

Sun Associates Service Profile

Museums, Libraries and Informal Education Organizations



Sun Associates provides evaluation and strategic guidance to museums, libraries and other informal education organizations. Ask us how we can help your organization...

Evaluate participant and visitor experiences, with a critical eye toward educational impact.

Our specialty is around assessing the degree to which programs, exhibits and visitor experiences achieve their intended goals. A Sun Associates evaluation will help your organization move beyond simple counting and visitor satisfaction surveys and to instead focus on the degree to which you are truly having impact on your community.

Develop Goals and Strategies for programs and exhibits that are clear and measurable.

We help museums and other public-facing informal educational organizations. We will work with your organization and community to develop meaningful goals that connect to your core mission. In particular, we bring our expertise in working with K-12 educators to the table and therefore help museum and library educators tailor programs to meet the specific needs of teachers and students.

Example Projects

Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center at the Boston Public Library -- www.leventhalmap.org

Sun Associates has evaluated three IMLS (Institute for Museum and Library Sciences) grants at the Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center –

www.leventhalmap.org. With a collection of over 200,000 maps that cover all historical periods and geographies, the Map Center is one of the nation's premier collections of maps and atlases. The growing collection includes over 10,000 digitized maps that are fully accessible to the public. Sun Associates has evaluated the Center's efforts to create a K-12 educator-friendly interface to the digital collection ("Tools for Teachers") as well as a project aimed at empowering secondary students to learn and communicate about issues in their communities using visual information ("Empowering Maptivists"). Currently, Sun Associates is evaluating the Center's exhibit on persuasive cartography ("Bending Lines").



U.S. Space and Rocket Center E³ Inquiry-Based Education Program -- go.nasa.gov/3jCVJ5l



Sun Associates was the external project evaluator for the U.S. Space and Rocket Center's (go.nasa.gov/3jCVJ5l) four-year grant from NASA to develop and implement STEM professional development and informal science education programming centered around the history and science related to human space flight and exploration. Key project activities included evaluation of an annual "STEMcon" professional development offering for educators located in Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, and Iowa. Sun Associates also evaluated the Center's creation and exhibit of a full-scale replica of the International Space Station's main module and mission control center ("Science on Orbit"). This work included the development of exhibit and visitor metrics and conducting visitor interviews, surveys, and focus groups.

Meta-Evaluation and Program Support for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) American History and Civics Initiative –

Working with WGBH Interactive, the Program Manager for CPB's American History and Civics (AHCI) initiative, Sun Associates provided meta-evaluation support to both phases of a \$20 million initiative aimed at increasing student engagement with American history and civics. The AHCI initiative initially funded seven projects that used new and interactive media to support K-12 American History and Civics education. Sun Associates guided the individual project evaluations to utilize common metrics for measuring the projects' impact on student learning and laid the groundwork for substantive research in the use of interactive games to stimulate student interest in civics.



U.S. Department of Education Teaching American History (TAH) Projects

www.sun-associates.com/taheval.htm



Sun Associates was the evaluator of 16 TAH projects funded by the US Department of Education in Massachusetts. In our TAH evaluation and project development work, we brought a strong background in program evaluation combined with expertise (both academic and classroom-based) in U.S. History. Several of our projects were based at Historical Associations and all contained substantial partnerships with informal educational organizations. During the duration of the Federal TAH program, thousands of Massachusetts students improved their historical thinking, critical thinking, and content knowledge. Sun Associates is honored to have been a key part of this major effort to support history and social studies across Massachusetts.

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