



Michigan State University
UNIVERSITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT
Online Asynchronous Focus Group Discussions
Moderator's Guide
Moderator: Margaret R. Roller

Introduction

General Comments About the Purpose & the Process

Hello and welcome to the first day of our two-day discussion concerning outreach and engagement. As you know, this discussion is being conducted on behalf of the university provost. My name is Margaret Roller and I have been asked to facilitate this discussion. I am an independent researcher who has worked professionally in research methods for more than 35 years. My graduate training is in psychology.

Our discussion will run from Monday November 12th to Tuesday November 13th. I will post two or more questions twice a day – once in the early morning (12:01 a.m. EDT) and then later in the day (3:00 p.m. EDT). Please log into the site at least twice a day and respond to these questions. I encourage you to log in as many times as you like and comment as often as you like. Although this is an online discussion, I am anticipating an active conversation, with all of us contributing to the discussion and engaging with each other.

In my email messages on November 9th and 12th, I sent you instructions on how to reply and comment in this online format. In the course of our discussion, you may want to send me material to review and incorporate in my analyses. If so, please send your documents directly to my email address at rmr@rollerresearch.com.

Participants Introduce Themselves

Before we get into the specific objectives of our discussion, let's begin by introducing ourselves. This group is made up of a variety of people coming from different colleges and units at Michigan State. To help us get to know each other, tell us something about yourself – your discipline and area of interest, how long you have been at MSU – and anything of that nature.

"Outreach & Engagement"

Our discussion today and tomorrow will be focused on "outreach and engagement" with a focus on your outreach and engagement activities and the Office of University Outreach and Engagement (UOE) at MSU.

“Outreach and engagement” is defined as scholarship that cuts across teaching, research, and service and involves generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences. This includes, but is not limited to, scholarship that addresses such community-defined needs as arts and cultural initiatives, children and families, community and economic development, health and wellbeing, human-technology interaction, preK-16 education, and civic engagement.

Participants’ Participation in Outreach & Engagement

Q1 I would like to begin our discussion by learning how outreach and engagement is conceptualized in your discipline, college/department, and your own research or creative work. What is “outreach and engagement” in your context?

Q2 To what extent is outreach and engagement an important, but separate, part of your faculty work life? For instance, to what extent is outreach and engagement embedded in your teaching, scholarship, and research activities as a faculty member?

Q3 If you haven’t already addressed this in your earlier comments, please tell us whether you have or have not been involved in outreach and engagement activities while at MSU and, if so, the kinds of activities you have been involved with.

Q3a. Specifically, who or what are the communities, partnerships, and groups that you typically interact with in your outreach and engagement activities?

Q3b. In your opinion, what are the factors that have made these relationships reciprocal and sustainable?

Q3c. What are the challenges you have experienced in making these relationships reciprocal and sustainable?

Q4 What opportunities do you see for global outreach and engagement in your unit?

Participants’ Use of Available Resources to Support Outreach & Engagement Activities

Q5 Let’s talk about available resources. What resources do you find (or would you find) particularly valuable in support of outreach and engagement activities?

Q5a In your opinion, what makes these resources particularly valuable to these activities?

Q5b What is missing? What types of additional support would be beneficial to furthering your faculty and intellectual outreach and engagement pursuits?

University's Role as a Resource in Outreach & Engagement Activities

Q6 I would like to turn the discussion now to the university's role in outreach and engagement. First, from your perspective and experience, what do you believe are the necessary components of a world-class university outreach and engagement emphasis in the 21st century?

Q7 I asked earlier about the available resources you have used to support your outreach and engagement activities. To the extent that you have not already addressed this, how has the Office of University Outreach and Engagement at MSU assisted you and/or your colleagues in facilitating your research, programming, or other creative activities?

Q7a What about other units at MSU? What other units, if any, have assisted you and/or your colleagues in facilitating your research, programming, or other creative activities?

Suggested New Approaches to Outreach & Engagement Support at MSU

Q8 Let's think now about new approaches or ways that MSU might facilitate your research, programming, or other creative activities. Specifically, how might your research, programming, or other creative activities be enhanced by new approaches to outreach and engagement at MSU? What are some specific examples you can give of new approaches MSU might adopt to support your activities?

Q9 Before we end this discussion, what other ideas or thoughts would you like to share regarding outreach and engagement at MSU?