

SOMETHING IN THE WAY

AN EXHIBIT PROVIDING ACCESS AND INCLUSION FOR THE HOMELESS COMMUNITY

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ISSUE

Museums and museum related institutions in the United States don't provide access and inclusion for homeless/unhoused individuals, especially in places where the homeless population is significantly high. Since 2021, the Seattle Art Museum approved a policy which states unhoused people are to stay off the museum property and prevent the set up of tents. SAM staff members responded with a boycott called "Decolonize SAM" to combat the museum's handling of homelessness.

PURPOSE

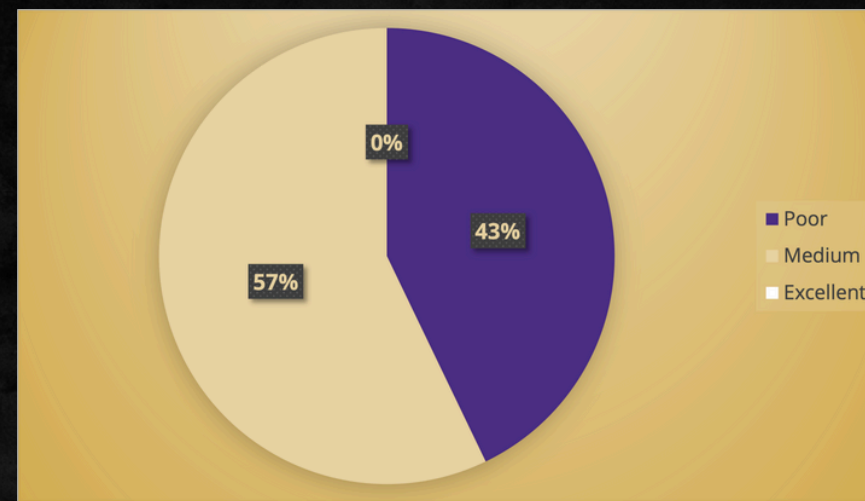
- Provide access and inclusion for homeless individuals in Base Camp Studios.
- Develop the *Something in the Way* art exhibit, giving homeless individuals a sense of healing, safety, and empathy to strengthen community engagement between housed and unhoused visitors and museum staff.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THESIS COMMITTEE

LANE EAGLES, Ph. D. – Committee Chair
NICK FERDERER – Host Site Advisor
PHOEBE ANDERSON-KLINE – Director of Community Programs at Facing Homelessness

How would you rate a museum's ability to allow access and inclusion for homeless individuals?



All housed survey responders feel that a museum's ability to offer access and inclusion to those considered unhoused to be poor and medium.

DELIVERABLE

- Art Call
 - Held from January 3 to February 6, 2024.
 - 6 homeless shelters were reached to invite homeless artists.
 - Artists not in shelters were also invited.
- Art Exhibit
 - Held on March 2-31, 2024.
 - Total of 13 artists and 25 art pieces
 - In-studio/gallery events including Belltown Artwalk, Artist panel, and film screening of "Streetwise"
 - Free food and drinks were offered.

PROCESS

- Base Camp Studios promoted the exhibit via Instagram, while some visitors heard from word of mouth.
- Show posters and copies of the curatorial statement were distributed in the Belltown and Downtown districts of Seattle.
- Total of 10 homeless visitors came to the exhibit, showing their appreciation and opinions on the exhibit.
- Art pieces covered sensitive topics and stories about the artists' surroundings and experiences.



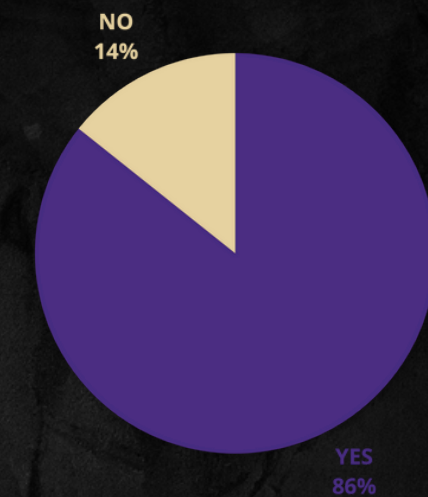
EVALUATION METHODS

Online surveys were distributed through a QR Code. The data was collected through SurveyMonkey, and observations were implemented as well. A total of 7 visitors, all housed, participated in taking the survey. The survey had a total of 15 questions.

Base Camp Studios



Do you believe all museums and museum related institutions in the United States should allow access and inclusion for homeless individuals?



6 out of 7 survey participants say museums and all related institutions should provide access and inclusion for the homeless community.

CONCLUSION

There is a need for access, inclusion, and programming for the homeless community. This subject is debatable due to safety concerns, yet proper community engagement methods can reduce them. Many visitors expressed their thoughts on the issue, believing positive changes should be done. The idea is to inspire all museums and all related institutions to follow the same procedure. By providing a clear understanding of human rights and offering access for all, museums will be able to fulfill their missions that involve inclusion for all visitors.