

Designing for Diverse Museum Visitors' Identity Exploration around Inventiveness



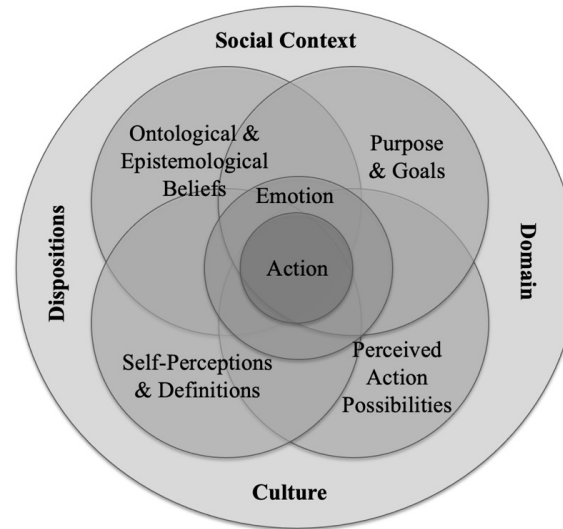
Avi Kaplan¹ Joanna K. Garner² Amani Rush¹ Sharon Klotz³ Monica Smith³

¹Temple University ²Old Dominion University ³Smithsonian Institution's Lemelson Center

This presentation describes research to inform the design of an exhibition that promotes identity exploration around invention



The exhibition concept



Applying the DSMRI



Local theory principles

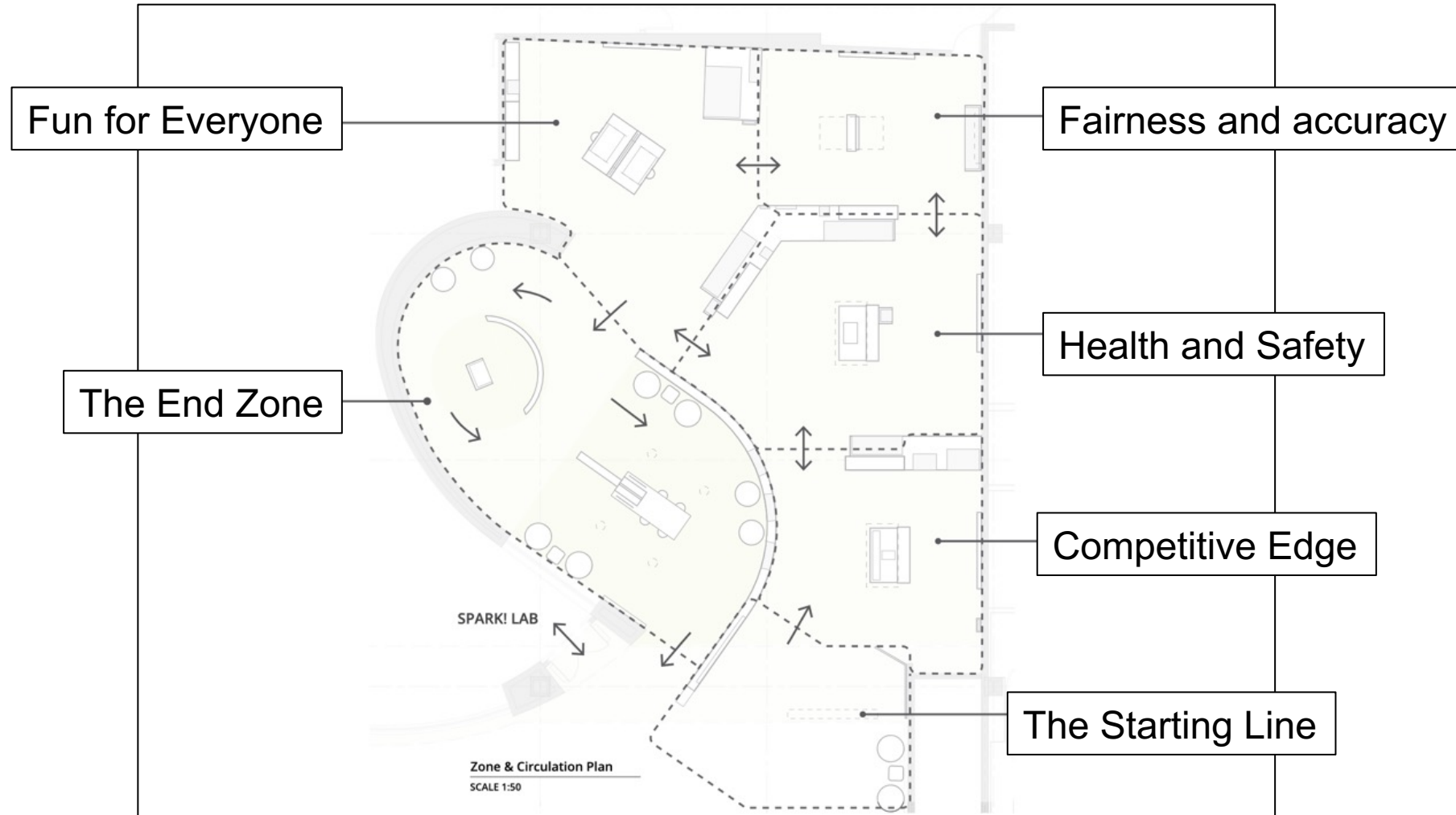
The Lemelson Center is located within the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington DC



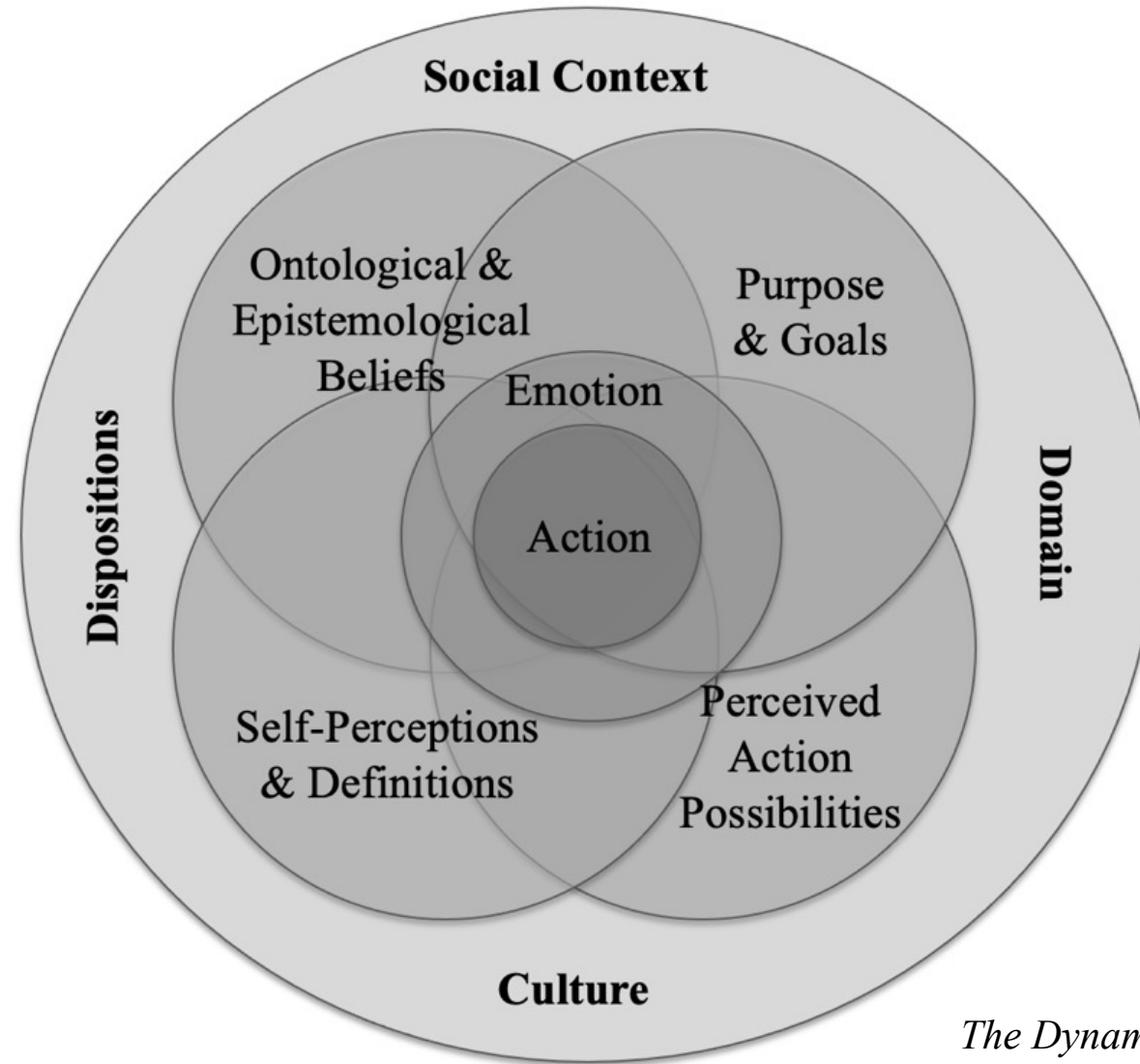
The Game Changers exhibition, scheduled to open in fall 2023, will promote visitors' identity exploration around inventiveness



The exhibition is organized around motivations for invention in sport and is being designed with target audiences in mind

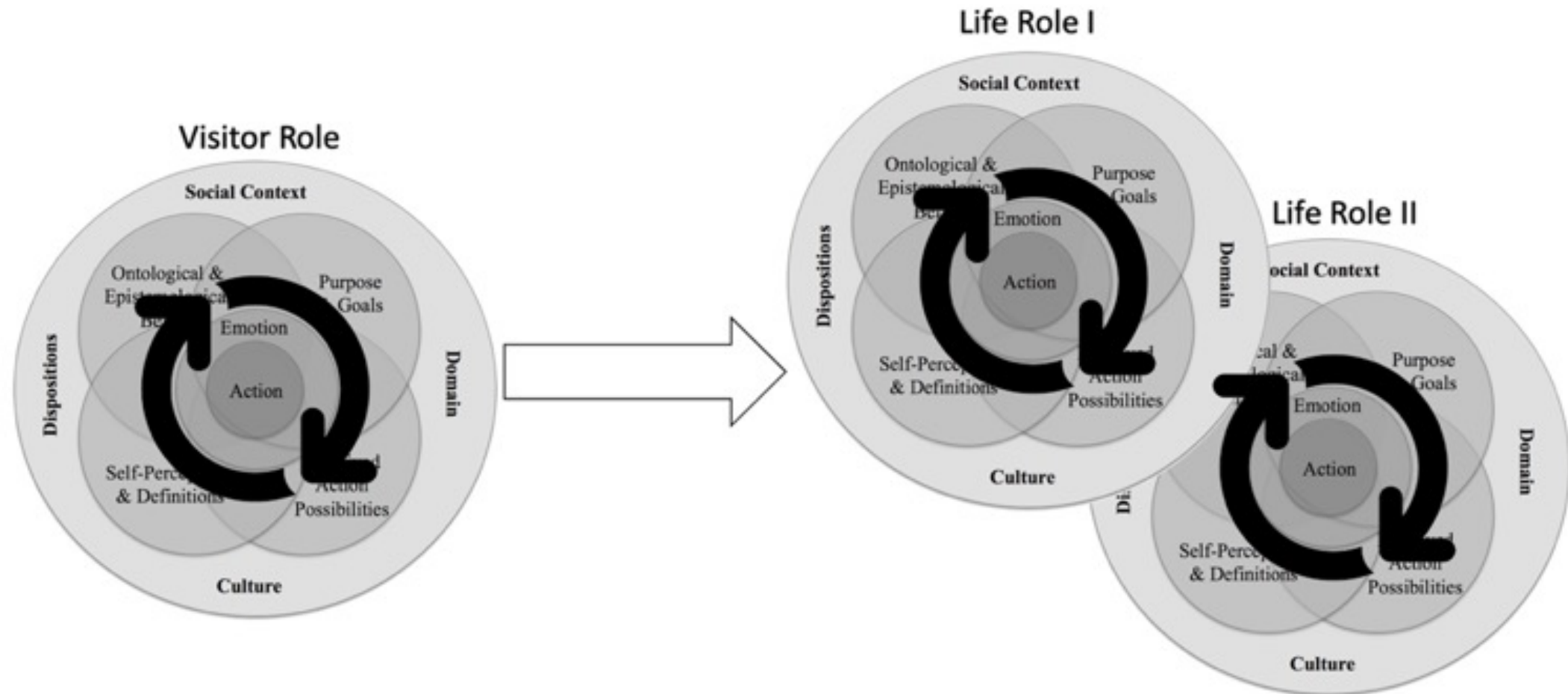


The DSMRI is a situative model of identity, motivation and action

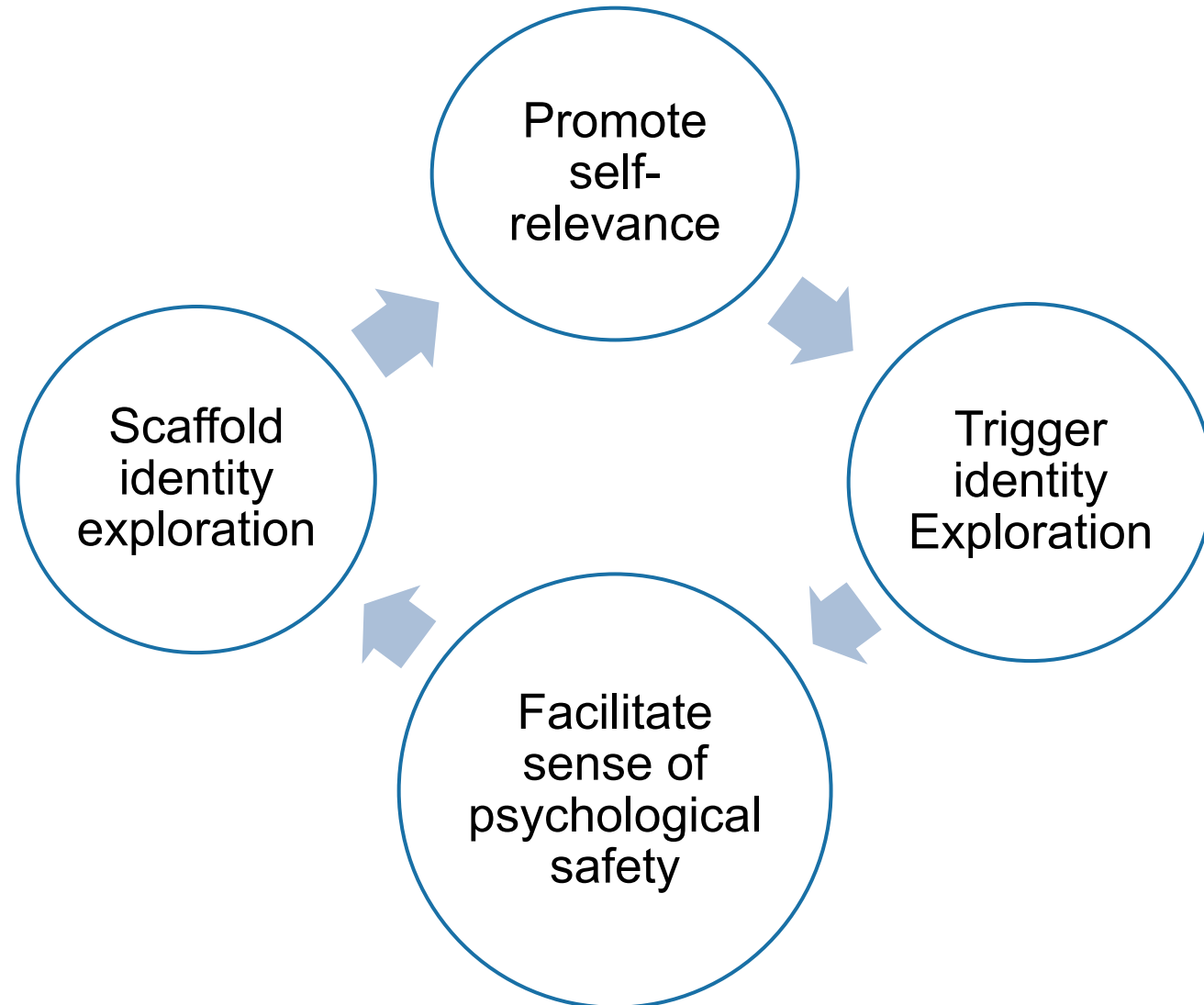


The Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI; Kaplan & Garner, 2017) ₆

The exhibition aims to promote a museum visitor role identity in which people explore inventiveness in life role identities

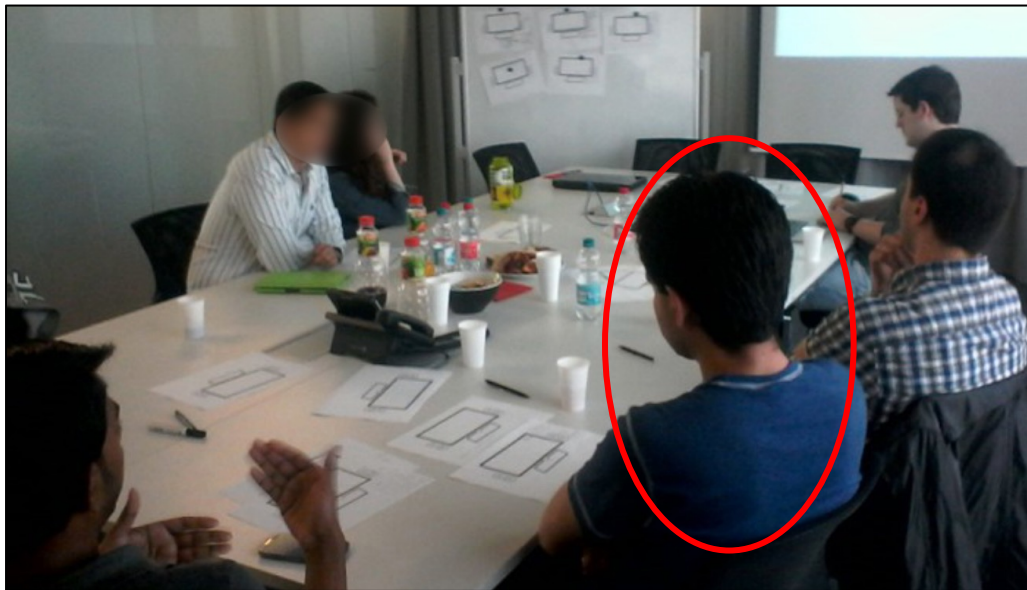


Design principles for identity exploration foster self-relevance and experiences of identity difference in a safe environment



The situative paradigm emphasizes the authentic context which, in our case, does not yet exist

Focus group context



Exhibition context



What local principles frame the emergence of visitors' role identities and their identity exploration of inventiveness?

Focus group participants from the target audiences were guided through a virtual rendition of the exhibition



The protocol guided participants to imagine themselves as visitors and describe their experiences during the virtual tour



Did you ever do anything like this?



Where can you be inventive in your life?

Would you be interested in an exhibition on invention in sports; why?

How is sport/invention related to your life? What is a Game Changer?

What exhibit you want to see; why?



What local principles frame the emergence of visitors' role identities and their identity exploration of inventiveness?

One. Initial visitor role identities are passive and content-focused

“I'm not really a big sports person. I used to do cheer but I do like sports, but I'm not, I don't play sports, but I like to understand, to learn about the history.”

Implications for design: Make identity exploration around inventiveness beyond sports the explicit purpose of the visit

Two. Initial visitor role identities include beliefs about Game Changers that imply that one is not inventive

“Game Changing to me is something reasonably monumental, it is a significant new direction in something, or something that is so significant that it has...permanency.”

Implications for design: Incorporate content that presents inventiveness as an everyday, common action

Three. Perceived self-relevance of the content to life roles serves as the anchor for identity exploration

“I have a strong desire to become something within the medical field and hearing about the invention with prosthetics, it really intrigued me.”

Implications for design: Scaffold visitors’ role-based construction of self-relevance of exhibition content including inventiveness

Four. Promoting identity exploration around inventiveness in life requires different scaffolds for different participants

“When [other participant] answered the questions, one of the first things that came to mind for me was... this challenge with my feet when I'm pushing, that they don't stay in the right position, but I couldn't find the right...strap for my feet...so I ended up looking at different items that were not exactly a strap...”

Implications for design: Incorporate exposure to other visitors' identity exploration about their inventiveness and scaffolds for interaction around being inventive

The DSMRI informs museum exhibition design by supporting the situative integration of virtual visitor role identities with other life roles



Questions?