

National Leadership Grants for Museums: Community Anchors

Below are examples of recently funded projects that support activities in the National Leadership Grants for Museums Community Anchors category.

California

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership - San Diego, CA

Year: 2012

Amount: \$247,960

Grant: 21st Century Museum Professionals Program

The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, a collaboration of 26 arts, science, and cultural institutions, operates a professional development program, the Balboa Park Learning Institute (BPLI). BPLI creates and implements professional development that advances knowledge and skills; builds networks and community; promotes collaborative learning and experimentation; and effects individual, organizational, and park-wide change. BPLI will use its grant to transform the "Balboa Park Experience" a park-wide approach to understanding visitor experience through a suite of BPLI programs focused on audience engagement. The project will address the strategies for increasing attendance and broadening the audience, deepening and enriching the visitor experience, and diversifying and attracting a wider range of people. This collaborative learning project will include 48 sessions, 28 workshops, a symposium, and new affinity group meetings for the 3000 staff of the 26 institutions in the partnership.

Delaware

University of Delaware - Newark, DE

Year: 2011

Amount: \$325,286

Grant: 21st Century Museum Professionals Program

The University of Delaware Museum Studies Program will work in partnership with the Tri-State Coalition of Historic Sites to create a collaborative training program for small historic organizations and emerging professionals. A series of workshops will be offered for paid and unpaid staff of 40 historic sites in Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey on collections, new media, social media, and volunteer programs. Each workshop will have two sessions one month apart, so that participants may learn a new skill in the first session, have one month to practice the new skill, and share the outcome in the following session. During their winter break, 18 museum studies students will work with volunteers and staff at historic sites on a collections-based community service projects with a focus on inventory, condition reporting, and re-housing of collections. IMLS funding will also support the creation of a resource center to include a lending library of media tools, collections care equipment, and on-line reference videos of narrated presentations created by students and geared to the needs of small historic sites.

Indiana

Indiana Historical Society - Indianapolis, IN

Year: 2012

Amount: \$152,110

Grant: 21st Century Museum Professionals Program

The Indiana Historical Society (IHS) will develop Local History Partners (LHP), a collaborative approach to training staff in small and predominantly volunteer-operated museums throughout Indiana in the areas of strategic thinking, collections care, and professional museum operations. The LHP coordinator will conduct local collections-care and operations trainings at small and mid-sized museums throughout Indiana. The primary tools of this training will be a peer-to-peer self-assessment process for 90 organizations, and a site-specific collections-care training program for 65 organizations. By training staff to think strategically through the assessment of their own organization and another institution, the program delivers two clear outcomes: (1) growing the leadership skills of paid and unpaid museum professionals, and (2) facilitating the development of sustainable institutional action plans for multiple organizations that will endure through leadership changes.

New York

Children's Museum of Manhattan - New York, NY

Year: 2011

Amount: \$564,699

Grant: National Leadership Grants for Museums- Demonstration

The Children's Museum of Manhattan will collaborate with the New York City Housing Authority to create a new community engagement model that unites and embeds the museum experiences of interactive exhibits and educational programs within public housing developments in East Harlem, New York. In addition to interactive exhibits focusing on early literacy and health, the museum and housing authority will develop programs for parent/child engagement, professional development for parents and caregivers, workforce programs for public housing and community residents, and access to other community resources for older children and families.

Cool Culture, Inc. - Brooklyn, NY

Year: 2011

Amount: \$244,430

Grant: 21st Century Museum Professionals Program

Cool Culture helps to build connections between museums and a new audience through its ongoing collaborative work with 90 museums and 40 early childhood learning centers in the greater New York City area. With IMLS funding Cool Culture will create a laboratory for new audiences, creating 12 new partnerships between museum educators and early childhood teachers. Through a series of seminars, participants will be encouraged to reflect on their own practice and exchange ideas on how museum educators can align their museum's resources with community needs. Through formal presentations, peer discussion groups, and collaborative problem solving, the three-year laboratory project will deepen museum professionals' knowledge of early childhood learning practice, outreach strategies for low income audiences, and how to align their museums' resources and programs with community needs.

Heart of Brooklyn Cultural Institutions - Brooklyn, NY

Year: 2011

Amount: \$500,000

Grant: National Leadership Grants for Libraries- Library-Museum Collaboration

The Heart of Brooklyn (Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Children’s Museum, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Public Library, Prospect Park, and Prospect Park Zoo), along with the Center for the Study of Brooklyn, the Institute for Learning Innovation, John Shibley Consulting, and WolfBrown, are developing a model to help strengthen the collective impact of cultural institutions in meeting significant community needs. This project will create tools that enable other cultural alliances to facilitate collaborative action that will benefit their communities. An assessment of each partner’s nonfinancial assets and impact will be conducted, providing a better understanding of the value that each organization provides. This project will also utilize a cross-institutional capacity-building curriculum, a new approach to community listening and to programmatic responsiveness. The Heart of Brooklyn and its community partners will develop new "collaborative muscle," strengthening cultural partnerships and tying them more strongly to the communities they serve.

International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience - New York, NY

Year: 2010

Amount: \$268,327

Grant: 21st Century Museum Professionals Program

The International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience will build on the success of its ongoing dialogue facilitation project to address regional differences in immigration issues within communities. Regional professional networks will be established in the Southeast and West Coast regions. The coalition will provide training for approximately 30 professionals in 18 museums in designing and facilitating dialogue programs to address issues and contexts specific to their regions, current immigration information and debates in each region, evaluation of dialogues, and audience-building for dialogue programs. Throughout the project, ongoing resources for participants will include quarterly conference calls, strategic public relations and publicity support, and an online resource center. A front-end evaluation seminar will develop mechanisms for measuring the changes in knowledge, skills, and abilities of participating museum educators as well as identifying site-specific indicators of success and evaluation strategies.

National Audubon Society – New York, NY

Year: 2012

Amount: \$459,732

Grant: National Leadership Grants for Museums - Research

The National Audubon Society will conduct a research study to answer these questions: What roles do nature centers serve? How are they valued by users, neighbors, and other community members? How do their missions align with the values of the communities? The answers are critical to ensure the best service to the public as well as, in some instances, the survival of the centers themselves. Key outcomes will include lessons relevant to improving community relationships for nature centers and similar institutions such as zoos, museums, and aquaria.

Research Foundation CUNY - Queensborough Community College - Bayside, NY

Year: 2011

Amount: \$495,000

Grant: National Leadership Grants for Museums- Demonstration

Queensborough Community College, in collaboration with the Rubin Museum of Art, the Katonah Museum of Art, El Museo del Barrio, and the Godwin-Ternbach Museum, as well as Visual Thinking Strategies and the Literacy Assistance Center, will build and support museum–community college partnerships that dramatically improve both institutions’ ability to engage and serve adult English language learners and their families. Through the collaborative implementation of “meCALTA,” these partnerships will open pathways for some of the country’s newest residents to language skills, cultural capital, higher education, and workforce development, while simultaneously helping each institution expand its reach and maintain its relevance in increasingly diverse communities. This project will demonstrate, refine, evaluate, and disseminate the model program across the greater New York City metropolitan area and nationwide.