Institutional Self Inventory: Worksheet for Informal Science Education (ISE) Partner

1. What are our core values?

o   What are the organization's mission, vision, and values?
o   What initiatives are we working towards in the next five years?
o   Who is our target audience? How do we serve them?

You may need to engage institutional leaders and multiple departments to capture a well-rounded picture of core values.

2. What are our strengths?

Define your strengths by considering both internal and external resources. Consider what resources you have now, but also long-term projections for projects and fundraising. Many federal projects take at least six months to be reviewed and possibly awarded, so it is critical to consider future internal resources (or lack thereof).

a. What are our internal resources?

o   What are our most effective programs?
o   How effective are our programs that connect scientists to public audiences?
o   Do we have a program space or room? Is this a flexible space? Can people bring in materials and set up?
o   Do we have staff trained in evaluation? Science communication? Workshop development? Program development?
o   Does our education staff have the flexibility to try new things?
o   Do we have tools or resources to support doing evaluation? Do we already have methods of measuring impact?
o   Is our institution successful at writing grants and receiving funding? Do we have resources and/or staff to support grant writing at your institution?
o   How are our programs funded? Is there capacity or the possibility to update or change programs, or are they dictated by funding sources?

b. What are our external resources?

o   What connections do we have to funding sources?
o   What are our active or potential partnerships with local research organizations or scientists? Consider: university faculty or researchers, university grants administrators, schoolteachers or administrators, after school programs, libraries, parks, youth and community centers, theaters, etc.
o   What is the community perception of our organization? Are we recognized as a leader in current science content? A fun engaging place of children? An educational center?

3. What are the desired audience impacts of our project?

Consider each of the audiences involved in the Broader Impact Design teams:

Audience: University grants administrators
Possible impacts: Administrators understand the mission, vision, needs, and challenges of the ISE and assist in connecting appropriate researchers to the ISE.

Audience: Principal investigators
Possible impacts: PIs recognize the value of ISE resources and designate appropriate funds to support ISE work. PIs develop a long-term partnership with the institution.

Audience: Community connections and learning scientists or specialists
Possible impacts: These partners help build leading practices in inclusivity into program design

Audience: Members of your institution
Possible impacts: Members experience new programs and content and increase their involvement with the organization.

4. Where do we want to go?

How will the Broader Impact Design teams contribute to fulfilling long-term institutional visions and development of internal capacity?