking for hands-on experience to bolster their resumes.

## **Creativity**

Scientific understanding of how creativity works has provided suggestions for how employers can help to foster insight and innovation within their teams [\[Source\]](#). Management theory also proposes organizational improvements managers can make in order to foster a more innovative and creative workforce [\[Source\]](#). In a climate in which innovation is demanded from our funders, donors, and the public, museums will need to explore ways to motivate and inspire innovation within their staffs.

Creativity is also increasingly being viewed as a valuable skill for managers. The “maker” movement provides a model for how “makers” can be better managers, through their interest in collaboration to achieve a creative objective [\[Source\]](#).

## **Plans**

The following examines what leading stakeholders are expected to do in the area of museum professionalization between now and 2030.

### **Funders**

Funders have yet to respond directly to museum professionalization and mentorship trends, but some recent developments could hold some interesting implications for museums. Museum funders have often provided professional development funding, usually as part of a larger initiative or project. Some regional funders, locally Arts Council Silicon Valley, have consistently provided professional development funding to arts organizations. Other funders have supported institutional investment through operating support grants.

Kresge Foundation, which for many years helped to fuel the museum expansion boom through capital campaign grants, has now shifted its focus to institutional support in its funding [\[Source\]](#). Could funders now be looking from the outside to the inside of museums, to support their health and sustainability? While Kresge’s current focus is financial health, perhaps soon funders would deepen their focus to staff and management health in museums.

### **Professional Training Programs**

Faced with increasing competition for students from other university programs, and from criticism in the field as mentioned above, museum studies programs will be forced to place more attention on marketing to showcase the individual value of their programs. Museum studies programs will also be forced to provide greater training in skills that have transferability to other nonprofit and for-profit sectors, such as fundraising, grant writing, and project management.

## **Baseline Forecast**

### **2015**

- **Thinking about Diversity** – California is one of the most diverse states in the United States and in order to remain relevant to its audiences, museums have to hire more diverse staff. This is

becoming more and more obvious and museums and other institutions within the field are making a conscious effort to recruit more diverse applicants. One example for targeting diverse applications is CAM's [Fellowship](#) for its annual conference.

- **Compensation Changes** - As a result of major shifts in the employment landscape nationally, with women increasingly earning more than men, museums—like other nonprofits—will need to adjust their compensation to more competitively align with the for-profit sector or risk the exodus of their best workers, leading to poor institutional performance and limited sustainability. Alternately, those that are not able to raise their compensation levels will lose their high-performing employees and will no longer be viable in an increasingly competitive climate. At the same time, museums will explore low-cost ways that they can offer their employees benefits and help foster greater work/life balance. Staff wellness classes, CSA boxes, art therapy appointments, chair massages, will increasingly be offered as fringe benefits for museum workers.
- **A Younger Work Force** - The museum field experiences reverberations from the largest turnover in human capital in history as Millennials outnumber Baby Boomers in the workforce. A new, younger workforce may be more focused on individualism rather than cohesion, more focused on me (individual) rather than we (community) group [\[Source\]](#). Conflicts may arise between more seasoned Boomer workers and emerging Millennials in the workplace, requiring museums to invest in multigenerational sensitivity training.
- **A Flexible Work Force** - An interest in flexible schedules, telecommuting, part-time schedules for working parents and job-sharing will continue. Museums will need to respond to these interests and the needs of a changing workforce by offering more opportunities for employees to work at home and telecommute. Financial constraints will encourage museums to pursue hiring consultants for some projects instead of staff, freeing them from having to support increasingly costly benefit packages. With a new more virtual workforce, museums will have to invest more in infrastructure technology to support virtual meetings and conferencing. A whole new area of management literature develops around managing virtual teams, including best practice models [\[Source\]](#).
- **Flat Organizational Structures** - Straight off the heels of the Oakland Museum of California's organizational structure shift, museums throughout the state adopt more flat organizational structures and shift to team-based approaches in most of their operations.
- **Training for EQ**—Employers begin to understand the importance of soft skills, such as empathy, in the workforce. Training institutes for emotional intelligence begin to emerge throughout the country to offer soft-skills training for employers and managers. The American Alliance of Museums provides webinars focused on developing EQ and devotes a special section of its 2015 conference to the topic. Graduate programs in museum studies offer training in EQ development. Employers and potential employees start to use personality-profiling tools in job search process
- **Outside In** - Expanding the participation trend in museum programing, some museums start experimenting with participatory governance. Using some local government examples, some museums experiment with asking their communities to participate in resource allocation decisions [\[Source\]](#).

- **Outsourcing** - Museums will start to explore the outsourcing trend, looking for opportunities to find more efficient ways to complete non-specialized administrative and program functions. Payroll and accounting are already functions being outsourced at many museums, perhaps in future, human resources and administrative support could be outsourced as well. Possible mergers between institutions to support similar functions, such as backroom operations (payroll, accounting, human resources), will emerge.
- **Networked Individualism** - Museums have embraced social networking for their community and internally. Their next challenge is to embrace the use of social networking in a way that supports “[networked individualism](#)”—social networking as a tool that helps promote community, within and outside the workplace social networking tools provide new platforms for collaboration.
- **Bringing Inside Outside** - Many museums have embraced the “maker” movement, but now they will start to create opportunities for their own staffs to actively participate in making and exhibiting their work in order to promote team building and staff development, and to create more of a connection between their public and staff members [[Source](#)].
- **Contractor Power** - Museum contractors will become “super temps,” providing highly specialized skills to museums without the institutional expense of full employee benefits. California contractors will adopt the model of other East Coast collaboratives, in which groups of museum contractors will band together, providing referrals and services in a broad range of museum operations—from strategic planning to education and exhibitions—in a “one-stop shopping” context.
- **Failure Clubs** - Museums will take Morgan Spurlock’s “[Failure Club](#)” as a model to offer support groups/critique groups onsite for artists and performers interested in pursuing new ideas or directions in their work. Individual museum professionals will use the model to create their own museum professional support groups for individuals taking risks in their own institutions and work.
- **New Work Environments** - Museums will take the lead from creative firms to implement new work environments that parallel their new interest in team-based approaches. Funders will emerge to support renovations of workspaces to support collaborative workplace models.
- **Partnering for Employee Perks** - While museums cannot compete with technology companies such as Google and Microsoft, museums will partner to pool their resources to provide some attractive services, such as chartered transportation and childcare services, for their employees.

## 2020

- **Diversifying Museums** - With an increasing focus on relevance and community engagement, museums begin to address the challenge of their lack of staff diversity through aggressive employment quotas and diversification processes. With rapidly changing ethnic demographics in the state, funders increasingly demand demonstration of staff diversity for their supported institutions. Some museums establish innovative and audacious goals to match the ethnicity of their staff with the demographic makeup of the state of California. Concurrently, foundations, such as the Getty, expand their investment in fostering a new, more diverse museum workforce through professional development and mentorship opportunities, as well as museum studies

scholarships for individuals in under-represented ethnic groups. A whole new area of museum management emerges focused on working with multicultural teams.

- **Ghost Town Offices** - As a result of more telecommuting and flexible schedules, museums will find themselves with often vacant office spaces. Museums are now faced with new challenges with internal stratification among their employees—the staff, such as educators, installation crew, registrars and security, who must work on-site, and the professional staff who are able to take advantage of telecommuting.
- **First Job Share Museum Director Position** - In 2020, the very first museum appoints a shared leadership position, a job share between two qualified professionals who wish to maintain a part-time schedule due to the demands of their family. As management models continue to transform and shared leadership is increasingly valued, museums start taking notice [[Source](#)].
- **Virtual Role Playing as Educational Tool** - [Virtual role playing](#), which has demonstrated applications in health care and education will now be used as a method to teach future museum professionals about their new field. Museum studies professors will create real-world virtual scenarios for their students to experience as part of their curriculum.

## 2030

- **A Truly Multicultural Work Force?** - As museums start to see the benefits of their aggressive employment diversity initiatives, many of them begin to meet their goals of matching the ethnic demographics of the state. Some challenges emerge between the divergent work approaches of younger, more diverse newer employees and more seasoned European American employees, requiring museums to invest in team building, greater multicultural awareness training. Because of this, and changing age demographics in the field, some museums adopt new internal human resources positions: Multigenerational/Diversity Coordinator.
- **White Females at a Disadvantage** - After approximately five years of aggressive diversification hiring processes at museums throughout the state, white women begin to find themselves at a disadvantage in employment searches. Demographics in museum studies programs change as a result of scholarships and professional development and mentoring programs for underrepresented ethnic groups. White women begin to form their own minority support networks and professional alliances.
- **Museum Workers On Exhibit** - Trends toward institutional transparency will continue with greater emphasis on bringing the “behind the scenes” aspects of museum operations into the limelight. In some museums, workspaces will move into public spaces in order to foster greater institutional transparency. Artists, frequently on the edge of these cultural trends, have already experimented with this phenomenon. Artist Mark Dion, as part of his installation for the Oakland Museum of California, put Senior Curator Rene De Guzman’s office within the gallery space—making his normally “behind the scenes” work visible and public.
- **EQ Institutionalized** - by 2030, employers truly understand the value of EQ and museums are no exception. Employees are evaluated based not only upon their performance, but their ability to effectively use soft skills.

- **Museum Coaches** - With increasing understanding of the value of coaching as a management philosophy and in an increasingly competitive work force, a new professional role of museum coaches emerges. These individuals work like life coaches, providing contract mentorship and career and professional guidance to museum workers. Much of this work will be done virtually.