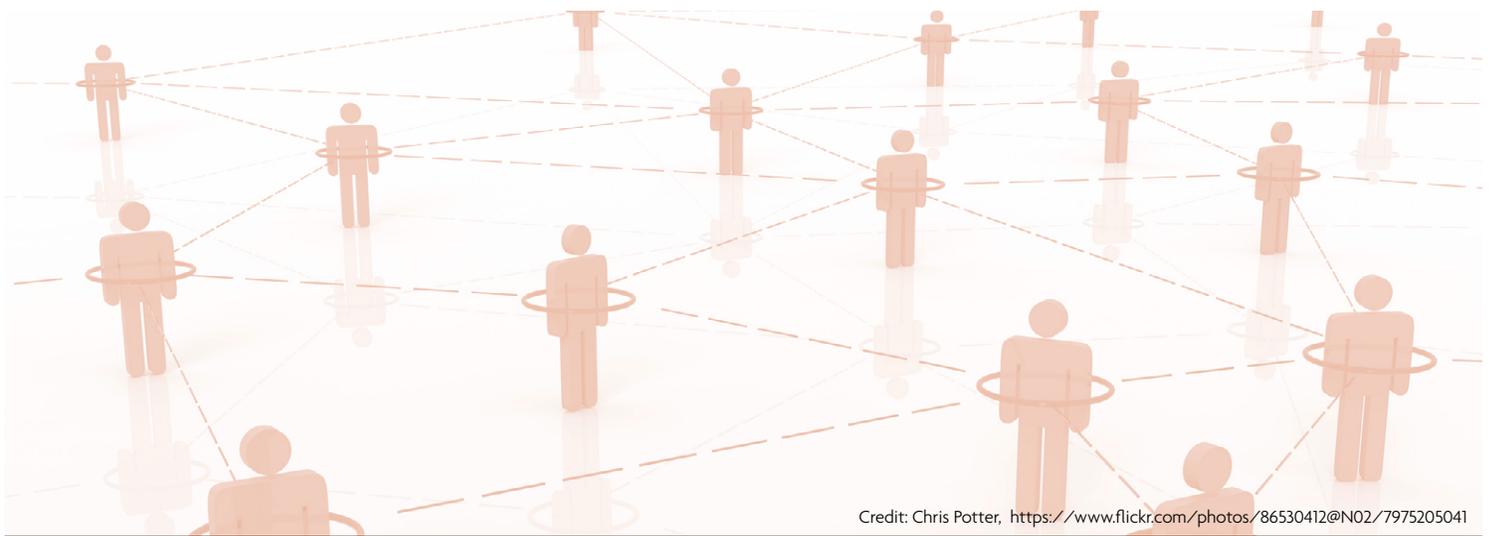




LAM Education Needs Assessments:
Bridging the Gaps

EDUCOOPIA
INSTITUTE



Credit: Chris Potter, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/86530412@N02/7975205041>

EDUCOPIA INSTITUTE

Publication Notes

Title: LAM Education Needs Assessments: Bridging the Gaps

Authors: Christina Drummond, Tom Claeson, Laurie Gemmill Arp,
Katherine Skinner

Publisher: Educopia Institute, 1230 Peachtree Street, Suite 1900, Atlanta, GA 30309

Copyright: 2015

Credit: This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and
Library Services. (Grant number RE-00-14-0095-14)

This publication is covered by the following Creative Commons License:

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0

You are free to copy, distribute, and display this work under the following conditions:

Attribution—You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author or licensor (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Specifically, you must state that the work was originally published as *LAM Education Needs Assessments: Bridging the Gaps*, and you must attribute the copyright holder as the Educopia Institute.

Noncommercial—You may not use this work for commercial purposes.

No Derivative Works —You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holder. Your fair use and other rights are in no way affected by the above.

The above is a human-readable summary of the full license, which is available: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Cover image credits, clockwise from top left: San Diego International Airport <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sandiegointernationalairport/4877323702/>; aotaro, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/aotaro/19247933840/>; Jan Tik, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seattle_library_framework_inside.jpg; pschubert, <http://www.morguefile.com/archive/display/590332>



Credit: Steve Johnson, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/artbystevejohnson/9087895963>

Purpose

Libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs) must anticipate and embrace change to continually meet the needs of their diverse communities. Common challenges – including rapid technological changes, the emergence of new learning styles, and the evolution of new content forms – impact staff members across these three distinct-but-related fields.¹

Continuing education and professional development (CE/PD)² opportunities enable librarians, archivists, curators, educators, and other professional staff to increase their knowledge and levels of practice so that they may better serve their fields and communities in these quickly changing environments. Such CE/PD offerings are imperative for these information-oriented professionals, who have to continue to develop new

skill sets and expand their professional knowledge throughout their careers.

Across LAMs, resources are few but the professional need and desire for CE/PD opportunities are high, and training providers increasingly explore collaboration as a means of reaching efficiencies of scale. Understanding where professional associations or training providers can best partner or leverage efforts requires an acute awareness of both unique and common needs across the diverse set of LAMs. While numerous efforts already explore CE/PD needs across individual memberships or sub-sectors,³ the results from such data collection efforts are not easily combined. Without a Rosetta Stone that allows us to bridge assessment efforts, the three fields (and their sub-fields) are limited in the extent to which

¹ Countless studies, reports, events, and debates have addressed both the similarities and the differences between these three fields, including Diane Zorich, Günter Waibel, and Ricky Erway, *Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration Among Libraries, Archives and Museums* (Dublin, OH: OCLC, 2008), <http://oclc.org/content/dam/research/publications/library/2008/2008-05.pdf>, and the Mapping the Landscapes Team, *Spanning Our Field Boundaries: Mindfully Managing LAM Collaboration* (Atlanta, GA: Educopia Publishing, 2015), <http://educopia.org/publications/spanning-our-field-boundaries-mindfully-managing-lam-collaborations>.

² There are many terms used in different fields to describe adult learning opportunities. For the LAM fields, the term “CE/PD” has been chosen for use by the Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries, and Museums. This paper adheres to this terminology.

³ See Appendix.

they can join forces and look across their data to identify collaboration opportunities with high impact potential.

Little around the process of conducting a CE/PD needs assessment for LAMs has been shared or documented. Yet, beyond the LAM fields, textbooks such as *Planning Responsibly for Adult Education: A Guide to Negotiating Power and Interests*⁴ or *A Practical Guide to Needs Assessment*⁵ provide frameworks and guidelines to inform needs assessment practice across a wide range of sectors and fields.

This paper aims to introduce guiding principles and practices for needs assessments from beyond the LAM sphere of reference. A needs assessment literature review highlights research that has been conducted for other fields (e.g., higher education, nonprofit training, etc.), drawing attention to models that could inform LAM practice. Existing LAM CE/PD needs assessment efforts⁶ are then contextualized against these models to inform future cross-sector CE/PD collaborations.

Across LAMs, resources are few but the professional need and desire for CE/PD opportunities are high, and training providers increasingly explore collaboration as a means of reaching efficiencies of scale.

⁴ Ronald M. Cervero and Arthur L. Wilson, *Planning Responsibly for Adult Education: A Guide to Negotiating Power and Interests*, 1st ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1994).

⁵ Catherine Sleezer, Darlene Russ-Eft, and Kavita Gupta, *A Practical Guide to Needs Assessment*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer, 2014).

⁶ See Appendix.



An individual may not ultimately know, or be able to self-report, his/her training needs.

Different Levels of Needs Assessment

When we consider training needs, we often think first of the individual learner. What does a person need to be successful in his/her professional life, across a career? In some cases, individuals may just need to focus on training opportunities that address existing professional competencies, as published by their professional associations (e.g., the American Library Association⁷), accreditation organizations (e.g., the Academy of Certified Archivists⁸), training centers (e.g., the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies⁹), peers (e.g., the American Alliance of Museums Curators Committee, CurCom¹⁰), or their own organizations (e.g., the National Parks Service¹¹). Yet, competencies are only part of the picture. One's role and associated required skill set is heavily dependent on the direction and derivative needs of one's organization, profession, field, and community.

⁷ American Library Association, "Core Competencies," *ALA.org*, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/careers/corecomp>.

⁸ Academy of Certified Archivists, "Handbook for Archival Certification," *Certifiedarchivists.org*, accessed October 6, 2015, <http://www.certifiedarchivists.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/handbook.pdf>.

⁹ International Council of Museums, "ICOM Curricula Guidelines for Museum Professional Development," *ICOM.museum*, maintained by the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies, last modified August 28, 2009, http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/professions/curricula_eng.pdf.

¹⁰ American Alliance of Museums Curators Committee, Standing Committee on Ethics, "Curator Core Competencies," *American Alliance of Museums*, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://www.aam-us.org/docs/default-source/professional-networks/curator-core-competencies.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.

¹¹ National Park Service, Training and Development Division, "Museum Management," *NPS.gov*, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://www.nps.gov/training/npsonly/RSC/musmngt.htm>.



Figure 1: Connected needs

The training an individual will require to do their job next year will depend on the path of their organization, profession, and field.

In other words, an individual may not ultimately know, or be able to self-report, his/her training needs. As Dr. Alan Knox, a leading education researcher, documented in the 1970s, CE/PD needs assessment research should capture information well beyond individual preferences and willingness to participate, including expert opinions on the needs of the field; gaps in competencies and proficiencies; and social, political, and economic trends.¹²

As depicted in Figure 1, an organization's staffing needs, often reflected in its strategic plan and recognized by its leaders, shapes and molds the expectations and related needs of individual staff members. An organization's needs are tied to the needs of the community it serves through its mission. Its needs may also be influenced (directly or indirectly) through its leadership and funding. An organization's leaders and supporters also have their own needs. Directions set by all of these organizational stakeholders directly influence what an organization will need to meet its mission.

Individual learners are subject to the push and pull of directions coming out of this mesh of interconnected needs – individual, organizational, and field-wide. Training an individual in what she/he will require to do a job tomorrow or next year will depend on what occurs at all of these levels. Keeping this in mind, when considering how to approach a CE/PD needs assessment within LAMs, it is necessary to ask “whose needs are we talking about?” As described below, multiple levels of need should be considered when assessing future CE/PD.

¹² Alan B. Knox, “Research insights into adult learning,” in *World Yearbook of Education 1979: Recurrent Education and Lifelong Learning*, ed. Tom Schuler and Jacquetta Megarry (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2012). https://books.google.com/books?id=TdRNfIKlwVMC&printsec=frontcover&source=gb_s_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false, 64.



Research consistently has identified challenges and biases that can be introduced when relying on self-assessments alone.

Level 1: Understanding the Needs of the Adult Learner

Education and professional development experts publish extensively on assessment approaches and trends pertaining to *individual* level CE/PD needs. This research broadly focuses on the needs of adult learners, with research efforts falling under the terms of “talent development,” “adult learning,” “adult education,” or “human resources development.” Many LAM CE/PD needs assessments¹³ already utilize some of the methods researchers have put forward for exploring individuals’ wants or needs, including interviews; focus groups; surveys; direct observation; and the analysis of documents, artifacts, photos, and videos.¹⁴ An individual’s perception of his/her own needs can be much broader than core competencies, and will be influenced by their own situational context.

Beyond Asking “What Do You Need?”

The importance of capturing learner needs information is clear, but “(t)he question remains – needs, as perceived by whom?”¹⁵ Researchers recognize that individual CE/PD needs are driven by learner “wants, felt needs, and unmet needs.”¹⁶ Having individuals voice their needs only captures part of the picture – the “wants” and the “felt needs.” Research consistently has identified challenges and biases that can be introduced when relying on self-assessments alone, concluding that “(l)earners have been shown to be inaccurate in self-assessing their educational needs.”¹⁷ As a result, educators have been urged to broaden their needs assessment toolkits, incorporating data collection methods beyond surveys and semi-structured self-reflection. For example, educators of health care providers have been cautioned:

Subjective assessments, such as questionnaires and self-reflection activities . . . may not be as useful for obtaining rigorous data. Objective, comprehensive assessments are necessary for demonstrating true need, as these are built upon validated criteria and truly represent healthcare practice patterns. Assessments such as case vignettes, standardized knowledge and skill assessment, peer reviews, and objective practice observation may be helpful to eliminate self-assessment bias.¹⁸

Knox has expanded on this advice, sharing that “(s)imple surveys and self-assessments are not helpful unless they are paired with other sources of

¹³ See Appendix.

¹⁴ Slezzer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 52-76.

¹⁵ Knox, “Research insights into adult learning,” 5.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Janssen Therapeutics, *Guide to Conducting an Educational Needs Assessment: Beyond the Literature Review*, Janssen Therapeutics Grants & Contributions, last modified December 11, 2011, [https://www.janssentherapeutics-grants.com/sites/all/themes/ttg/assets/Needs Assessment Guide.pdf](https://www.janssentherapeutics-grants.com/sites/all/themes/ttg/assets/Needs%20Assessment%20Guide.pdf), 4.

¹⁸ Ibid.

input such as 360° evaluations from people you work with, peer review to see evidence of what people are actually doing, and documentation.”¹⁹ Knox has also noted that the value of a needs assessment depends on the involvement of the “stakeholders who are going to do something with the results.” For training providers, the assessment itself is but one part of ongoing CE/PD program implementation, along with “formative evaluation about how you improve a program that’s ongoing, and summative evaluation that’s concerned with the outcome or results.”²⁰

Similarly, Dr. Amy D. Rose cautions that individual level needs assessment data is “most problematic when it isn’t balanced by the perspectives of the executive leadership.”²¹ The challenge with individual level data, Rose continues, is that “just because they say they want it doesn’t mean they actually need it or will attend it if it’s offered. Simplistic inquiries rarely actually get at needs.”²² Approaching needs assessments with individuals via such common methods as surveys and focus groups requires a researcher to go beyond the surface questions (*e.g.*, “what development classes would you be interested in taking?”) and instead address the context within which those individuals work and how that context is changing and requiring new skills of its workforce.

Level 2: Appreciating the Needs of the Organization

Education professionals also publish extensively on approaches and trends to assess *organizational* level CE/PD needs. The organizational perspective is informed by an organization’s leadership, and includes a top-down view of what skills/proficiencies staff

need to attain in order to move the institution forward. As summarized in the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)’s²³ *Practical Guide to Needs Assessment*, organizational needs can be inclusive of staff needs, spanning the following:

1. **strategic needs** – identified through gaps between the current and desired conditions required to meet long-term organizational goals,
2. **operational/tactical needs** – surfaced in gaps between current and desired (near-term) operational conditions,
3. **individual performance needs** – gauged from the difference between current and desired accomplishments, behaviors, and performance, and
4. **learning needs** – gaps in knowledge and skill between current and desired conditions.²⁴

Indeed, Sleezer et al. define “training needs assessment” as one of four types of organizational needs analyses, complementing 1) “Business analysis” – identifying and clarifying an organization’s strategic or operational goals and how to measure them (*i.e.*, organizational direction); 2) “Performance analysis” – identifying capacity and processes for producing accomplishments (*i.e.*, organizational capacity); and 3) “Cause analysis” – identifying specific reasons for performance gaps (*i.e.*, challenges to be overcome).²⁵ “Training needs assessment” – or, identifying performance gaps that can be addressed with training solutions – in theory should be directly informed by these other types of organizational analyses that provide context for the individual’s working environment.

¹⁹ Alan Knox, interview by Katherine Skinner, July 23, 2015.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Amy D. Rose, interview by Katherine Skinner, August 12, 2015.

²² Ibid.

²³ Currently known as the Association for Talent Development (ATD).

²⁴ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 37-38.

²⁵ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 38-39.



Figure 2: Factors impacting CE-PD needs

Training needs assessment should be directly informed by other types of organizational analyses that provide information about the context of the individual’s working environment.

Individual and organizational level CE/PD-related needs do not evolve in a vacuum; rather, they are themselves informed and impacted by directions set at the field, profession, and community levels (see Figure 2). LAMs must stay relevant in service to their communities. Organizational directions and services are often influenced by both changes in the communities served (e.g., demographics) and changing professional trends (e.g., technology or service approaches).

Organizational needs assessments therefore bridge the needs of an organization’s staff and the needs of its broader stakeholder communities.²⁶ Identifying what an organization needs from its CE/PD investments of staff time and funding not only clarifies the desired CE/PD outcomes for the organization’s leadership, but it also informs program planning and justifies continued CE/PD support by showing how it prepares the organization not for where it is, but for where it wants to be. Just as an individual’s needs are informed by those of her organization, an organization’s direction and related needs are tied to the needs of society, as indicated by such measures as patron requests or funding sources. Some needs assessments use a broader systems approach to map societal needs back to an organization for strategic planning purposes, thereby allowing an organization to address specific gaps through its operations and staff.

²⁶ See Watkins, Miers, and Visser for research on organizational level needs assessment. Ryan Watkins, Maurya West Meiers, and Yusra Laila Visser, *A Guide to Assessing Needs: Essential Tools for Collecting Information, Making Decisions, and Achieving Development Results* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2012), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2231>.

“Capacity development,” a familiar term among nonprofit and government organizations, encapsulates this “process through which individuals, organizations, and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time.”²⁷ Public service institutions, such as The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), illustrate the interplay between an organization’s own strategic and operational capacity-driven needs and those of the field or communities served. In its work innovating technology to address agriculture and food supply challenges, UNDP defined three levels of capacity that should be considered when working to triangulate the level of training need: 1) the environment (or system) level (*i.e.*, the broad national and/or international context within which a program operates), 2) the organization level (*i.e.*, the wide range of organizations involved that share common objectives), and 3) the individual level.²⁸ To effect change, UNDP recognized that its partner organizations were shaped as much by the environment or society (*e.g.*, through laws, regulations) as by the individuals within them (*e.g.*, through skills, leadership, relationships).²⁹ LAMs face similar inter-dependencies on a regular basis.

Level 3: Integrating the Needs of the Profession

It is important to anticipate changes or shifts in a given profession to proactively (not reactively) plan for CE/PD investments capable of preparing staff for future years. Trends within the LAM professions and fields can signal future CE/PD needs. Knox notes how experts can anticipate “needs that will probably emerge for many adults in a given category as a result of life-cycle change and societal change. From an examination of trends, experts can help us to anticipate some of the needs that many individuals will have in the future.”³⁰ As noted above, the professional associations that represent LAMs are positioned to both project and plan for trends that can impact their member associations. As a key example, the American Alliance of Museums regularly exposes its membership to emerging issues, technologies, and research through its Center for the Future of Museums.³¹ Such professional or meta-organizations ideally develop this broad perspective based on the conglomerate of their members’ experiences and needs. The question then



Credit: Gowolves109, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Measurement_unit.jpg

Identifying organizational CE/PD objectives can clarify desired outcomes for leadership, inform program planning, and help justify continued CE/PD support.

²⁷ United Nations Development Programme, Capacity Development Group, *Capacity Assessment Practice Note*, UNDP.org, last modified October 2008, [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplavs/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/capacity-assessment-practice-note/Capacity Assessment Practice Note.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplavs/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/capacity-assessment-practice-note/Capacity%20Assessment%20Practice%20Note.pdf).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Alan B. Knox, “Critical Appraisal of the Needs of Adults for Educational Experiences as a Basis for Program Development,” *Institute of Education Sciences*, accessed September 21, 2015, <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED022090.pdf>, 7.

³¹ Elizabeth E. Merritt et al., *TrendsWatch 2014, American Alliance of Museums’ Center for the Future of Museums*, last modified March 18, 2014, http://www.aam-us.org/docs/default-source/center-for-the-future-of-museums/2014_trendswatch_lores-with-tracking-chip.pdf?sfvrsn=0.

Trends within our professions and fields can signal future CE/PD needs.

becomes how to bridge the training needs assessments³² of *individuals* and *organizations* back to the anticipated needs of the field (or fields) as a whole.

LAM sub-sectors may also have unique guidance available to them, contextualizing their needs assessment processes for their specific structures, funding streams, or missions. For example, all federal museums, libraries, and archives can obtain training needs assessment resources and guidance through the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, and through publications that may also have state-government equivalents.³³ Competencies exist for professions related by structures (e.g., government records managers and archivists³⁴) and organizational roles (e.g., conservators).^{35, 36}

Broader research has documented CE/PD needs assessment processes across a variety of fields (e.g., health care, defense). As no known research synthesizes the needs assessment process across LAM environments, these other studies provide a proxy, as long as we recognize differences in resource levels which impact both the trainee and organization's ability to pay for CE/PD. For example, the U.S. Military Evaluation Program (MEP) utilizes a needs assessment methodology where "teams of subject matter experts identify quality elements and key learning outcomes which prompt award of credit for comparable learning."³⁷ For medical training, Jacob Coverstone notes that instructional designers working with needs assessment should understand the gaps between performance and skill, professional standards, and barriers to CE/PD, including available resources. He writes, "A needs assessment draws linkages from discovery of a problem to proposed resolution," asking readers to consider the evidence that education is needed and that the proposed CE/PD solution will yield positive change.³⁸

³² Such as those conducted within the American Alliance of Museum's Committee on Museum Professional Training.

³³ Training and Executive Development Group, "Training Needs Assessment," *U.S. Office of Personnel Management*, accessed September 21, 2015, <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training-and-development/planning-evaluating/>.

³⁴ National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, "Local Government Archives and Records Administration Certificate Program," *NAGARA.org*, accessed September 21, 2015, http://nagara.org/content.php?page=Local_Government_Archives_and_Records_Administration_Certificate_Program.

³⁵ American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, Qualifications Task Force, *Defining the Conservator: Essential Competencies*, *Conservation-us.org*, last modified May 20, 2003, <http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/governance/defining-the-conservator-essential-competencies.pdf?sfvrsn=1>.

³⁶ Perhaps due to the diverse array of professions that touch LAM organizations, ranging in structure (nonprofit, government and private) and functional role (conservator, fund development, etc.), no known master matrix of needs or competencies has surfaced that spans the variety of charting efforts.

³⁷ Wilson and Hayes, 471-72.

³⁸ Jacob Coverstone, "Conducting a Needs Assessment (NA) for Continuing Medical Education (CME)," *Analyze Everything* (blog), accessed September 21, 2015, <http://jacobcoverstone.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Fundamentals-of-a-Needs-Assessment-NA.ppt>.

The field level orientation is the least explored within the needs assessments literatures to date; Dr. Amy Rose and others within the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) will be exploring this issue in forthcoming work. As LAM fields pursue field and cross-field level needs assessments, this research may prove useful as a guide.³⁹

Level 4: Connecting to the Needs of Society

Although one might expect multiple professions with mission alignment to come together for system level, joint needs assessment activities (e.g., health care spanning physician education, nurse education, hospital administration, etc.), this research team could not find evidence of this occurring outside of policy settings. Some system level change efforts, including those using the *Collective Impact*⁴⁰ methodology, have looked to engage diverse stakeholder types in the hopes of identifying, implementing, and measuring positive changes at the system or societal level, recognizing the interconnected needs that have to be addressed for stakeholders. This system level focus is resonant with needs assessment work; when deliberately connected, needs assessment and system level framing efforts can reciprocally influence and reinforce each other. Maintaining a system level lens enables a researcher to consider where a field of practice intersects with, influences, and is influenced by the broader system in which it operates.

Leveraging public policy assessment frameworks, organizations may strategically plan for ways to address and achieve complex socio-economic changes for their communities. For example, the California Department of Education commissioned a needs assessment within California's adult education system, leveraging research reports and data, comparative research on programs in other states, interviews with leaders in the field, field participation at professional conferences, and an online survey.⁴¹ This public affairs/policy analysis approach allowed the organization to map its strategic plan directly to the social gaps it wanted to impact. By pulling in data to estimate unmet needs, this effort established working proxies for outlining the types of service. By leveraging census statistics, they arrived at an approximation of unmet need in specific communities. This information effectively allowed the organization to map from the needs of society, down to its organizational strategies and affiliated needs, to the skills needed by its staff. The data also allowed the organization a means to continually measure progress, as the baseline condition pre-CE/PD was documented.

³⁹ A.D. Rose, "Understanding and Assessing Need in Program Planning within the Context of Career Based Basic Education: Insights from the USA" (presentation, Cultures of Program Planning in Adult Education: Policies, Autonomy, and Innovation, Hannover, Germany, September 28-29, 2015).

⁴⁰ John Kania and Mark Kramer, "Collective Impact," *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Winter 2011. Accessed September 28, 2015, http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact.

⁴¹ Svetlana Darce, Nara Nayar, and Paul Downs, *Adult Education in California: Strategic Planning Process Needs Assessment, Outreach and Technical Assistance Network*, last modified November 2009, <https://www.otan.us/strategicplanning/pdf/AE-NA-113009.pdf>.



Credit: kaz k, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kazk/198640938>

Maintaining a system level lens enables a researcher to consider where a field of practice intersects with, influences, and is influenced by the broader system in which it operates.



Credit: Greg Jordan,
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gregoryjordan/5539751263>

There is an opportunity to enhance LAM CE/PD data-gathering efforts by integrating research methods ... moving from “one-off” approaches to consistent frameworks to enable cross-referencing and triangulation of data.

Leveraging Existing LAM Needs Assessments

Most LAM CE/PD needs assessments to date have occurred within very specific settings (e.g., a single association) and have not sought to produce data that could be used outside of those settings. These needs assessments represent a variety of research lenses and perspectives (including library, archives, and museum organizations and associations) and are often performed by association staff with an individual and/or organization level focus. While these assessments have provided data to guide specific association-based CE/PD programmatic development, they have yet to be aligned or compared to investigate the cultivation of shared LAM CE/PD infrastructure.

As the LAM fields work together to assess unique and shared needs across their respective workforces, there is an opportunity to enhance LAM data-gathering efforts by integrating research methods from the broader CE/PD realm. Moving from “one-off” approaches to integrated or cross-referencing frameworks can enable the triangulation of data from multiple levels and from a variety of sources. By working together, LAM organizations can deploy a broader range of tools and model how they may be used, advertising efforts within cross-field gatherings (e.g., the Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries, and Museums; IMLS Focus).

LAM organizations are positioned to collect and review data in concert, across the key levels (individual, organization, field, and societal) to understand and address “needs” using a more comprehensive and informed view than any one of these levels or organizations could reveal in isolation. This data could be collected on a regular and ongoing basis, either through an inter-organizational agency or organizational coalition, providing common data infrastructure to inform everyone’s CE/PD decision making. Longitudinal changes in the data could also illuminate how the needs and arcs of these three fields shift, while also helping the fields identify and address common needs consistently and deliberately.

LAM fields can also enhance their largely qualitative methodologies using quantitative data that already exists at the field level – data that tells us more about who comprises our workforces, where they are concentrated, and how many people they encompass.⁴² Demographic data has been used in some assessment work already (e.g., A*Census), but does not appear to be

⁴² One element of note for future funding is that, in Darche’s research, the “funding mechanism for Adult Education is flat regardless of program costs. A California Postsecondary Education Consortium (CPEC) report notes that this formula creates incentive to cross-subsidize expensive programs with lower cost-programs; however differential funding concepts have been unpopular with the legislature as such approaches tend to increase budget requests. Key informants and focus groups suggested that some of the complaints about the value of some offerings were related to the unfortunate effects of this unintended incentive.”

leveraged in most LAM needs assessment work to date. Going forward, tying together and referencing multiple layers of data will help LAM CE/PD developers, funders, and hosts to create CE/PD that helps the fields evolve to meet their communities' needs.

Approaches to Needs Assessment

Drivers of Needs Assessment

A researcher must define drivers at an early stage of the needs assessment process. A wide range of drivers lead to CE/PD needs assessments, including policy directives, grant agency expectations, state-based mandates, and organizational or field-based demands. As the needs assessment data is used to establish a set of desired outcomes, the researcher must determine how the drivers relate to (and ideally, will reinforce) the aimed-for outcomes.⁴³ The identification and use of drivers is integral to the needs assessment methodology, and helps CE/PD providers/researchers to identify skills that need improvement; establish ways to measure that improvement; and determine how best to achieve that improvement, both through an action or intervention (e.g., training) and through ongoing reinforcement of the results from that action.⁴⁴

Notably, a training needs assessment need not assume that training is the only or the best solution to an identified gap. Approaches beyond CE/PD could include developing or improving incentives, improving peer-to-peer or on-the-job knowledge sharing, engaging mentors, and modifying or enhancing the processes (and technologies) used.⁴⁵ Given the multiple ways available to address gaps, the assessment phase should not limit itself to a focus on training topics, but instead should explore the space between desired and current performance in order to identify and quantify existing

gaps. Assessment drivers can then be used to prioritize and propose actions that are most likely to result in the desired changes.

For example, a needs assessment may be triggered by a desire to improve an organization's ability to meet its mission (i.e., "organizational performance").⁴⁶ In *A Practical Guide to Needs Assessment*, Sleezer et al. build upon this general concept of "performance improvement," noting that needs assessment should allow for the "examining and framing (of) people-related problems, performance improvement opportunities, and organization-related or community-related problems and potential solutions."⁴⁷ This assessment approach ties individual and organizational needs back up to the respective organizational and societal challenges (drivers) they are trying to address.

Some authors note that assessment can be driven by a "discrepancy perspective," looking to identify and measure "differences and inconsistency between what is and what should be at the strategic, tactical, or operational level." Many may think of this as a gap analysis approach. Yet, the same authors also note that assessments could leverage an "appreciative inquiry perspective," which instead of pegging assessment against a defined existing standard, focuses on strengths to "build organizations, programs, and projects around what works, rather than exclusively focusing on trying to fix what doesn't."⁴⁸

Types of Needs

The identification of drivers (as defined above) is perhaps an overlapping, but necessary precursor to assessing the resulting needs against *something*. In the realm of CE/PD, an individual might be advised by his/her boss to improve her/his project management or

⁴³ Training and Executive Development Group.

⁴⁴ Coverstone.

⁴⁵ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 18.

⁴⁶ Watkins, Meiers, and Visser, 23.

⁴⁷ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

The key to effective LAM CE/PD is to ensure that staff CE/PD outcomes meet the needs of multiple stakeholders ... an individual's recognized needs, organizational strategic needs, and shifts within their field or profession.

communications skills (to fulfill a “Discrepancy Need”), but this need may not match the skill improvement priorities that the organization’s leader cites as necessary to help the organization meet the results of a five-year strategic plan. The key to effective CE/PD outcomes, especially in LAM fields where staff time and training funding are limited, is to ensure that staff CE/PD outcomes meet the needs of multiple stakeholders, spanning across an individual’s recognized needs to yet-to-be operationalized organizational strategic needs, and onto field-wide changes that are starting to occur or be signaled by policymakers and the funding community.

In the 1985 publication, *Conducting Educational Needs Assessments*, Stufflebeam et al. set a foundation for CE/PD needs assessment that continues to be used widely today.^{49, 50} As explained by Sleezer et al., these four definitions of need can be explored through 1) differences between current and ideal or expected performance (*i.e.*, “Discrepancy Needs”); 2) what most people prefer or select, often influenced by the majority standard (*i.e.*, “Democratic Needs”); 3) by intuition, insight, expert consideration, or enlightenment (*i.e.*, “Analytic Needs”); or 4) through causal analysis and research (*i.e.*, “Diagnostic Needs”).⁵¹ This set of needs has been used across a wide range of fields to contextualize and guide both qualitative and quantitative research on training and education.

Compared to What? Identifying and Measuring Gaps

Needs assessments essentially define gaps between an existing state of knowledge or need against an established benchmark or identified goal. The *Guide to Conducting an Educational Needs Assessment* for medical training notes that needs assessment is “the gap between what is known and what should be known. Without grounded methods and an assessment of practice and performance gaps, education offerings are unlikely to be effective.”⁵² The guide stresses the importance of training needs assessments, noting that when there is a lack of understanding around learner needs, CE/PD programs may provide education that is either not understood by the audience, or that is so disconnected that a researcher is unable to determine the effectiveness of the program.⁵³

⁴⁹ Daniel L. Stufflebeam, Charles H. McCormick, Robert O. Brinkerhoff, and Cheryl O. Nelson, *Conducting Educational Needs Assessments, Evaluation in Education and Human Services*, vol. 10 (Boston, MA: Kluwer-Nijhof, 1985).

⁵⁰ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 20

⁵¹ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 20-21.

⁵² Janssen Therapeutics, 1.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

Sleezer et al. also recognize gap analysis as an essential component of assessment, noting that, “A want is something the client would like to have even though it does not contribute to a long-term learning or performance goal. By contrast, a need, when addressed, contributes to achieving the desired learning or performance goal by closing the gaps between the current and desired conditions.”⁵⁴ In this context, needs assessment becomes “a process for figuring out how to close a learning or performance gap.”

What to Measure: Areas of Needs Assessment

Just as there are different drivers that lead to a needs assessment, there are also different areas or types of needs assessments. As depicted in Figure 3, Sleezer et al. recognize four areas of needs assessment, with a fifth (“Complex”) pointing to a need to integrate analysis across more than one of these areas.⁵⁵ “Knowledge and skills assessments” measure needs against specific information or skill sets. “Job and task assessments” measure needs against the scope, responsibility, and tasks of particular job functions. “Competency-based assessments” measure needs against the competencies required by defined job functions, “including knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, motivations, and beliefs.”⁵⁶ “Strategic assessments” explore the gaps between an organization’s mission and its staff’s performance.⁵⁷ A common error in needs assessment entails blending more than one of these assessment types into a single instrument *without awareness that one is doing so*. These categories help researchers to conduct a direct line of inquiry rather than merging research questions in ways that make the resulting data hard (or even impossible) to interpret. In other words, understanding which of these general types of assessment a researcher is pursuing helps inform the assessment questions and gap analysis itself.

“A want is something the client would like to have even though it does not contribute to a long-term learning or performance goal. By contrast, a need, when addressed, contributes to achieving the desired learning or performance goal by closing the gaps between the current and desired conditions.”
 —Sleezer, et al

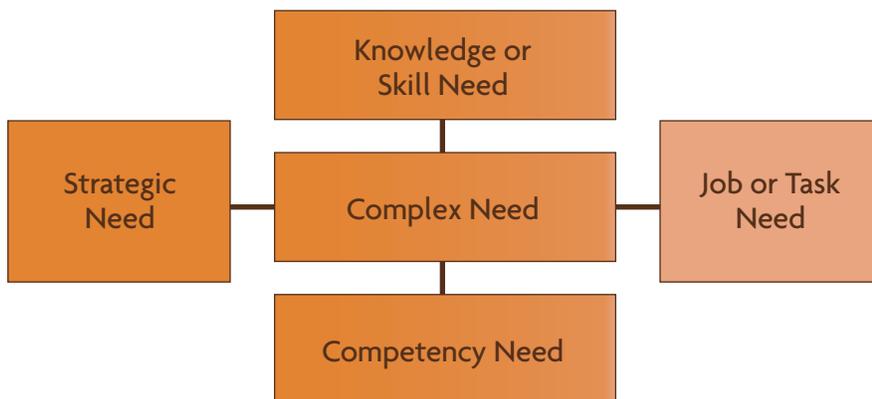


Figure 3

⁵⁴ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 37

⁵⁵ Sleezer, Russ-Eft, and Gupta, 28-30.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Assessment type	Defining characteristics
Knowledge and skills	measure needs against specific information or skill sets
Job and task	measure needs against the scope, responsibility, and tasks of particular job functions
Competency-based	measure needs against the competencies required by defined job functions
Strategic	explore gaps between the organization's mission and staff performance
Complex	integrate analysis across all four types above

Table 1: Assessment types, as defined by Sleezer, Ruff-Eft, and Gupta

Take, for example one of the typical mechanisms used in needs assessment – a survey of audience members – and consider the differences between the following two pathways:

CASE 1:

An association seeks to broaden and update its curricular offerings to meet its members' needs. The association circulates a survey to all of its members asking questions about their preferences around the following: 1) topics, 2) times, 3) formats (in-person, web, other), and 4) cost. Based on the responses, the association adjusts its topical offerings, times, formats, and cost to meet the association members' stated preferences.

CASE 2:

An association seeks to understand what job-based functions are changing for its members and where they need training or other interventions to prepare them to excel. The association circulates two surveys, one to its members and another to organizational leaders. The member survey asks questions about the following: 1) job title and description, 2) recent or anticipated changes to job title and description, 3) current skills exercised on the job, and 4) future functions the job might include. The organization leader survey asks questions about the following: 1) job relationship to organization; 2) organization mission; 3) job relationship to strategic plan (or organization's future).

The first association in these two case studies will be limited by the blurry lens it brings to the research process. The questions it asks are practical on the surface, but they do not help identify gaps in skills and learning that need to be addressed in order to empower staff for future challenges. They also do not gather data that can be triangulated across sources or levels to ensure that the information provided by one group (prospective trainees) matches or complements the information given by another group (organizational leaders). By contrast, the second association potentially gathers concrete data at two levels, each of which maps consistently to an assessment type; the individual survey addresses the "Job and Task" assessment, and the organization leader survey addresses the "Strategic" assessment. Correlating the results from these surveys should provide the association with a stronger basis for gap analysis and intervention planning.

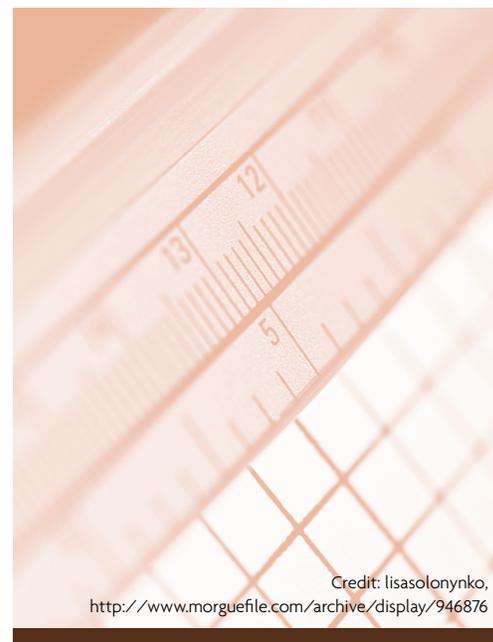
In the absence of established guidelines or core competencies, LAM practitioners could gauge a range of related skills by capturing what staff are already using. One approach, labeled “Prior Learning Assessment” (PLA) in Wilson and Hayes, asks individuals to identify what knowledge they are already acquiring. Wilson and Hayes define PLA as “the process of identifying, assessing, and recognizing skills, knowledge, or competencies that have been acquired through work experience, unrecognized training, independent study, volunteer activities, and hobbies.”⁵⁸ Indeed, some organizations utilize PLA to identify informal learning that may fulfill an employer’s needs, or certification or training program requirements. Organizations or professions that do not already have competency guidelines to inform CE/PD gap analysis might be able to look for trends among the information they may already be gathering through a PLA-like approach.

Another approach is to leverage and adapt published competencies from others, an approach that IMLS itself adopted when incorporating the P21 “Framework for 21st Century Learning”⁵⁹ to publish IMLS’s own *Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills*.⁶⁰ Indeed, the IMLS’s “Self Assessment Tool for Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills”⁶¹ is itself a mechanism for organizational level needs assessment.

Consider Who Conducts the Assessment

Every assessment effort should be undertaken to meet specific goals. Whether grounded in the member-support interests of a professional association, basic research interests of faculty, or the support of future directions by a funding entity, underlying objectives influence the type and areas of inquiry. Understanding the rationale of those leading and supporting a needs assessment effort helps to contextualize the findings.

Recognizing that someone has to ultimately pay for CE/PD affiliated costs, whether the learner, their employing organization, or perhaps an external scholarship or funding agency, there is room to consider the perspectives of both those demanding CE/PD (those footing the bill) and those supplying it. While alignment between learner-expressed needs and the needs of CE/PD providers is ideal, we should also recognize that the entity leading a needs assessments will have its own motivations and objectives. A professional association may need to gauge how best to serve its active member-base



Credit: lisasolonynko,
<http://www.morguefile.com/archive/display/946876>

⁵⁸ Wilson and Hayes, 510.

⁵⁹ Partnership for 21st Century Learning, “Framework for 21st Century Learning,” *P21.org*, last modified May 2015, <http://www.p21.org/about-us/p21-framework>.

⁶⁰ Institute of Museum and Library Services, Office of Strategic Partnerships, *Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills*, *Institute of Museum and Library Services*, last modified July 2009, <http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/21stCenturySkills.pdf>, 3.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

or grow and sustain existing CE/PD programming.⁶² Yet, assessment data derived to inform such organizational objectives cannot fully replace a broader organization or field level assessment effort.

Organizations seeking to conduct needs assessments should consider and make clear which objectives and perspectives are addressed when sharing assessment results, and they should share those results broadly whenever possible. Even if data is gathered to inform an organizational level assessment, this valuable information can be shared and used to engage the greater funding community. For example, if programming needs surface that cannot be implemented due to revenue or funding gaps (e.g., the target learner population cannot afford it), other funding sources may need to be consulted or may be interested in helping.

By sharing this information, and recognizing when it addresses individual, organizational, or field level needs, we can increasingly support underserved LAM learners, addressing needs unique to specific demographics, populations, or roles, and under-resourced populations.

Spanning Multiple Disciplines: Perspectives from CE/PD Trainer Associations

A wealth of resources support both researchers and trainers in the “adult education” or CE/PD landscape. More than 50 CE/PD or adult education associations and organizations serve this area, many of which regularly host conferences and publish research on a wide variety of topics, including assessment. These associations include academic and non-academic, trainer and researcher, and policy and advocacy specializations. This area is relatively saturated, with overlapping memberships between many of the associations.

Several of these organizations have published handbooks on needs assessment processes, including the Association for Talent Development (ATD), formerly known as The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD). Such associations host journals that occasionally publish on needs assessment topics (e.g., American Association for Adult and Continuing Education’s *Adult Education Quarterly*), or conduct needs assessments of their own memberships. For example, ATD publishes an annual “State of the Industry Report” that covers the demographics of the training industry itself, reporting what trainers seek in their own training preparation.

As leaders of some of these CE/PD trainer and education associations have indicated, industry- and profession-based silos are common.⁶³ Of the 11 associations and consortia consulted during this research, only two indicated that they actively deploy needs assessments across their own memberships to inform their associations’ work.⁶⁴ Jeff Carter, Director with the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC) and National Council of State Directors of Adult Education (NCSDAE), noted there is a gap in collaboration on training related research within or across sectors. His organizations are currently working to “strengthen and build new alliances across other sectors — K-12, education, higher education, health, immigration, criminal justice, and others.” Carter pointed to the ways in which policy changes and compliance issues often drive training design in some fields, complicating both the needs assessment process and cross-sector training opportunities.⁶⁵

A few association leaders reported that they work explicitly on cross-sector alignment issues in their training work while also conducting cross-sector needs

⁶² For some professional associations, CE/PD programming revenue may provide a substantial portion of their own organizational budgets, tying their CE/PD needs assessments to their strategic planning processes. If revenue generation is a key consideration in greenlighting CE/PD offerings, CE/PD providers could limit programming to what trainees indicate they (or their organizations) will pay for, thereby meeting the needs of the organization more so than the needs of the individual learners.

⁶³ Some indicated that our cross-field work could prove to be influential in the broader research community.

⁶⁴ Most host open calls for course proposals and for conference papers, using expert committees to determine what they offer each year to their respective research communities.

⁶⁵ Jeff Carter, interview by Katherine Skinner, July 23, 2015.

assessments across their diverse memberships to inform their training portfolios. The matrix includes vertical tracks of training pertaining to specific industry jobs (e.g., government, health care, finance), and horizontal tracks that document issues that span horizontally across fields (e.g., technology, leadership development, mobile learning).⁶⁶ As LAMs look to build upon the outcomes of their needs assessment activity, this matrix model may offer one approach for considering both the specific CE/PD needs within the individual professions, and where those needs may span across due to function (e.g., conservator) or topic (e.g., leadership development).

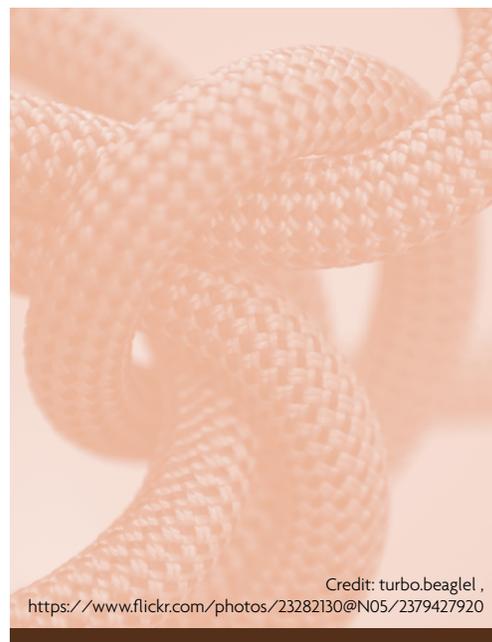
Amy Heitzman, Executive Director of the University Professional and Continuing Education Association, described the impact of the concurrent shifts from in-person to virtual classroom settings, and in higher education student demographics (from 18-22 year old campus-based students to students of diverse ages and settings). These changes have created new opportunities for collaborative experiences among trainers that serve different fields but teach similar topics. Similarly, the Past President of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), Alan Knox, has pointed to the wide range of areas ripe for joint research and collaboration today, but also shared that “there is a long history of interest in collaboration going back over the last century” in adult education, and that the longest-lived examples have such features as shared interests, demonstrable benefits to collaborating, and complementarity of skills.⁶⁷ Dr. Amy D. Rose, Past President of AAACE, concurred, sharing that, particularly in related fields, it is feasible to produce mutually beneficial programs.⁶⁸ These range from data collection efforts (needs assessments, supply analyses) to cross-field analyses that incorporate demographic data to illuminate the gaps, saturation points, and possible overlaps in current training opportunities.

Connecting the work of LAMs with select consortia and associations in the broader adult education research realm may provide additional support and exposure for the LAM CE/PD environment in the future.

Informing CE/PD Assessment Practices across the LAM Environment

Common Practices / Findings

Today’s LAM-oriented needs assessment efforts tend to leverage survey data collection, although some use a mixed-methods approach by incorporating



Credit: turbo.beagle1 ,
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/23282130@N05/2379427920>

⁶⁶ Kristen Fyfe-Mills, interview by Katherine Skinner, July 24, 2015.

⁶⁷ Alan Knox, interview by Katherine Skinner, July 23, 2015.

⁶⁸ Amy D. Rose, interview by Katherine Skinner, August 12, 2015.

additional data obtained through focus groups or interviews.⁶⁹ Often, but not always, CE/PD needs assessment efforts ask individuals “what do you need,” precipitating the challenges outlined above. However, a few examples exist where LAM needs assessments also explore organizational needs, and the needs of their professions.⁷⁰ Despite the variety of CE/PD assessment activity taking place, most of the LAM CE/PD needs assessments have been done with a sector-specific focus. Those few that cover CE/PD issues across the sectors of libraries, archives, museums, historical societies, and other LAM institution types tend to be oriented around a role or profession (e.g. conservators) or other common interest (e.g. government organizations, nonprofits, etc.).

Individual Level Assessments		
American Institute for Conservation for Historic and Artistic Works (AIC)	2015 Continuing Education Survey	2015
National Park Services (NPS)	National Park Service Interpretation and Education Needs Assessment	2014
Society of American Archivists (SAA)	Member Needs & Satisfaction Survey	2012
American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Committee on Museum Professional Training (AAM COMPT)	Museum Community Training Needs Assessment	1996
Organization Level Assessments		
Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA)	COSLA 2014 Continuing Education State Reports	2014
Heritage Preservation	Heritage Health Information Survey 2014	2014
Society of American Archivists (SAA)	Member Needs & Satisfaction Survey	2012
Field, Sub-field, or Profession Level Assessments		
Center for the Future of Museums (AAM CFM)	TrendsWatch 2014	2014
Association of African-American Museums (AAAM)	Assessment of the Field: African-American Cultural Organizations	2008
Society of American Archivists (SAA)	Archival Census and Education Needs Survey	2006
American Alliance of Museums Committee on Museum Professional Training (AAM COMPT)	Training for Entry-Level Museum Professionals	2000

Table 2: Example LAM CE/PD Assessments

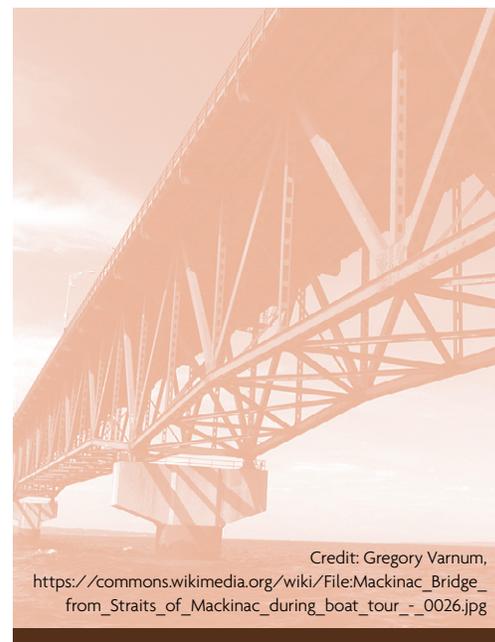
⁶⁹ One example of such cross-sector survey activity was the Institute of Museum and Library Services-funded *Connecting to Collections Statewide Preservation Planning Project*, which included surveys performed across U.S. states and territories between 2008-2012. These surveys, while not focused specifically on CE/PD issues, often included questions on continuing education on preservation issues, and in a majority of states, as a requirement of the project funding, libraries, archives, museums and historical societies all participated in the statewide studies.

⁷⁰ For example, see The Getty Conservation Institute and The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, *Professional Development for Conservators in the United States – Report of the Directors’ Retreat for the Advancement of Conservation Education*, *The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works*, accessed October 6, 2015, <http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/education/professional-development-for-conservators-in-the-united-states.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.

As the trend of closer collaboration between LAM institution types continues to grow, CE/PD needs assessment across these fields must also expand in its scope and methodology. Opportunities exist to combine or align assessment efforts to look at CE/PD needs across institution types. This could further inform the definition of functional or thematic CE/PD areas that span across LAMs of a given shape or size, bringing the LAM sector closer to being able to define a matrix type of training approach akin to the Association for Talent Development (ATD)'s thematic/horizontal approach to meeting CE/PD needs studies of issues across industrial sectors.

In the LAM community, CE/PD assessment could focus on individual, organizational, and field-wide performance improvement, providing information to help bridge the learning and performance gap between current and desired skills for LAM workers. Holistic methods of CE/PD needs assessment should examine the knowledge and skills of practitioners while measuring them against benchmarked competencies. Assessment outcomes could be positioned to inform both individual trainees (*i.e.*, professionally) and their organizations (*i.e.*, strategically). Developing CE/PD studies and their methodologies in a more open/public manner can lead to future replicability of the studies, allowing for longitudinal, cross-sector data generation.

Studies on the effects of CE/PD on the operation and efficiency of LAM organizations is another area of research which has not previously been performed and which may prove fruitful as a future line of inquiry.





Credit: Jan Tik, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seattle_library_framework_inside.jpg

Looking Forward

Where Do We Go From Here — A Call To Action

Libraries, archives, and museums have a wide variety of ways they can strengthen their approaches to needs assessment in order to guide CE/PD. From utilizing demographic information and statistics to determine geographic education needs and gaps, to assessing needs that arise from a variety of drivers (e.g. gaps in skills, job performance, or core competencies), organizations can add to and improve upon the commonly used learner self-assessments. The result will be better informed CE/PD offerings at the association, field, and cross-sector levels, and a skilled workforce that is trained to meet future challenges.

It is vital that we continue working to bridge from the needs of the communities we serve, to the strategic plans of our organizations, down to the needs of our individual learners. In its publication *Creating a Nation of Learners: Strategic Plan 2012-2016*, the IMLS identifies its goals and objectives addressing learning and collaboration, noting opportunities for working both in communities of practice, and in partnership across LAMs, to meet the needs of our diverse publics.⁷⁰ By coming together to increase the use of assessment and evidence-based practice, LAM organizations can maximize the impact of their own public and private funding streams.

To gauge common CE/PD needs across the LAM fields, additional assessment efforts beyond individual and organizational level assessments must occur. We need to strategically align our efforts to meet our common communities, and then assess the gaps between what we are providing and what is needed for CE/PD. For instance, assessments from the organizational perspective can inform and refine staff knowledge gaps from field-level competencies.

Collaborating to determine the CE/PD needs of staff across LAM boundaries and silos is an efficient next step in improving the entire LAM workforce. Doing so across the still-prevalent “silos” of the library, archives, and museum fields will bring about transformational change, both for CE/PD and the fields themselves. Across our fields, organizations, and funding communities, the challenges now before us are to gather rigorous, consistent needs assessment data; to share relevant portions of that data to help inform cross-field development and collaboration; to identify the gaps in needs assessment across our three fields; and to make a plan of action to address those gaps, both individually and collaboratively.

⁷⁰ Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, *Creating a Nation of Learners: Strategic Plan 2012-2016*, IMLS.gov, last modified January 2012, https://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/StrategicPlan2012-16_Brochure.pdf.

Appendix

Examples of Library, Archives, and Museums Needs Assessments in CE/PD (as of August 2015)

These annotated listings provide short descriptions and known context for how the needs assessment fits into to the schema listed above.

Museum Assessments

- Heritage Health Information 2014
<http://www.heritagepreservation.org/HHI/>
 - As of July, 2015, this is the survey instrument only; no report has been issued and it is not expected until late Fall 2015. The main focus of this survey is on preservation and conservation policies. There are a limited number of questions related specifically to CE/PD.
- National Park Service Interpretation and Education Training Needs Assessment Project
<http://idp.eppley.org/INA>
 - See also the [2014 I&E Needs Assessment Report](#).
 - This is a review of Interpretation and Education Competencies performed at various staffing levels within the NPS, and illustrates their importance to employee performance. It explores the individuals perceived importance of, preparation for, and ability to perform defined competencies. Findings included seven top training needs of survey participants.
- Association of African American Museums (AAAM) 2008 assessment
http://www.blackmuseums.org/Resources/Documents/AAAM_2008_Assessment_of_the_Field_Sept-08.pdf
 - The survey provided an overview of organizations in the field, their services to the public, collections information, and institutional needs (starting on page 38); and discussed greatest needs. Some of the needs could be covered through training.
- American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Committee on Museum Professional Training (COMPT)
<http://www.compt-aam.org/resources/surveystudies.html>
 - See also the [Museum Community Training Needs Assessment, 1996](#) and [Training for Entry-Level Museum Professionals Assessment/Report, 2000](#).
 - While these examples are somewhat dated, they are helpful to review. More helpful in their publication style and currency are the AAM “Annual TrendsWatch Reports.” The 2014 report can be viewed at http://www.aam-us.org/docs/default-source/center-for-the-future-of-museums/2014_trendswatch_lores-with-tracking-chip.pdf?sfvrsn=0

Archives Assessments

- SAA Member Needs Survey (2012) (see page 130 for CE/PD information)
<http://files.archivists.org/membership/surveys/saaMemberSurvey-2012r2.pdf>
 - The survey covers overall member needs, with some coverage of CE/PD Attributes, Use of Formats, Quality of Formats, Likelihood of Pursuing training from SAA, and Participation. The “Likelihood of Pursuing...” data includes a list of the most highly desired education topics.
- SAA’s A*Census — Archival Census and Education Needs Survey (2006)
<http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/ACENSUS-Final.pdf>
 - An excellent survey study, although now almost a decade old. There’s a strong focus on CE/PD. A complete issue of *American Archivist* was devoted to survey analysis, data tables, etc.

Library Assessments

- Cultivating Global Library Leadership by Arabella Advisors (2015)
<http://www.arabellaadvisors.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Cultivating-Global-Library-Leadership.pdf>
 - Funded by the Gates Foundation and conducted by Arabella Advisors, this survey and interview-based report includes numerous case studies and training program descriptions. It focuses heavily on library leadership training program providers (supply organizations).
- Spanning Boundaries to Transform Library Leadership
<http://educopia.org/research/nexus>
 - See also [Library Leadership Roadmap](#) (2014), The Center for Creative Leadership’s [Library Leaders Discovery Report](#) (2014), and [Recommendations for Action](#) (2014).
 - The project included focus groups and other research methods to develop lists of competencies and a roadmap for CE/PD in Library Leadership.

- Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) 2014 Continuing Education State Reports
http://www.cosla.org/documents/2014_CE_State_Reports436.pdf
 - State-by-state results of a brief survey on training offerings from U.S. State Library agencies, the report includes lists of subject-matter expertise by state.

Multiple

- American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 2015 Continuing Education Survey
<http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/education/faic-2014-education-survey5676FFD65BB9.pdf?sfvrsn=2>
 - A top-line report of a survey project from FAIC, it features raw data only (no narrative). The survey was focused specifically on conservation CE/PD. Questions covered training topics, costs, delivery, and longitudinal training trends vs. 2006 and 2001 surveys. Cross-tabulations by work setting, years of experience, primary conservation specialty, and number of educational events attended in the past two years are included in the report.
- IMLS Museums and Libraries 21st Century Skills (2009)
http://www.imls.gov/about/21st_century_skills_home.aspx
 - See also [the report](#) and [the Self-Assessment Tool](#).
 - This report is a high-level survey project reviewing the IMLS 21st Century Skills Framework (Learning and Innovation Skills; Information, Media, and Technology Skills; Life and Career Skills; and 21st Century Themes); the 20th-21st Century Skills comparisons; and a variety of case studies. It also includes a Self-Assessment Tool and Skills Definition.



Credit: <https://pixabay.com/en/rope-intertwined-tied-knot-cable-19900/>

Bibliography

Academy of Certified Archivists. "Handbook for Archival Certification." *Certifiedarchivists.org*. Accessed October 6, 2015. <http://www.certifiedarchivists.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/handbook.pdf>.

American Alliance of Museums Curators Committee, Standing Committee on Ethics. "Curator Core Competencies." *American Alliance of Museums*. Accessed September 21, 2015. <http://www.aam-us.org/docs/default-source/professional-networks/curator-core-competencies.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.

American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, Qualifications Task Force. *Defining the Conservator: Essential Competencies*. *Conservation-us.org*. Last modified May 20, 2003. <http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/governance/defining-the-conservator-essential-competencies.pdf?sfvrsn=1>.

American Library Association. "Core Competencies." *ALA.org*. Accessed September 21, 2015. <http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/careers/corecomp>.

Cervero, Ronald M., and Arthur L. Wilson. *Planning Responsibly for Adult Education: A Guide to Negotiating Power and Interests*. 1st edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1994.

Coverstone, Jacob. "Conducting a Needs Assessment (NA) for Continuing Medical Education (CME)." *Analyze Everything* (blog). Accessed September 21, 2015. <http://jacobcoverstone.net/conducting-a-needs-assessment-for-continuing-medical-education/>.

Darche, Svetlana, Nara Nayar, and Paul Downs. *Adult Education in California: Strategic Planning Process Needs Assessment*.

Outreach and Technical Assistance Network. Last modified November 2009. <https://www.otan.us/strategicplanning/pdf/AE-NA-113009.pdf>.

Institute of Museum and Library Services, Office of Strategic Partnerships. *Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills*. *IMLS.gov*. Last modified July 2009. <http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/21stCenturySkills.pdf>.

Institute of Museum and Library Sciences. *Creating a Nation of Learners: Strategic Plan 2012-2016*. *IMLS.gov*. Last modified January 2012. https://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/StrategicPlan2012-16_Brochure.pdf.

International Council of Museums. "ICOM Curricula Guidelines for Museum Professional Development." *ICOM.museum*. Maintained by the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies. Last modified August 28, 2009. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/professions/curricula_eng.pdf.

Janssen Therapeutics. *Guide to Conducting an Educational Needs Assessment: Beyond the Literature Review*. *Janssen Therapeutics Grants & Contributions*. Last modified on December 11, 2011. https://www.janssentherapeutics-grants.com/sites/all/themes/ttg/assets/Needs_Assessment_Guide.pdf.

Knox, Alan B. "Research insights into adult learning." In *World Yearbook of Education 1979: Recurrent Education and Lifelong Learning*, edited by Tom Schuler and Jacquetta Megarry. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2012. https://books.google.com/books?id=TdRNfIKlwVMC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

- Knox, Alan B. "Critical Appraisal of the Needs of Adults for Educational Experiences as a Basis for Program Development." *Institute of Education Sciences*. Accessed September 21, 2015. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED022090.pdf>.
- Mapping the Landscapes Team. *Spanning Our Field Boundaries: Mindfully Managing LAM Collaboration*. Atlanta GA: Educopia Publishing, 2015. <http://educopia.org/publications/spanning-our-field-boundaries-mindfully-managing-lam-collaborations>.
- Merritt, Elizabeth E., et al. *TrendsWatch 2014. American Alliance of Museums' Center for the Future of Museums*. Last modified March 18, 2014. http://www.aam-us.org/docs/default-source/center-for-the-future-of-museums/2014_trendswatch_lores-with-tracking-chip.pdf?sfvrsn=0.
- National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators. "Local Government Archives and Records Administration Certificate Program." *NAGARA.org*. Accessed September 21, 2015. http://nagara.org/content.php?page=Local_Government_Archives_and_Records_Administration_Certificate_Program.
- National Park Service, Training and Development Division. "Museum Management." *NPS.gov*. Accessed September 21, 2015. <http://www.nps.gov/training/npsonly/RSC/musmngt.htm>.
- Partnership for 21st Century Learning. "Framework for 21st Century Learning." *P21.org*. Last modified May 2015. <http://www.p21.org/about-us/p21-framework>.
- Rose, A.D. "Understanding and Assessing Need in Program Planning within the Context of Career Based Basic Education: Insights from the USA." Presentation at the Cultures of Program Planning in Adult Education: Policies, Autonomy, and Innovation, Hannover, Germany, September 28-29, 2015.
- Sleezer, Catherine, Darlene Russ-Eft, and Kavita Gupta. *A Practical Guide to Needs Assessment*. 3rd edition. San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer, 2014.
- Stufflebeam, Daniel L., Charles H. McCormick, Robert O. Brinkerhoff, and Cheryl O. Nelson. *Conducting Educational Needs Assessments. Evaluation in Education and Human Services*, vol. 10. Boston, MA: Kluwer-Nijhof, 1985.
- Taylor, E. W., M. M. Parrish, and R. Banz. "Adult Education in Cultural Institutions: Libraries, Museums, Parks, and Zoos." In *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*, Edited by C. Kasworm, A.D. Rose, and J.M. Ross Gordon. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2010.
- The Getty Conservation Institute and The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. *Professional Development for Conservators in the United States – Report of the Directors' Retreat for the Advancement of Conservation Education*. The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. Accessed October 6, 2015. <http://www.conservation-us.org/docs/default-source/education/professional-development-for-conservators-in-the-united-states.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.
- Training and Executive Development Group. "Training Needs Assessment." *U.S. Office of Personnel Management*. Accessed September 21, 2015. <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training-and-development/planning-evaluating/>.
- United Nations Development Programme, Capacity Development Group. *Capacity Assessment Practice Note*. *UNDP.org*. Last modified October 2008. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/capacity-assessment-practice-note/Capacity_Assessment_Practice_Note.pdf.
- Watkins, Ryan, Maurya West Meiers, and Yusra Laila Visser. *A Guide to Assessing Needs: Essential Tools for Collecting Information, Making Decisions, and Achieving Development Results*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2012. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2231>.
- Wilson, Arthur L., and Elisabeth R. Hayes. *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*. New edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Zorich, Diane, Günter Waibel and Ricky Erway. *Beyond the Silos of the LAMs: Collaboration Among Libraries, Archives and Museums*. Dublin, OH: OCLC, 2008. <http://oclc.org/content/dam/research/publications/library/2008/2008-05.pdf>.