

# Membership for Today's Museum Audiences: **Rethinking Relevance & Engagement**

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**THE  
MET**

slover**linett**  
AUDIENCE RESEARCH

**Note:** This version of the presentation contains just a few of the slides that Peter Linett and Jessica Hirschey showed onscreen during their AMMC session in Chicago. The museum is not yet ready to disseminate some of the findings and early-stage strategic decisions depicted on the other slides. We hope it is still helpful to you as a reminder of what we discussed, and we welcome any questions at [peter@sloverlinett.com](mailto:peter@sloverlinett.com) or [jessica.hirschey@metmuseum.org](mailto:jessica.hirschey@metmuseum.org). Thanks!

discuss in pairs

Some of our visitors wish that their experiences at our museum could be more

x

y

z

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# Research objectives

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**[ Exploratory ]** Understand members' and potential members' needs and goals

**[ Diagnostic ]** Learn how well the current program design supports those needs and goals

**[ Formative ]** Identify ways to better support those needs and goals and become more compelling and valuable to current and potential members

**[ Structural ]** Explore feasibility of streamlining program and optimizing pricing to maximize retention and upgrade potential

**[ Comparative ]** Understand how the membership perceptions and needs of specific audiences differ by age, geography, and renewal status



Re-envisioning a membership or loyalty program at the Met that is more compelling to visitors, members, and supporters and provides new experiences that deepen enjoyment, engagement, and loyalty.

# Phase 1: Qualitative research

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## A: Discussion & Brainstorming Groups

- **2 groups:** current lower level members (older & younger)
- **1 group:** lapsed lower level members
- **2 groups:** recent visiting non-members (older & younger)

## B: In-depth Interviews

**18 phone interviews:** upper level members

## traditional

## emerging

**formality** (elegance)

**comfort, welcoming**

**unmediated, objective** (“right” interpretation, “facts”)

**personally mediated** (subjective, not just experts but other personalities)

**product** (the object)

**process** (the human activity)

**institutional scale** (grandeur, “overwhelming”)

**intimacy** (small-group experiences, “niches” of connection; manageable)

**meditative** (focused, quiet, individual)

**active, social** (vibrant, connected; artworks are ‘social objects’)

**expert** (impersonal, “above”)

**friend** (peer-like, personal connection & vibe)

**scripted** (rehearsed, controlled, buttoned-down)

**spontaneous** (conversational, unguarded, informal)

**purity (#1)** (an art-only realm, “escape” from everyday world)

**context** (embedded in, connected to the world)

## traditional

## emerging

**purity (#2)** (the object in splendid isolation for looking)

**theatricality, being transported** (lighting, sound/music, the object in a multisensory environment; escape to a *different* world)

**art-discovery** (learning, judgment, object-oriented)

**self-discovery** (learning about *me*, also my visiting companions, other visitors; people-oriented)

**daytime** (rational, professional)

**night-time** (irrational/fun, leisure)

**hierarchical, unilateral** (“snobby”)

**flat, open, dialogic**

**museum as provider/producer** (defines its own & visitors’ experiences, purposes)

**museum as platform** (can be used by others, for their own experiences & purposes)

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## B: In-depth Interviews

**18 phone interviews:** upper level members



**Interim report** – presentation & discussion



**Brainstorming session** with Met team to generate strategies to test in Phase 2



# Phase 2: Quantitative research

[ **Exploratory** ] Understand members' and potential members' needs and goals

[ **Diagnostic** ] Learn how well the current program design supports those needs and goals

[ **Formative** ] Identify ways to better support those needs and goals and become more compelling and valuable to current and potential members

[ **Structural** ] Explore feasibility of streamlining program and optimizing pricing to maximize retention and upgrade potential

[ **Comparative** ] Understand how the membership perceptions and needs of specific audiences differ by age, geography, and renewal status

## A: Conjoint studies (online surveys)

- **Model 1:** non-member visitors
- **Model 2:** lower-level members

## B: Non-conjoint online survey

Upper level members



**Interim working report**



**Working session** with Met team to prioritize findings and determine strategies to pursue



**Integrated final report**

**ALL MEMBERSHIPS INCLUDE:**

Free admission to the main building and the Cloisters (general admission and special exhibitions)  
 Access to the exclusive Members Dining Room  
 Eligibility to rent elegant rooms for private events  
 Members-only emails with advance notice of events, programs, and offers  
 \$1 off audio guides each time you visit

**ATTRIBUTES****LEVELS****Who is included?**

One adult  
 Two adults  
 Two adults + children in the household under 18

**Special Member Access**

None  
 4 exhibition previews per year + daytime preview of spring Costume Institute exhibition  
 Member-only hours for entire museum (9-10 AM) once a week  
 Member-only hours for entire museum (9-10 AM) once a week + 4 exhibition previews per year + daytime preview of spring Costume Institute exhibition

**Subscription to the Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin and Members Calendar**

None  
 Electronic  
 Print  
 Print and Electronic

**Guest Benefit**

None  
 1 extra person anytime you visit  
 2 extra people anytime you visit  
 4 single-visit guest passes per year  
 10 single-visit guest passes per year

**Shop/Restaurant Discount**

No discounts to the museum shops or museum restaurants  
 10% off at museum shops only (plus seasonal double discounts)  
 10% off at museum shops (plus seasonal double discounts) and 10% off at museum restaurants

**At renewal, which would you choose?**  
**If you were presented with these options, which would you choose?**

*You may place your mouse over any term in blue to be reminded of the details/definition.*

**Choice A**

**Choice B**

**Choice C**

**Choice D**

Membership for <u>one adult</u> + children in the household under 18	Membership for <u>two adults</u>	Membership for <u>two adults</u> + children in the household under 18	<p><b>I would not renew.</b></p> <p><b>I would not join.</b></p>
2 extra people anytime you visit		6 single-visit guest passes per year	
		5 Members-only special exhibition previews per year	
	Monthly members-only hours: Evenings, after the galleries close to the public	Monthly members-only hours: Mornings, before the galleries open to the public	
Members-only tours	Members-only meet-ups	Members-only curatorial lectures	
Digital subscription to the Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin and Members Calendar	Print subscription to the Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin and Members Calendar		
		Reciprocal membership benefits at 15 major US art museums outside of NYC	
	10% off at museum restaurants	10% off at museum shops (plus seasonal 20% double discounts), at museum restaurants, and on concert and performance tickets	
\$80 per year	\$250 per year	\$225 per year	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**ALL MEMBERSHIPS INCLUDE:**

Free admission to the main building and The Cloisters museum and gardens (including general admission and special exhibitions) and many other standard benefits.



Q  
&  
A

**How can we innovate around  
engagement/loyalty/frequency  
for (and with) our visitors?**