

Community Engagement Summary

Phase 1: Dialogue Sessions

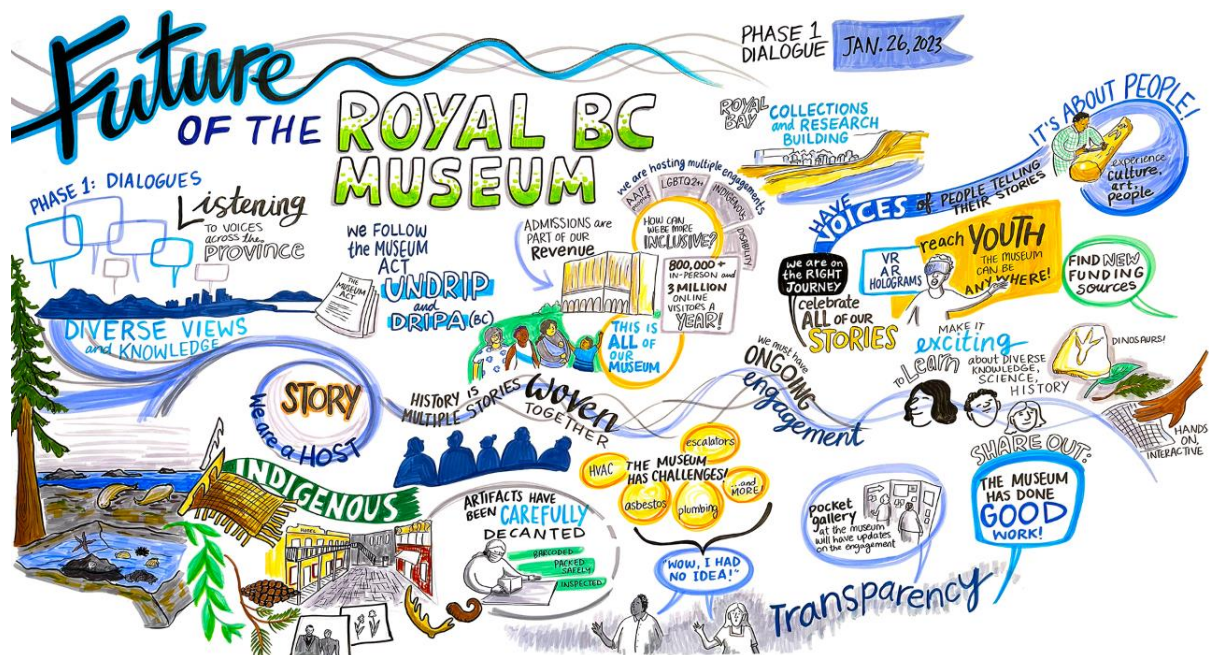
Date	Session Type	Location	Number of Attendees
Thursday, January 12, 2023	General public	RBCM	31
Tuesday, January 17, 2023	General public (day)	RBCM	63
Tuesday, January 17, 2023	General public (evening)	RBCM	28
Friday, January 20, 2023	Business community	RBCM	15
Wednesday, January 25, 2023	Business community	RBCM	14
Thursday, January 26, 2023	General public (day)	RBCM	74
Thursday, January 26, 2023	General public (evening)	RBCM	28
Tuesday, January 31, 2023	General public	Virtual	30
Friday, February 3, 2023	General public	Virtual	39
Monday, February 6, 2023	General public	Surrey	19
Monday, February 6, 2023	General public	Vancouver	12
Tuesday, February 7, 2023	General public	Richmond	7
Wednesday, February 15, 2023	General public	Nanaimo	27
Friday, February 24, 2023	GLAM* community	RBCM	17
Tuesday, February 28, 2023	General public	Virtual	21
Sunday, March 5, 2023	Métis community	Richmond	60
Wednesday, March 8, 2023	General public	Kelowna	37
Friday, March 10, 2023	General public	Prince George	2**
Monday, March 13, 2023	First Nations Leadership Council	Virtual	12
Thursday, March 23 and Friday, March 24, 2023	Gathering our Voices-Indigenous Youth	Vancouver	30
Monday, March 27, 2023	Educators and students	Victoria	9
Wednesday, March 29, 2023	General public	Nelson	5
Thursday, March 30, 2023	General public	Cranbrook	7
Monday, April 3, 2023	General public	Prince Rupert	2
Thursday, April 6, 2023	General public	Fort St. John	21
Thursday, April 14 and Friday, April 15, 2023	Provincial First Nations	Victoria	29***
Monday, May 15, 2023	General public	Port Hardy	23
Monday, May 22, 2023	Métis community	Terrace	6
Tuesday, May 23, 2023	General public	Smithers	12
Saturday, May 27, 2023	Educators	RBCM	35
Wednesday, May 31, 2023	General public	Virtual	141
Total attendees			856
Total sessions			31

What We've Heard

Themes raised by participants and discussed in-session

- Many of the belongings in the museum were taken without permission from First Nations. The museum needs to go back to each nation and ask for permission to hold these items or return them to the nations to build trust.
- Questions on how the museum will include diverse communities, including 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Asexual, and additional sexual orientations and gender identities) groups and those with accessibility or disability challenges.
- The importance of including diverse stories from all cultures that contributed to the history of British Columbia.
- Establishing partnerships with cultural and diverse communities (i.e., Youth Advisory Council, University of Victoria, 2SLGBTQIA+).
- How are all communities and cultures being represented, along with Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nations) communities.
- It is important for the museum to work directly with Indigenous communities to include stories with the belongings to provide authentic context.
- Discussions around the modern role of a museum and comments about the lack of modern history within the museum.
- Strong desire to focus on experiential, educational, and interactive spaces and exhibits in the museum for kids and youth.
- The Royal BC Museum can provide additional advocacy support for Indigenous communities, including updating archaeological policies.
- The terminology for repatriation is flawed, and there needs to be a reframing of the work ahead based on consent.
- Emphasizing the need for co-creation. The museum is important as its role is to hold history, tell stories, and facilitate learning.
- All communities must have a voice in how their belongings are shared and the learnings that are embedded in them.
- How communities in Northern BC feel isolated and are looking to the museum to help bring the province together through shared histories and cultures.
- Confusion about the separation between the Indigenous view of history and the settler view and discussion around how to integrate both histories.
- Students felt less of a connection with the 'old' museum and are excited to see what is new and in the future.
- How the Royal BC Museum can help drive tourism across the province by sharing stories of communities from all over BC inspiring visitation to those communities.
- Systems in place to protect archaeological heritage are often lacking. Support from the museum to advocate for stronger controls and enforcement.
- Questions on the advocacy role of the museum and how it can correct misinformation regarding the history of many communities across the province.

- The importance of integrating a greater diversity of cultures into the stories told in the museum to reflect BC's history.
- Discussion around accessibility and cost of the museum in Victoria for other areas of the province, suggestion of "satellite" or other campus museums around the province.
- Stronger collaboration with community museums and cultural institutions.
- Clarity on the future of the third floor (including the 'Old Town' display). Discussions would be held on the current state of the third floor (that it had not been demolished), and the community would be invited to help reimagine the space in the future.
- The Royal BC Museum's model for admission fees and how the museum could be more accessible for low-income or budget-conscious people.
- Repatriation and the relationship between the museum and Indigenous communities.
- Discussions around access to audio and video recordings held at the museum and archives and ownership rights. According to intellectual property laws, rights go to the researcher and not the individuals who were interviewed. There's traditional knowledge in these recordings.
- How the current climate crisis can be updated in the Climate Change gallery (in the Natural History gallery) to reflect current research, knowledge, and action.
- Funding models to support the Royal BC Museum's growth and infrastructure needs.
- The importance of ensuring the Royal BC Museum has strong and supportive relationships with other cultural organizations and groups across the province.
- Access to the museum for BC schools is free, but there is the added cost of transportation, especially for those not on the island.



Graphic recording captured key points of a Dialogue Session.

- Support for new ways of thinking (for example, a shift from “artifact” to “belonging”)
- How to become more involved via volunteer programs and career opportunities.
- The importance of having more interactive/hands-on exhibits for younger audiences.
- Concerns over how the Royal BC Museum is being portrayed in the media and how the museum is combating negative sentiment.
- Challenges faced by regional museums in protecting artifacts and information via digitization and how the museum can support.
- Questions on how the museum can better reflect the history and culture of BC’s regions like the Okanagan and Northern BC, Vancouver Island, and the coast.
- Repatriation is important, but is there a way where belongings can still be available so everyone can still learn, view, and observe important cultural aspects of First Nations across BC?
- The Royal BC Museum is a connector, and there was support for continuing to build networks with museums and cultural institutions across the province to share resources, archival and research expertise, and travelling exhibits.
- Support for archival access and increased online access.
- Suggestion to let knowledge keepers share learnings based on what they want to share and not just on what the public wants to learn.
- Increase representation of local nations, specifically the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, whose land the museum resides.

Next Steps

Phase 1 is now complete and the feedback and the information collected is being analyzed by staff and engagement consultants to inform the formal Phase 2 Engagement Strategy. To learn more about what was discussed you can watch a recent Zoom recording of a [Dialogue Session](#) from Phase 1.

Phase 2 will begin in September 2023 and will focus on deeper engagement throughout the province to encourage active participation, feedback, and collaboration from diverse voices and perspectives on the future of the Royal BC Museum and its experiences. This co-designed approach will allow communities to be the authority of their historical and current lived experiences and stories (narrative sovereignty). This feedback will allow the museum to bolster public knowledge, education, and discourse about our provincial history as well as our modern-day experiences.

We aim to listen to everyone objectively and strive to understand what matters to British Columbians while identifying what will encourage and welcome them to be a part of the Museum’s future and ongoing engagement.