



# Advocacy for Community Museums and the Communities they Serve

WITH MICHAEL RIKLEY-LANCASTER

Learn how advocacy both for the museum sector and within it is key to a progressive field, particularly in a “post-COVID” context. Without the COVID relief programs, the need for adequate and sustained operational museum funding at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels has never been so clear. The current funding programs are lacking, while the social and ethical commitments of museums are moving forward to reflect the needs of the diverse communities that we serve. Founded and existing within colonial systems, museums have never been neutral, and we have a social responsibility to these communities to do better. To create a sustainable and equitable sector, we must be advocates for change in and for our sector. Join me for a great discussion about advocacy and how it can help us be more relevant to our communities!



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Level Suitability -  
Established-Expert



Type -Webinar



Theme - HR &  
Leadership

Wednesday, September 27,  
2023 - 11:00 am - 1:00 pm -

Webinar

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## Michael Rikley-Lancaster, Executive Director & Curator, Mississippi Valley Textile Museum



Born and raised in Chatham, Ontario, Michael has been Executive Director/Curator (ED/C) of the MVTM since July 1, 2007. He studied Fine Arts at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario before receiving a diploma in Applied Museum Studies from Algonquin College, Ottawa. In the summer of 1999, Michael was a summer student at the MVTM and went on to become the Assistant Curator at Diefenbunker: Canada's Cold War Museum, followed by Program Coordinator for Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations at the Canadian Museums Association.

Serving as ED/C, Michael has been pivotal in making the building fully accessible, acquiring a heating and cooling system, and increasing the Museum's partnerships within Mississippi Mills and the surrounding areas.

He has overseen the creation of two permanent exhibits at the Museum about industrial wool processing, an oral history project preserving the experiences of local mill workers, and countless temporary exhibits that work to provide forums for contemporary issues.

Under Michael's direction, the Museum has been recognized for multiple awards, including the 2020 Ecclesiastical Insurance Cornerstone Award for Resilient Places, which celebrated the significance and benefit of the Museum to the local community for over 10 years. Shortly after, the Museum received the 2021/2022 Ontario Historical Society Dorothy Duncan Public History Award for the Millworkers' Staircase and Riverwalk, which was completed in partnership with the Municipality of Mississippi Mills. It includes 20 interpretive historic panels along Almonte's scenic Riverwalk, a new workers' sidewalk, and a steel staircase that pays homage to the historic route used by workers of the No.1 Rosamond Woolen Mill.

Paving the way for safe museum spaces, Michael has empowered the MVTM to become Canada's first Rainbow Registered Museum and pioneered the first proclamation of Pride Month within Mississippi Mills. Striving to create a more diverse and inclusive heritage sector, Michael is involved in several local Municipal committees and the Ontario Museum Association's Executive Council.

Michael is a proud member of the 2S LGBTQIA+ community.

Visit the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum at [www.mvtm.ca](http://www.mvtm.ca) or 3 Rosamond Street Almonte. [curator@mvtm.ca](mailto:curator@mvtm.ca) 613-256-3754



<https://mvtm.ca/mvt2/>



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