Quilt Index Evaluation
Suggested outline for conducting a Quilt Index evaluation session.

I. Begin with a brief introduction to the Quilt Index.

Tell the group about the Quilt Index.

 Some suggested information to share:

The Quilt Index represents years of research and development to bring together quilt
information in a centralized online tool for education, research, and public access. The
Quilt Index was conceived and developed by The Alliance for American Quilts in
collaboration with Michigan State University's MATRIX: The Center for Humane Arts,
Letters and Social Sciences Online and the MSU Museum.

The pilot phase of the Index, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities,
included the Great Lakes Quilt Center/Michigan State University Museum, The
Kentucky Quilt Project, Inc., The Illinois State Museum, and Quilts of Tennessee at the
Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Major funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, National Leadership
Grant program has enabled the Quilt Index to work with additional library and museum
partners to expand the mass of quilts, to develop architecture and procedures for
interacting with other databases, to develop protocols for adding documents, journals, and
oral histories to the Index; and to develop a series of written documentation for the whole
project.

Quilt collections being added during the current IMLS funded phase include the Great
Lakes Quilt Center/Michigan State University Museum, the Daughters of the American
Revolution Museum, the Museum of the American Quilter's Society, the Rocky
Mountain Quilt Museum, Quilts of Tennessee, the Nebraska Quilt Project at the
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Texas Quilt Search/Winedale Quilt Collection at the
Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

The newly awarded, upcoming NEH phase expands the Quilt Index to include quilt data
collections from the West Virginia Department of Archives and History, North Carolina
Museum of History, Connecticut Quilt Documentation, Hawaiian Quilt Research Project,
Louisiana Regional Folklife Program, Minnesota Quilters Inc., New England Quilt
Museum/MassQuilts, Rutgers University Library/Archives, Historical Society of Iowa,
University of Rhode Island, Western Carolina University's Mountain Heritage Center,
and Wyoming Quilt Project Inc. Funds will also support the planning to develop metadata
and integration of the journal *Uncoverings* into the Index.

II. Introduce the group to the website.

The website address for the Quilt Index is http://www.quiltindex.org/ .

Briefly walk the group through the site so that they are aware of the site's various features. Be sure to show them the browse and search functions.

III. Evaluation

The evaluation is divided into three parts.

A. First, have everybody fill out the pre-evaluation form. It asks for some information about their background and then asks them to devise either a research question or a teaching/learning exercise that they are interested in investigating using the Quilt Index.

You may want to conduct a guided demonstration through a sample exercise. Examples are

> 1. Sample research question:
> I have a crazy quilt that includes the inscriptions "1910, Morenci, Michigan." How can I use the QI to research this quilt? Show searches under "browse through category" of: collection, time period, style/technique, purpose, and location. Talk about how a material culture analysis comparing your quilt to others the QI can help lead to conclusions.
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> 2. Sample teaching learning exercises:
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> a. Example A: I am teaching a class on 20th century American history. How can I use the QI in my class? Could look use the QI to discuss feminist movement or other political movements reflected in material culture.
>
> b. Example B: assign students, material culture/visual analysis find an object and write short descriptive essay, or find two different quilts with the same pattern and compare/contrast – for an art history/criticism/visual analysis essay exercise. Ex. Compare and contrast two quilts with same pattern, but from different time periods or that have very different effects, such as a log cabin.

B. Next, give them some time to look at the website to work on their research question or create their teaching/learning exercise using the database.

C. Finally, have them fill out the post-evaluation form. This asks some questions about their reactions to using the database.

IV. Ask the group if they have any additional questions or suggestions. Encourage them to include any additional comments/feedback on their evaluation forms. Let them know that these comments will be passed on to the project management team.

V. Thank your group for participating and collect their forms!

When you collect the forms, be sure that corresponding pre and post evaluation forms stay together. A good way to track this is to write corresponding numbers on the pre and post forms (1 on both pre and post, 2 on both pre and post, etc.). You can use these numbers to be sure you have matched the correct sets of forms together.

Return completed forms to:

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East Lansing, MI 48824-1045

If you have any questions, Mary can be reached at (517) 432-4118 or Worrall@msu.edu.

Document prepared by Mary Worrall, October 2005 (revised April 2006)