

EXHIBITION MASTER PLAN



**UTSA** *Institute of*  
**TEXAN CULTURES**



THE  
**MUSEUM**  
PRACTICE

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Institute of Texan Cultures gives voices to the experiences of people from across the globe who call Texas home, providing insight into the past, present, and future.



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

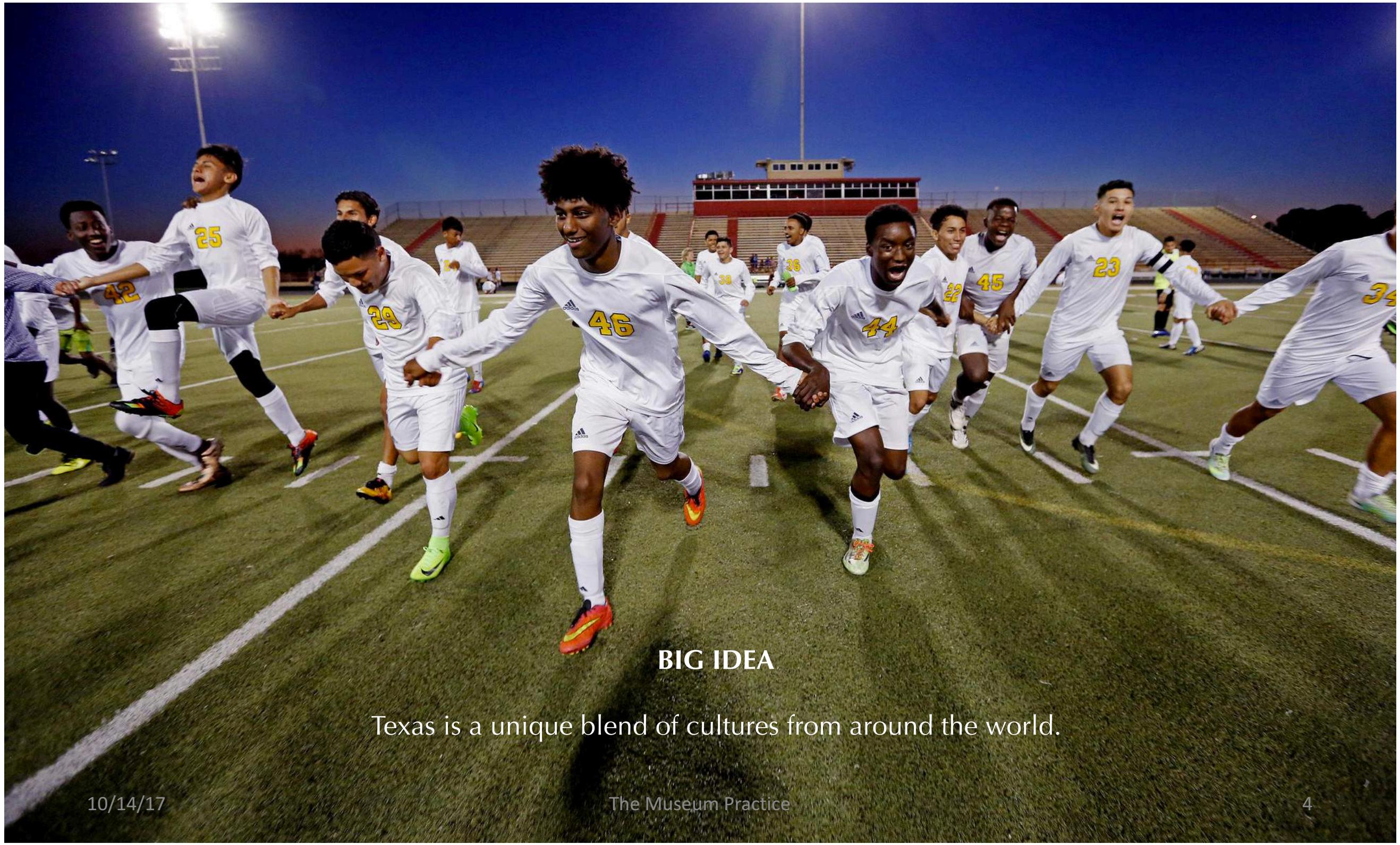
The UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures established the standard for presenting cultural heritage to the public – a standard other institutions would follow for the next 50 years. With the institution marking its 50th anniversary, it is time to establish a new paradigm for teaching, learning and experiencing culture.

The Institute of Texan Cultures connects people to people, and people to the world. Beyond merely showing or telling, the institute enables visitors to experience, personally and profoundly, the cultures that have woven together the Texan identity.

Join us in defining what “Texan” will mean for the next generation.

Angelica Docog  
Executive Director





## BIG IDEA

Texas is a unique blend of cultures from around the world.

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# GOAL

To revolutionize how cultural history is experienced with exhibits that are:

★ Inspiring

★ Immersive

★ Personal

★ Bright

★ Social

★ Multisensory

★ Participatory

★ Active

★ Cutting Edge

★ Inclusive





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## EDUCATIONAL TAKEAWAYS

We want visitors, local and tourists, to leave the ITC being able to answer:

### What is culture?

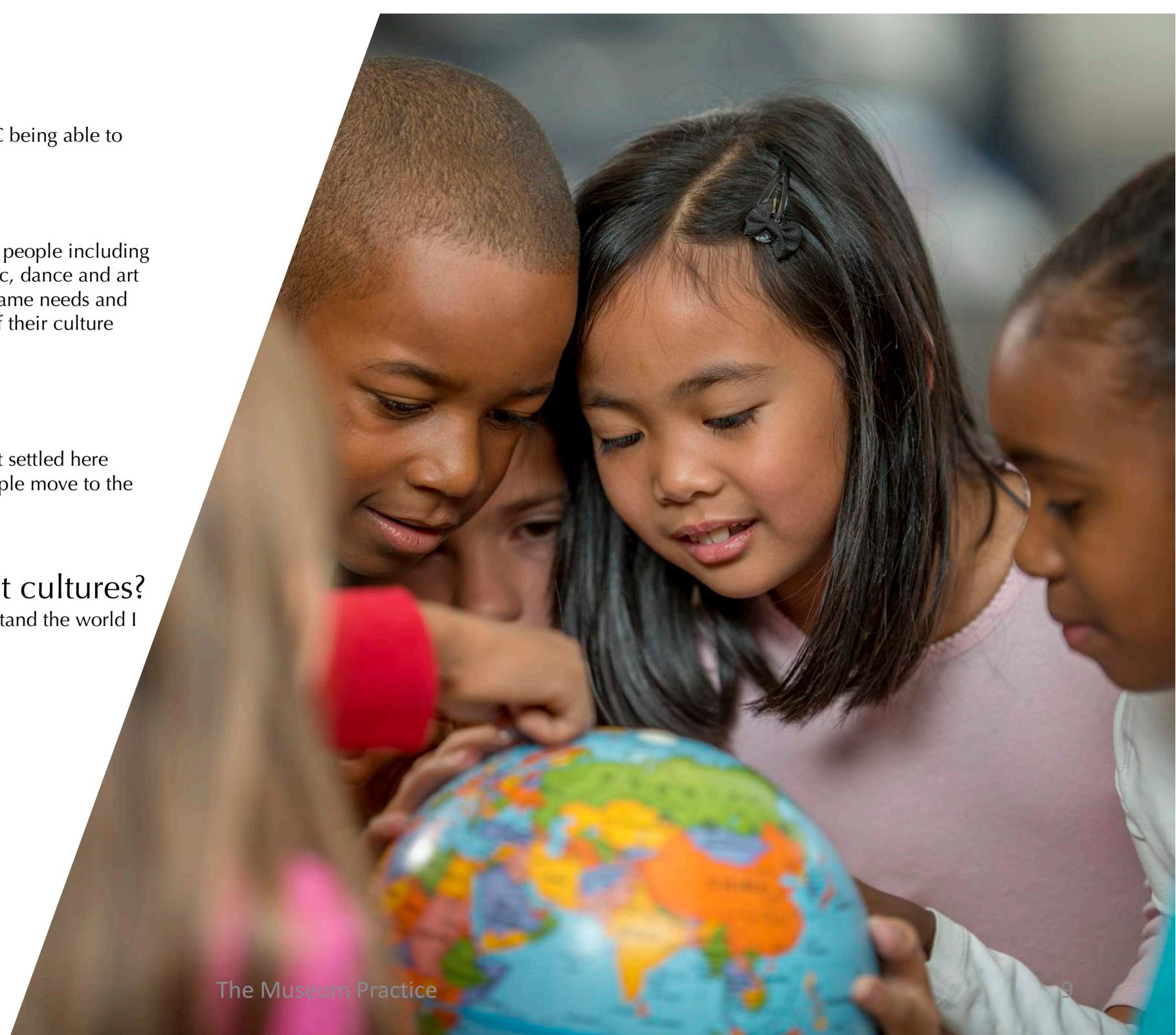
- ★ Culture is the knowledge of a particular group of people including their language, religion, food, social habits, music, dance and art
- ★ People throughout the world share many of the same needs and desires, but approach them differently because of their culture
- ★ Culture is ever changing

### Why is Texas special?

- ★ Texas is a unique fusion of the many cultures that settled here
- ★ Texas continues to evolve as more and more people move to the state

### Why do we care about different cultures?

- ★ Learning about specific cultures helps me understand the world I live in
- ★ My family and I are a product of our culture



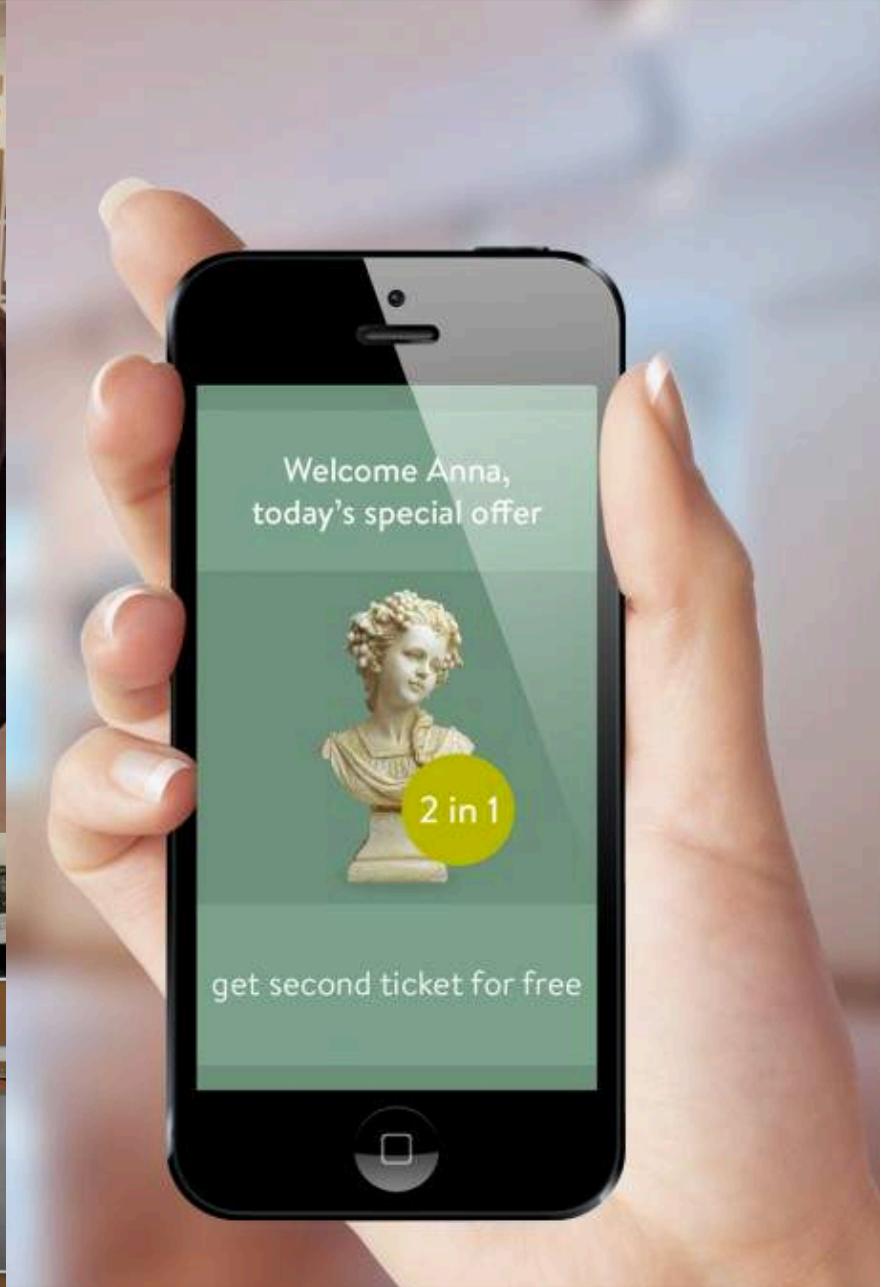
**CREATING  
A 21<sup>ST</sup>  
CENTURY  
SPACE**



★ Focus on Visitors



★ Incorporate UGC



★ Are Data Driven



# VISITOR FOCUSED

The new ITC will focus on the visitor experience by providing exhibits and programs that are:

## ★ Active

Visitors move in different ways, participating in making traditional crafts and even taste new things

## ★ Multisensory

Visitors will be overwhelmed with beautiful and inspiring sights, sounds, smells, textures, etc.

## ★ Social

More and more, visitors come to museums for social interaction. We will encourage visitors to interact with friends and strangers by incorporating:

- Objects that spark conversation including artifacts that are:
  - Personal - connect to something familiar
  - Active – movement is surprising!
  - Provocative
  - Relational or collaborative
- Questions for visitors to answer
- Live interpretation, demonstration and instruction

## USER GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)

Visitors have always wanted to see themselves reflected in museum content. User generated content (UGC) allows visitors to *become* part of the content.

Throughout the space, the new ITC will ask visitors to respond to questions such as “How does this make you feel?” or finish statements such as “I remember...” In addition, visitors will be encouraged to send in similar photographs of family objects they have from home.

Selected UGC photographs, audio, video and printed content will be incorporated onto stories on the floor. In addition to making visitors feel like they are part of the Institute, UGC will help ITC:

- ★ Stay relevant and **up-to-date**
- ★ Incorporate **more cultures** into the exhibitions
- ★ **Increase audience** by encouraging visitors who want to see or hear content donated by friends and relatives
- ★ **Expand the collection** of oral histories and photographs
- ★ Provide basis for **new research**
- ★ Promote ITC via **social media**

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@welcomecollection this object makes me feel glad my grandfather survived WW1. A similar lucky black cat is tucked inside his Army issued book of scripture. #museumfeels #welcomecollection #luckyblackcat #firstworldwar

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8 likes 1 comment

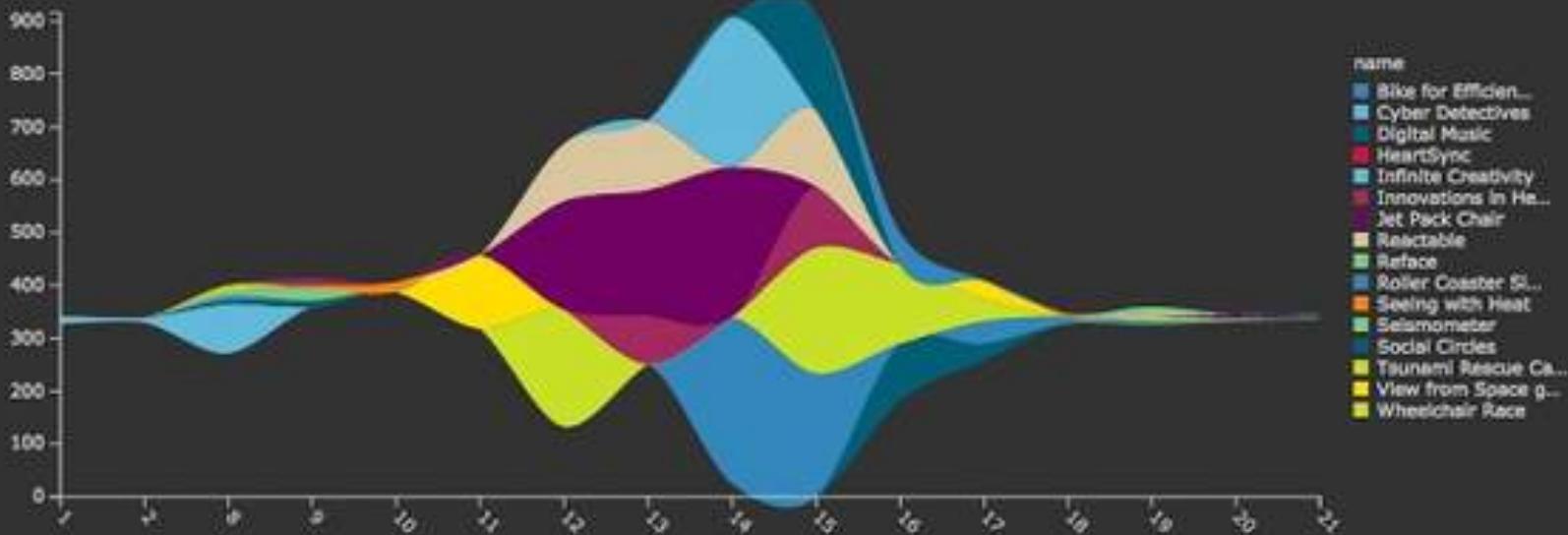
Instagram 12

# Plan your Visit

## Distribution of Visitors

This graph displays how visitors distribute

### Based on Traffic



### Based on Physical Activity



## DATA

Finally, the new ITC will incorporate the most up to date digital data collection technology into the new space. Wi-Fi hotspots, apps like iBeacon, or even wearable tech monitors can allow ITC to track visitors in real-time to better understand both general demographics and individual interests. Harnessing all the ways to collect visitor data is the first step towards being a data driven experience. Big data can be used to:

- ★ Inform future changes to the exhibition space or the programming efforts
- ★ Drive ticket sales by determining when to promote unexpected hits
- ★ Market to individuals based on their previous interest

EXHIBITS  
FEATURES



★ Texas Culture

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★ World Cultures

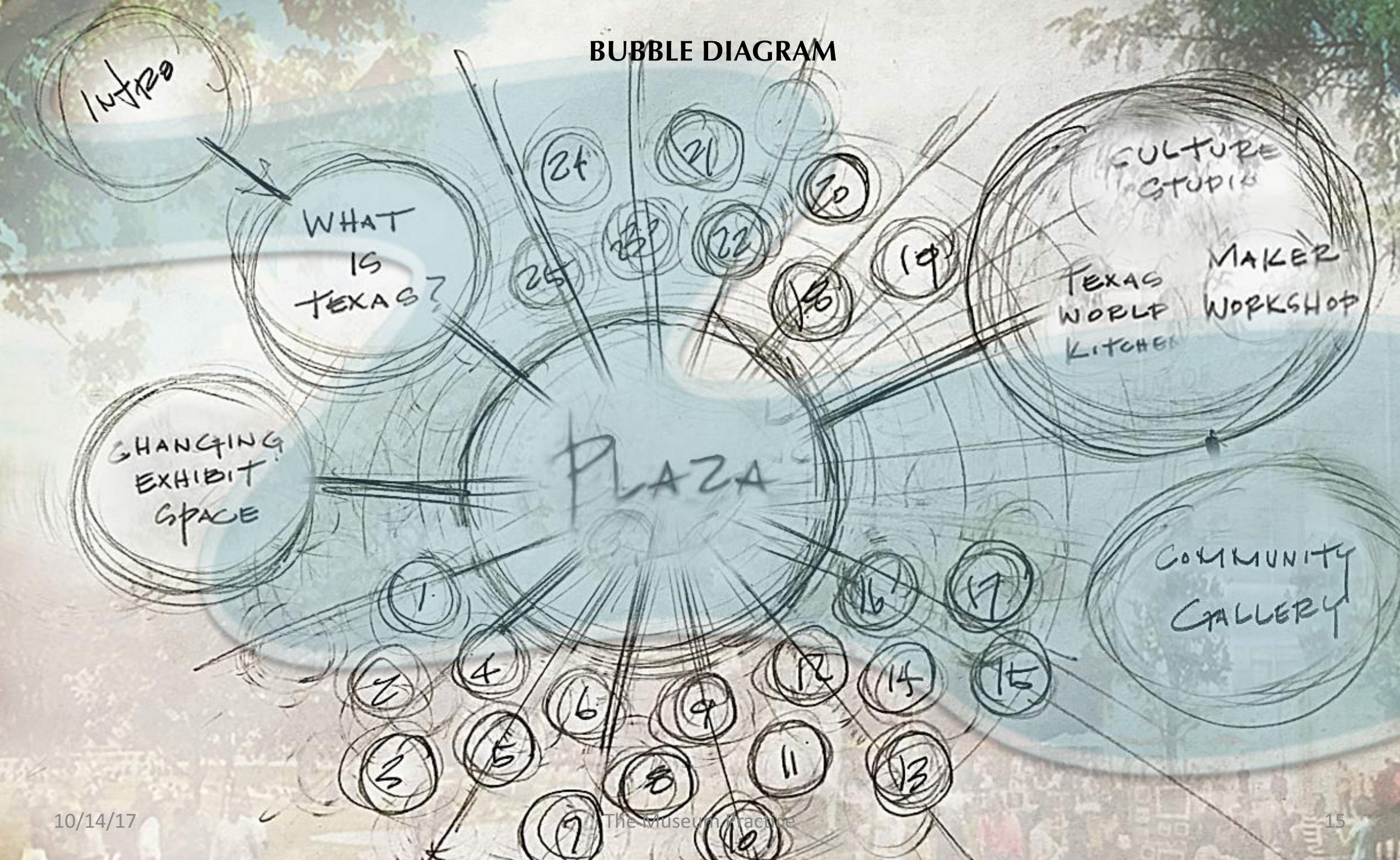
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★ Making Culture

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# BUBBLE DIAGRAM



## WHAT IS TEXAS?

The entrance experience at the new ITC will be a visitor focused, object based, media driven introduction to the people of Texas.

### Takeaways:

- ★ Texas is a reflection of the many cultures that settled here
- ★ Texas has been globally connected for centuries
- ★ The story of Texas goes beyond the stereotypes. It is more than Alamo, cowboys and oil tycoons

### Brief description:

*What is Texas* introduces visitors to ITC, and sets the stage for the rest of the experience, through a series of objects and images that are uniquely Texan. The people and objects included in the space are extremely diverse, but there is no mention of origin, just that they are Texans.

On the way out of the space visitors learn that over the centuries of migration and immigration, and even today, new people coming to Texas have brought special objects and their own way of life with them. Today these customs have morphed into something rich, a state full of amazing art, music, food, community and so much more. Now visitors are invited to search for the origins of the objects featured in *What is Texas* in a “Where’s Waldo” type hunt throughout the Cultural Showcases.



**FUN FACT:**  
The two-inch Cuban heel featured in many styles of cowboy boot has Latin roots, most notably in flamenco dancing.

What is Texas?  
features



★ Personal Stories



★ Classic Images



★ Participatory Moments



★ Inspiring Media



★ Surprising Artifacts



★ Fun Facts



★ UGC Elements



★ Texan Music



## PLAZA: A Central Gathering Place

The large central space features an open stage, some benches and large sails overhead that reflect the Texas sky with clouds, balloons, rockets, maybe a sunset. They also serve as a screens for a reimagined dome show. In addition, the show will incorporate large scrims in some nearby the Cultural Showcases making it feel like a more immersive experience.

### Takeaways:

- ★ Celebrate people and cultures
- ★ We are all connected. We have the same needs (food, water, shelter), problems (man vs nature, man vs man). We are resilient
- ★ We are all capable of great accomplishments and deeds – Heroism, Military, Service, Law, Civil Rights, etc.
- ★ Diverse communities contribute to a strong society – socially, economically, etc.

Uses  
of the  
PLAZA



★ Reimagined Dome Show

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★ Gathering

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★ Performances

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## CULTURAL SHOWCASES

The goal of the Cultural Showcases is to have visitors empathize with other people through stories, immersive environments, and beautifully displayed artifacts. At least twenty-four stories help highlight some of the numerous cultures found throughout Texas.

### Takeaways:

- ★ Cultures share many of the same elements—music, food, art—and express them in different ways
- ★ People from all over the world call Texas home
- ★ People bring their culture with them when they move
- ★ People still come to America for the same reason they did 100 years ago
- ★ We can learn a lot by listening to people's stories about the past
- ★ My family's story is similar to that of other cultures

An engaging template will help unify the experience for visitors



Each Cultural Showcase will:



★ Focus on Individuals - Karla Santoyo, 24, from Aguascalientes, Mexico

★ Provide Hands-on/Active Experiences



★ Incorporate Technology

★ Immerse Visitors

★ Be Multisensory

## CULTURAL STUDIOS

In addition to hands-on activities on in the Cultural Showcases, the new ITC will come alive with an art and music studio, dance floor and a test kitchen/restaurant, where visitors actively make and experience Texas culture today. The studio space provides an opportunity to include traditions from Texas cultures not represented in the cultural silos. The cultural traditions highlighted will follow the annual calendar of cultural holidays so that local people from various backgrounds may come in preparation and celebration of for their family traditions.

### Takeaways:

- ★ Culture is evolving
- ★ We are all capable of producing beauty and greatness - art, invention, innovation, technology, dance, food, clothing

The Cultural Studios give visitors a reason to come back to the museum on a regular basis. The constant programing is supported by the Institute's amazing interpreter program. In addition, students from USTA and local artists can be recruited to share their talents. The programming is active, constantly changing, and new source of income.



The Cultural Studios Feature:

★ Art

Drop-in Activities, Holiday Programming, Collaborative Projects

★ Dance and Music

Drop-in Workshops, Weekly Afternoon and Evening Classes, Practice Space

★ Food

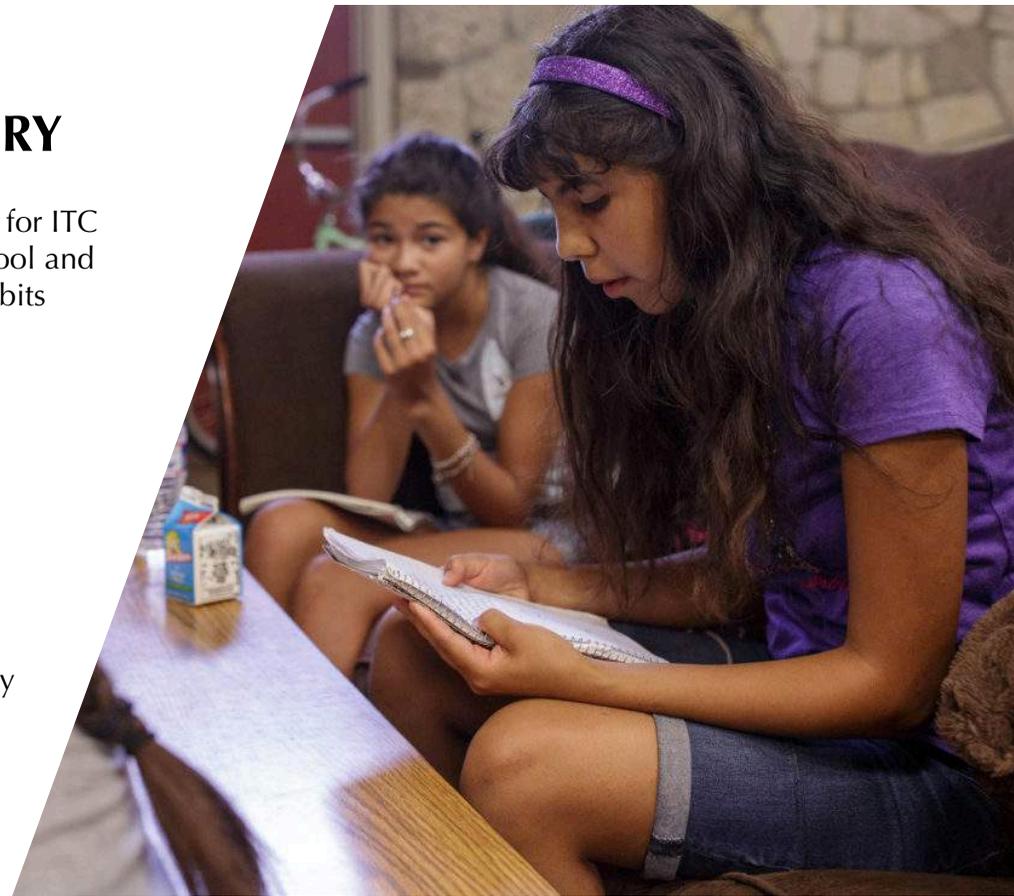
Daily Tastings, Purchased Meals, Afternoon and Evening Classes

# THE COMMUNITY GALLERY

The Community Gallery is a dedicated space for ITC to continue the tradition of working with school and community groups to create and display exhibits about their personal experiences in Texas.

## Takeaways:

- ★ I am a part of Texas
- ★ My story matters
- ★ There are other people in my community like me



# CHANGING EXHIBIT SPACE

Temporary exhibitions give visitors another reason to return regularly. This space will be used to both host travelling exhibits and temporary exhibits produced by ITC.



# RACE<sup>®</sup>

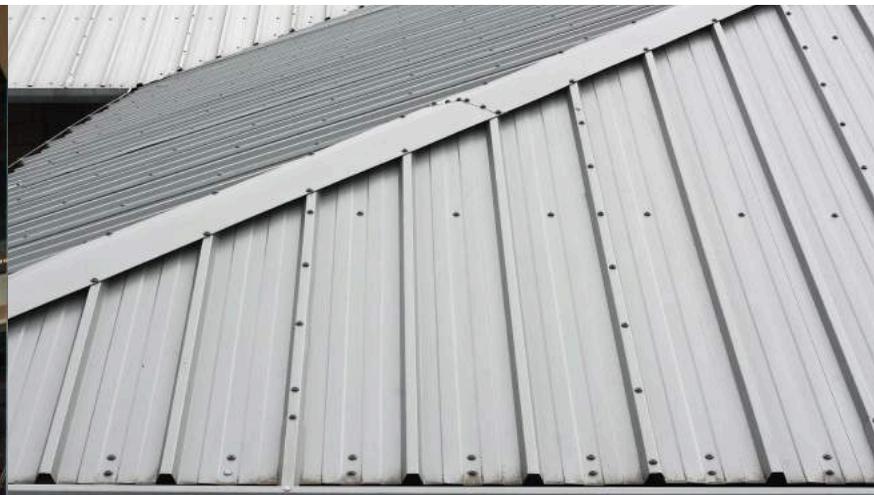
Are We So Different?



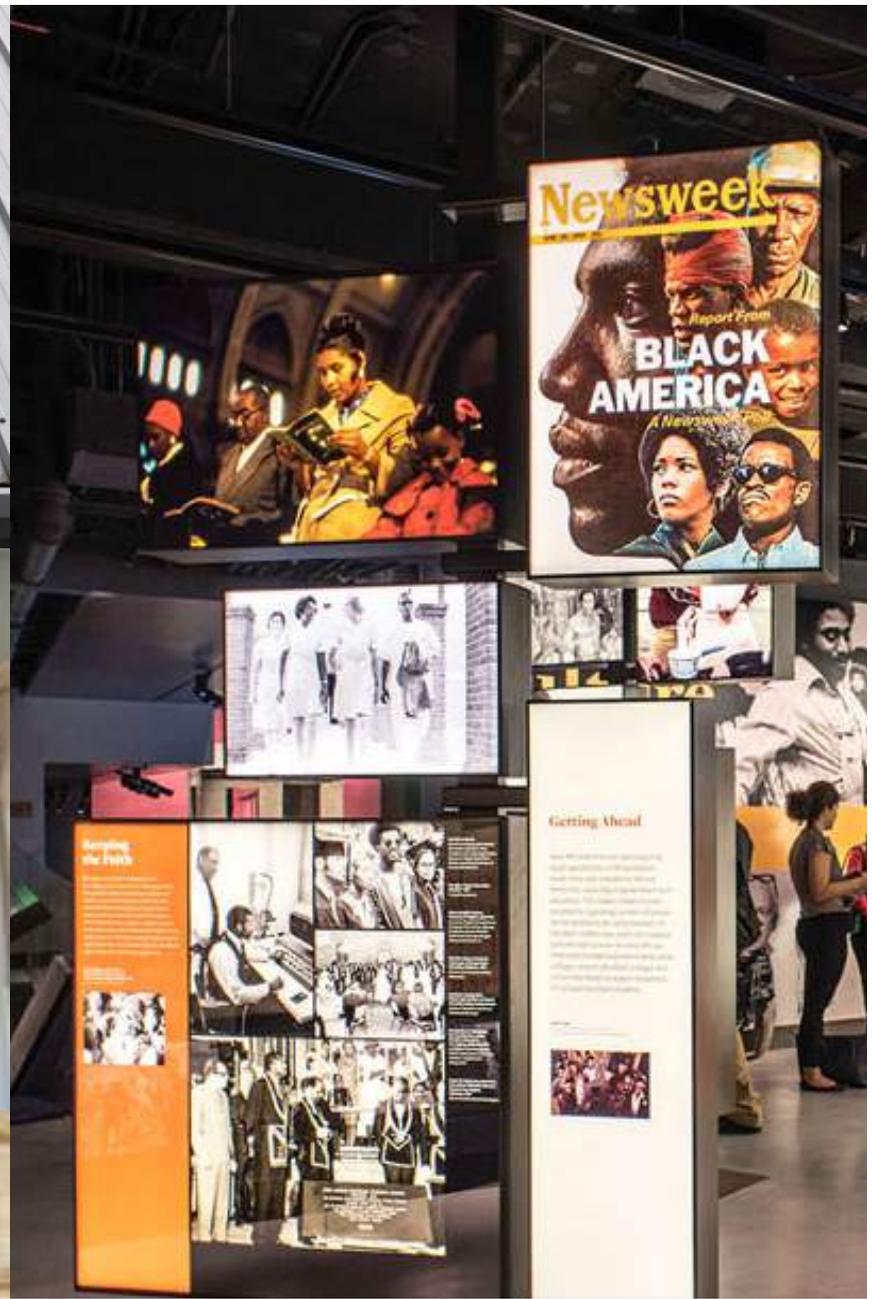
★ STYLE



★ Clean/Contemporary



★ Uses Local Materials



★ Flexible

## DESIGN OBJECTIVES

1. A clean contemporary design will help:

- ★ Update the overall look
- ★ Unify the Cultural Showcases
- ★ Bring new energy to the experience

2. Standardized graphics will include:

- ★ 100% bilingual text (English and Spanish)
- ★ a reference to time periods that can be compared across the exhibits making it easy for visitors to understand just how long different cultures have been in Texas

3. Modular Cultural Showcases that allow for:

- ★ Regular updating: Can incorporate new or different cultures when appropriate
- ★ Reorganizing: Showcases can be grouped by different themes or highlight different cultures around significant holidays or times of year.

4. The use of local materials throughout the design helps ground the exhibition, once again saying, "This is Texas."



## CREATING COMMUNITY

The re-envisioned, active ITC will be the cultural hub of San Antonio serving:

- ★ Residence of Bexar
- ★ Visitors/tourists
- ★ UTSA faculty and students
- ★ School children
- ★ Young families
- ★ Artists
- ★ Cultural Groups
- ★ Newest US citizens and their families



Serving  
San Antonio  
via:



★ Large Festivals



★ Weekly Concerts



★ Naturalization Ceremonies



★ Exhibitions



★ Artisan Focused Gift Shop



★ Daily Activities



★ Research Facility



★ School Programs



★ Studio Space



★ Lecture Series



★ Evening Classes



### NEXT STEPS

- ★ Enter a full Concept Design Phase, with community input
- ★ Simultaneously, finalize location
- ★ After series of approvals, proceed to schematic and detail design



**THE  
MUSEUM  
PRACTICE**

*"We can learn to see each other and see ourselves  
in each other and recognize that human beings are  
more alike than we are unlike."*

**-MAYA ANGELOU**