

Setting up a network: International Perspectives

Marie Hobson, Senior Manager – Audience Research and Insight

A large, stylized logo consisting of the letters 'V', '&', and 'A' in a classic serif typeface. The letters are white and set against a dark grey background. The 'V' and 'A' are tall and narrow, while the ampersand is smaller and more decorative, positioned between the two larger letters.

Introduction

- What can we learn from other visitor studies associations?
 - Aims
 - Members
 - Types of Membership
 - Benefits
 - Topics



Associations of visitor studies professionals

VSG (Visitor Studies Group)	VSA (Visitor Studies Association)	REV (Research and Evaluation thematic Group)	Culture Data and Research Network (CDRN)
U.K.	U.S.A.	Europe	U.K.
1990s	1980s	2012	2018
			

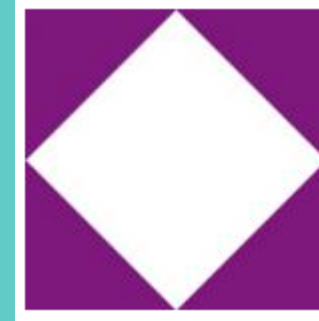
Committee member

Member

First elected Chair

Member

Aims



To promote dialogue, facilitate debate and provide members with access to high quality training to improve their professional development

A membership organization dedicated to understanding and enhancing learning experiences in informal settings through research, evaluation, and dialogue.

REV will *connect, communicate, equip, advocate and advise* to stimulate and help facilitate research and evaluation in science museums and centres across Europe.

Strengthen data and research practice and skills within the sector by providing members with a forum to exchange experiences, share best practice, debate current issues and form new collaborative partnerships.

Considerations

- What are your aims?

REV will:	Objectives	REV members will be able to:
Connect	Provide physical and digital networking opportunities to make it easy for professionals with an interest in research and evaluation to connect with each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue discussions started at Ecsite post-conference • Use an easy tool for common evaluation between Europe members to start networking • Make links to academics and practitioners • Ask questions of other REV members • Find evaluation consultants
Communicate	Facilitate wider understanding of current research and evaluation through communicating the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Results and outcomes (the “what”) – Methods and processes (the “how”) of current evaluation and research studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hear about what research and evaluation studies are being conducted in Europe and internationally • Keep up-to-date with current best practice

REV will:	Objectives	REV members will be able to:
Equip	Enable members to conduct their own research and evaluation studies and share their findings about results and methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend training sessions in evaluation methods • Share skills and expertise
Advocate	Promote the value of conducting research and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justify the value of conducting audience research in their institutions
Advise	Become a reference point for ECSITE Board about research an evaluation in science centres and museums	

Considerations

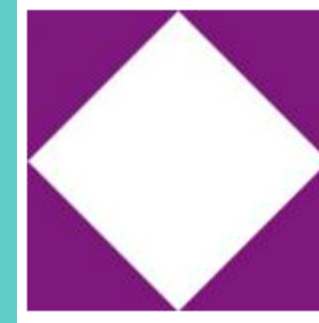
- How are you going to achieve them?
 - Action plan
 - Constitution
 - Roles and remits

Mission: To stimulate and help facilitate research and evaluation in science museums and centres across Europe.

Aligning with Ecsite's Key Priorities:
 2) Monitor and develop operational standards in our field with a view to sharpening performance
 3) Enable greater collaborative communication among members
 REV will **connect, communicate, equip, advocate and advise** to stimulate and help facilitate research and evaluation in science museums and centres across Europe.

Action Plan		
Year 1: 2012-2013	Year 2: 2013-2014	Year 3: 2014-2015
Organise an annual pre-conference which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to members' needs for continuing professional development • Refers to practical examples / case studies of research that has been conducted • Creates opportunities in the pre-conference for members to share their skills and expertise 		
Increase members by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a relationship with pre-conference participants by inviting them to join REV • Inviting past and present conference presenters on research and evaluation topics to join REV 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create links and build relationships with similar organisations (e.g. VSG and VSA) 		
Create a web presence for REV on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecsite's website • Social networking sites e.g. Linked In / Ning 	Maintain a web presence for REV on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecsite's website • Social networking sites e.g. Linked In / Ning • Use social networking sites (e.g. Linked In / Ning) to create a discussion forum and share documents 	
Disseminate evaluation methods and findings through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Ecsite newsletter 	Disseminate evaluation methods and findings through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing research and evaluation sessions to the main Ecsite conference • Articles written by Directors / experts with first-hand experience of useful evaluation projects 	Disseminate evaluation methods and findings through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of pamphlets which justify the value of evaluation to difference Museum professionals

For whom?

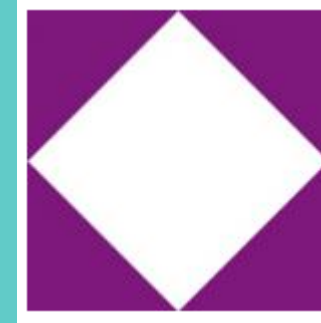


<p>Visitor studies professionals in roles including audience research, evaluation, audience development, visitor studies, learning, education, community engagement</p>	<p>Researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, organizational leaders, and funders</p>	<p>Anyone engaged with or interested in the process and results of evaluation and research being conducted in science centres and museums e.g. academic researchers, in-house evaluators, evaluation consultants and exhibition and programme developers etc.</p>	<p>Researchers and data practitioners NOT freelancers or research agencies</p>
<p>Museums, zoos, nature centres, visitor centres, historic sites, parks and other informal learning settings</p>	<p>Informal learning</p>	<p>Science education</p>	<p>Public-facing arts and cultural institutions and heritage organisations</p>
<p>U.K.</p>	<p>USA and worldwide</p>	<p>Europe and worldwide</p>	<p>U.K.</p>

Considerations

- Which roles?
 - Audience researchers or consumers of audience research?
 - Academics v. practitioners
 - Learning researchers v. data analysts
 - Novices v. experts?
 - Mentoring (VSG)
 - Differing programme strands (VSA)
 - Freelancers and research agencies
- Which sectors?
 - Museums, cultural sector, visitor attractions, digital
- How to reach smaller institutions?
 - Variable pricing
- How to be truly national?
 - Online events, regional events

Types of membership

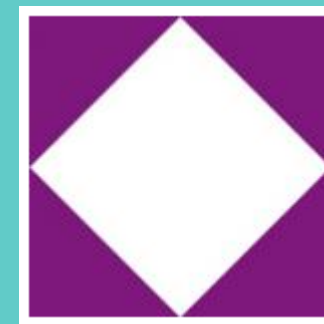


<p>Fees</p> <p>Individual Membership £45</p> <p>Concession Membership* £25</p> <p>Organisation Membership** £215</p>	<p>Fees</p> <p>Full \$110</p> <p>Student \$50</p> <p>3-5 \$95</p> <p>6-9 \$90</p> <p>10+ \$85</p>	<p>Free to conference participants (but conference cost 1500 Euros)</p>	<p>Free (charge for conference)</p>
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Considerations

- Legalities
- Cater for different organisation size and budgets
 - Different rates according to organisation size
- When to renew – all at the same time for ease or when join?
- How to ensure that it is value for money?
 - VSA v. VSG

Benefits

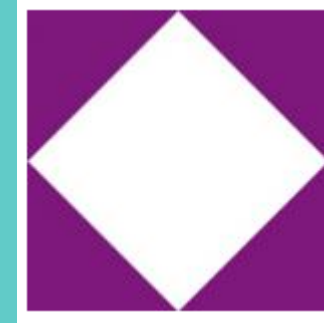


Conference	Annual conference (discounted)	Annual conference (discounted)	Annual 2-day pre-conference workshop	Annual conference
Events	Ad hoc special events	Web chats, virtual webinars and workshops.	-	Quarterly online-get togethers
Newsletter	Periodically	Quarterly	-	Quarterly
Journal	-	Peer reviewed journal + access to journals	-	-
Networking	Directory of consultants	Members' directory	-	Slack channel; LinkedIn Members' Only Area
+	Bursaries and mentoring			

Considerations

- How to keep engagement throughout the year
- Volunteers v. paid staff
 - VSG paid part time admin
- Conference took up whole time -> sub committees

Topics and trends



- How to write a brief
- Co-creation and participation
- Measuring social value
- Access
- Forging relationships
- Environments

- DEAI
- Reimagining and rebuilding
- Strengthening public trust
- Big data
- New perspectives on visitor studies

- Evaluation for beginners
- Audience segmentation
- Embedding research and practice
- Conducting visitor studies with teachers
- Improving the relationship between designers and visitor studies professionals
- How to measure learning

- GDPR
- Diversity monitoring
- Audience segmentation

Trends in audience research

- How to choose which topics are key to the field?
- Some key trends
 - Big data
 - Behavioural insights
 - DEAI
 - How to make the sector more representative

Thank you

Email: m.hobson@vam.ac.uk

Twitter: [@mchobson](https://twitter.com/mchobson)

LinkedIn:

V&A