



**Museums for America
Sample Application MA-20-13-0076-13
Project Category: Community Anchors**

**Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific
American Experience**

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$150,000
Amount of cost share:	\$167,269

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Abstract
- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Lead Applicant

The lead applicant is the Wing Luke Memorial Foundation, dba the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (The Wing). The Wing, located in Seattle's historic Chinatown-International District, is the only pan-Asian Pacific American (APA) museum in the nation and the first Smithsonian Affiliate in the Pacific Northwest. There are no formal partners in this project.

Community Challenges

The Chinatown-International District (C-ID) is a vibrant, historic neighborhood on the National Register yet it is Seattle's lowest-income neighborhood struggling with downturned business revenues, public safety issues, vacant buildings, and city projects that are disrupting the community and infringing on the preservation and livelihood of the C-ID, its businesses and residents.

Project Activities

Our Asian American Hometown – Anchoring Community Vitality through Culture, will produce a newly designed Tour Program to empower the APA community to share their stories, help stimulate our local economy, and promote the historic and cultural vibrancy of the C-ID. Over a two-year period, The Wing will focus on revision of our Tour Program (including our 1910 Historic Hotel and neighborhood walking tours) emphasizing community storytelling and audience engagement. Technology capabilities will be improved with much needed training to better analyze data and grow audiences. Additionally, the project includes tour training and a Volunteer Docent Program to provide additional support and serve as a starting place for community members to get involved in the neighborhood and gain experience in the Museum.

Intended Results

Intended results of *Our Asian American Hometown* are to empower APA community members to produce an interactive and lively Tour program that we hope will spark dialogue and increase awareness of the C-ID community. Through the re-designed Tours, we plan to attract and increase visitorship to both the Museum and the C-ID, spurring economic vitality of the neighborhood. Significantly, the project will also provide training and professional development of staff and volunteers, helping to ensure the ongoing stewardship of the C-ID by the next generation of community leaders. Results will be measured through quantitative community participation and visitor attendance tracking, front-end and summative evaluation surveys, and print/online media tracking.

Public Benefit

APA community members will be empowered to tell their own stories and actively work to preserve and share their history and culture while C-ID businesses and cultural organizations will help build the vitality of the C-ID. Through the Museum's marketing efforts the neighborhood's visitorship will increase and raise awareness of the rich, authentic cultural experience of the C-ID.

Project Justification

The Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American (The Wing) is located in the Chinatown-International District (C-ID), one of Seattle's oldest neighborhoods and a historic district on the National Register. With its inception in the early 1900s, the neighborhood has always served as the starting place for immigrants and refugees from many nations in Asia and the Pacific Islands. Today it continues to serve as the cultural anchor and home base for Asian Pacific American (APA) communities throughout the region. Original historic buildings that provided small apartments for laborers, ornate balconies showing the outward face of social organizations, and storefront windows once sites of import-export stores and today the location of family-owned restaurants, bakeries and tea shops continue to line the streets, remind us of our roots and affirm our identity today.

Despite its significance, the C-ID has also faced severe challenges throughout the decades. Located just south of Seattle's Downtown core, according to the 2010 Census, the district is in the City's lowest-income tract. We also have the highest inventory of vacant buildings and the 4th highest crime rate in Seattle. Major public projects in the 1970s and 1980s severely impaired growth of our historic community. Construction of the Interstate 5 cut right through the heart of the district while the Kingdome, a sports stadium completed in 1976 just west of the neighborhood, resulted in traffic congestion that hindered the small surrounding businesses rather than benefiting them. The Kingdome was later torn down in 2000 but has since been replaced with two stadiums. A third one is on its way posing further risks to the community and, again, infringing on the preservation and livelihood of the C-ID.

In addition to the sports stadiums, the C-ID is undergoing yet more disruptive construction threatening the historic fabric of our neighborhood. Construction of a streetcar along two major thoroughfares began in early 2012 and local businesses have reported a 30% loss in revenue since the project began. On days when crews are directly in front of their business, they comment that they might as well not even be open with sales down 99%.

Despite these challenges, the APA community remains steadfast, joining together to protect our neighborhood, ensure its survival and help our 500 small and family-run businesses to thrive. With the establishment of a stadium district adjacent to our neighborhood, the C-ID can serve as a unique, historic restaurant core servicing year-round stadium attendees. The streetcar, rather than just a means to cut through our neighborhood, has the potential to bring thousands of customers to our doors daily. APAs now represent the largest population of color in the Seattle/King County region at over 18% of the population and are now the nation's fastest-growing immigrant group (2010 Census). With APA heritage an integral part of Seattle's rich history and its present multiculturalism, the C-ID can thrive as a vibrant historic and cultural anchor, enduring as our Asian American Hometown.

To do this, the APA community recognizes that we must protect and affirm our authentic historic and cultural roots. The top message of the C-ID's 2010 neighborhood marketing plan is that it is "an authentic and vital Seattle neighborhood which will unite under one concept to create more cultural awareness, greater business opportunities and economic growth to sustain and build our community for residents, businesses and visitors." The plan's second message targeted at consumers echoes the same, "[The C-ID] is a neighborhood full of

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Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience
Our Asian American Hometown – Anchoring Community Vitality through Culture

flavor, where restaurants, shops, museums and events invite you to discover and enjoy an authentic Asian experience – like no other neighborhood in Seattle.” Within the plan, the neighborhood laid out a roadmap to success: we will invite people to learn about our cultures through events, tours and exposure; we will develop greater business opportunities; and we will welcome visitors to drive greater numbers of customers to our businesses.

The Wing is a core anchor within the community’s path to vitality and strength – preserving and promoting the C-ID’s historic value, ensuring authentic cultural representation and direct APA voice in the neighborhood, and connecting with the broad public necessary for the C-ID’s economic livelihood. The Museum, which has operated in the heart of the C-ID since our founding in 1966, is the only pan-APA museum in the nation and is the first Smithsonian affiliate in the Pacific Northwest. Our recent nomination for designation as an affiliated area of the National Park Service affirms The Wing as a nationally significant cultural resource. The Wing is nationally and internationally recognized for our community-based programming, with community members directly creating exhibitions on display. Through the Museum, APAs are empowered to tell their own stories, create programming, build community and significantly, share their experience with others. The Wing’s role as an empowering anchor within the community is reflected in our audience demographics: 43% non-white (including 32% APA) and 57% white. Our staff and board reflect the diversity of the APA community; and each year we also have over 300 volunteers, diverse generations ranging from students to elders.

The Wing also serves as a strong economic driver for the neighborhood – second only to the Asian supermarket Uwajimaya. Our 2012 visitor survey indicates that 84% of our annual 45,000 visitors spend their dollars in a neighborhood restaurant, and over 75% visit non-restaurant businesses during their visit to The Wing. Visitors to The Wing explore our 1910 preserved Historic Hotel, experiencing the authentic APA laborer rooms, family apartment, social gathering spaces and import-export store of our past. Guided neighborhood walking tours encourage visitors to explore and patronize the local shops and small independent restaurants, soaking up the living culture of today. In this way, The Wing serves as a welcoming entry point for both timid and intrepid visitors to our neighborhood.

Despite these initial successes, our neighborhood needs more. Under the *Museums for America Community Anchors* program The Wing’s proposed project, *Our Asian American Hometown – Anchoring Community Vitality through Culture*, will enhance and rebuild our Tour Program to provide unique opportunities for the APA community to share their stories, foster our partnerships with neighborhood businesses and organizations to help stimulate our local economy, and promote the historic and cultural vibrancy of the C-ID. This entails both programmatic and operational actions including: 1) revision of our guided Historic Hotel and neighborhood walking tours and including front-end, formative and summative evaluation for sound, thorough development; 2) increase of our technology capacity to better accommodate visitors, analyze data and grow audiences; 3) training and professional development for staff and community members and implementation of a Volunteer Docent Program; and 4) outreach and promotion to grow the neighborhood’s customer base. As a result of this project, APA community members will be empowered to tell their own stories and actively work to preserve and share their history and culture; C-ID businesses and cultural organizations will join together

to build the vitality and strength of the C-ID; visitorship will increase to the C-ID; and awareness of the rich, authentic cultural experience of the C-ID will also grow. Significantly, the project will also result in the training and professional development of staff and volunteers, helping to ensure the ongoing stewardship of the C-ID by the next generation of community leaders.

Beneficiaries of *Our Asian American Hometown* – including C-ID businesses and cultural organizations along with APA community members who call the C-ID home – have been involved in these initiatives from the very beginning and will continue to do so throughout the project. After 40 years leasing storefront space within the C-ID, community stakeholders set the direction for The Wing with its \$24 million capital project supported by over 1,500 individual donors completed in 2008 – committing its future in the C-ID by purchasing and rehabilitating a 1910 Historic Hotel and establishing the Museum experience to include a guided tour of the Historic Hotel and neighborhood walking tours. Since then, The Wing has engaged with over 30 neighborhood businesses and cultural organizations to host tours and special events. A survey completed by the Museum this past Fall indicated that they wanted to continue along these efforts, needing to continue to draw in more new patrons to the neighborhood.

This project is directly in line with our *Strategic Business Plan: Fiscal Years 2013 – 2017 (Board adoption anticipated March 2013)*, which indicates that The Wing is in a state of growth and with a need to expand our resources to meet APA community and audience demands. The plan outlines goals and strategies in four areas: programming, marketing, donors and capacity building. Our proposed project is derivative of this plan and will help advance The Wing's goals to: strengthen the APA voice and place within the American story; merge culture and community-building, including a commitment to the survival and vitality of the C-ID; sell the diverse museum and neighborhood experience to a larger audience of all ages and backgrounds; and restructure and implement a new business model for the Tour Program.

Project Work Plan

Our Asian American Hometown – Anchoring Community Vitality through Culture will first begin with front-end evaluation of our current tours, including guided tours of our 1910 Historic Hotel and our C-ID neighborhood walking tour. Our 2012 Visitor Survey indicated that a high percent of visitors find our tours to be very educational yet lacking in entertainment value. A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) will be formed with members representing the C-ID's businesses and cultural organizations to evaluate and rebuild tours. Together with Museum staff, they will research local and national model tour programs to inform development of our own. Two members from the project team will visit New York's Lower East Side Tenement Museum to explore their participatory approach to connecting visitors with the neighborhood's immigrant story that strongly influences our national identity today. Two other team members will travel to Indiana's Conner Prairie Interactive History Park to experience its lively, engaging interpretation of its regional history. The entire team will tour Seattle's own Museum of History and Industry, which just reopened in its new space. Each site visit will include thorough evaluation questions with presentation to and discussion among the entire team, laying a strong foundation for development of our own Tour Program to produce a fun, creative, immersive and memorable learning experience. In addition, Underground Seattle, a successful

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Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience
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neighborhood walking tour for-profit business in the adjacent Pioneer Square neighborhood serving 250,000 customers annually, has agreed to serve as an advisor for our Tour Program, and their CEO is a long-time donor to The Wing.

Project activities will build from there, including: tour development, opportunities for formative evaluation with pilot tours, and ultimate launch of the revised Tour Program with summative evaluation. The project also includes concurrent capacity building work, with improvements to The Wing's visitor database software, Galaxy, and training for Education and Visitor Services staff to properly handle onsite and online tour requests. A 2012 assessment of the Museum's information/technology system by an outside consultant identified our extreme underutilization of Galaxy due to lack of training and prioritized updates and enhancements to Galaxy to correct and increase its ability to integrate with other museum databases and to track sales, payments and invoices. Additionally, the project includes tour training for our part-time Interpretive Leads who guide our tours as well as development of a Volunteer Docent Program to provide additional support for the tours and serve as a starting place for community members to get involved in the neighborhood and gain experience in the Museum.

Our Asian American Hometown – Anchoring Community Vitality through Culture will be led by Cassie Chinn, Deputy Executive Director since 2009 and previously Program Director since 2001, who manages exhibitions and collections, as well as education, youth and public programming. Over her nearly twenty years in the museum profession, Cassie has directed numerous multi-year projects to successful completion. She also holds a Master in Teaching and is a previous high school history teacher. She will manage all components of this project and devote 20% of her time over the project's two-year period.

Project support will also come from the following key staff who will meet monthly and as needed throughout the project period to ensure the project's timely and successful completion:

- Virgel Paule, Education Manager, joined the Museum in 2012, has a Master in Teaching and taught elementary and high school for 8 years; develops tour content, oversees Interpretive Leads and Volunteer Program; will dedicate 20% of his efforts over a two-year period;
- Andrea Kim Taylor, Tour Manager, part of the team since 2011; manages Tour business operations and outreach efforts; will expend 20% of her time over a two-year period;
- Roldy Ablao, Education Coordinator since 2009; coordinates tours and assists with development and evaluation of the Tour Program's curriculum and recruitment, training and supervision of Docents; will provide 20% of his time over a two-year period;
- Margaret Su, Development & Marketing Director, with the Museum since 2007; manages fundraising and marketing efforts; will focus 15% of her time over a two-year period; and
- Marites Mendoza, Marketing Associate, joined The Wing in 2012; coordinates marketing initiatives and external communication; will spend 10% of her time over a two-year period.

All of the project staff listed here entered the museum profession through The Wing. They are a dedicated group of individuals who are committed to the health of the C-ID and are representative of the APA community yet they are in need of greater museum professional development. As such, this project helps to build capacity within the APA community, the C-ID and the museum profession overall. The project is also supported by an 8-member Community

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Advisory Committee (CAC) with monthly planning meetings. Identified potential CAC members include: Annie Chan (neighborhood business owner); Binko Chiong-Bisbee (retail business owner); Tuck Eng (cultural organization leader and former C-ID resident); Debbie Kashino (cultural organization leader); Mei-Jui Lin (community organization leader); and Sam Ung (neighborhood restaurant owner).

For the grant period of October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2015, activities are planned as follows:

Start of Year One | October – December 2013:

- Conduct front-end evaluation of tours and research local and national tour programs;
- Confirm CAC participants and launch meetings including local site visit;
- Begin development of Tour Program

January – March 2014:

- Continue Tour Program development with CAC;
- Begin development of objectives, activities and content for Tours

April – June 2014:

- Continue Tour Program development with CAC;
- Confirm objectives, activities and content for Tours;
- Begin script development;
- Conduct formative evaluation of pilot neighborhood walking tour;
- Update sales, payments and invoicing system for tours through Galaxy software

July – September 2014:

- Continue Tour Program development with CAC;
- Revise script based on formative evaluation;
- Conduct formative evaluation of select activities for Historic Hotel tour;
- Begin fabrication and installation of select activities for Historic Hotel tour;
- Begin development of marketing and publicity plan

Start of Year Two | October – December 2014:

- Complete Tour Program development with CAC;
- Continue fabrication and installation of select activities for Historic Hotel tour;
- Continue development of marketing and publicity plan

January – March 2014:

- Complete training materials for staff and volunteers;
- Develop, recruit and train Volunteer Docent Program;
- Update Galaxy software to include advanced and online ticketing capabilities;
- Begin implementation of marketing and publicity plan in advance of Tour Program launch

April – June 2015:

- Launch new Tour Program

July – September 2015:

- Evaluate new Tour Program and refine marketing and publicity plan

Updated marketing materials, printed and online, are essential to the *Our Asian American Hometown* project, which will serve as the main channels for promoting and sharing our newly re-designed Tour Program. This project represents a significant opportunity for The Wing to extend our community engagement practices, provide a voice and place for APAs, and enliven our neighborhood with cultural and economic activities. Evaluation will be completed through audience and neighborhood partner surveys (front-end, formative and summative), quantitative attendance tracking and in-depth evaluation through our CAC. Key project personnel will review findings and distill strategies and lessons into a written report to guide future work. Participation in museum conferences and professional development workshops will also provide additional platforms for sharing our project results with fellow museum professionals. The Wing's current website on our community-based process (<http://wingluke.org/process.htm>) will be updated to reflect our tour development and neighborhood work to further share about the project with the museum professional field. To fulfill the 1:1 cost share, The Wing has currently secured support from the Ford Foundation, JPMorgan Chase Foundation and the Kresge Foundation. The Wing will also commit operating funds and work to secure additional contributions from corporations, foundations, public agencies and other private funders.

The Museum's *Strategic Business Plan: Fiscal Years 2013 – 2017* acknowledges the impacts of the recession on our operations and mandated that we manage our resources prudently while keeping our unique vision and programming at the forefront of our institutional priorities. The attached Program Information Sheet indicates a budget deficit in FY10 and FY11. These deficits reflect inclusion of a capital budget for capacity growth, funded by our own reserve, and no debt was incurred. The museum relocated into a larger facility in June 2008 and deficits were planned (and funded through capital campaign) for the first few years of operations as our revenue base increased to meet expenses necessary to operate the new facility. The demonstrated surplus in FY12 reflects the strategies in place have increased revenue to meet our expenses.

Project Results

Intended results of *Our Asian American Hometown* are to empower APA community members to produce an interactive and lively Tour Program that will create dialogue and increase awareness of the C-ID community and its major contribution to Seattle. Through the re-designed tours, we plan to attract and increase visitorship to both the Museum and the C-ID, spurring economic vitality of the neighborhood.

As a result of this project, APA community members will be empowered to tell their own stories and actively work to preserve and share their history and culture; C-ID businesses and cultural organizations will join together to build the vitality and strength of the C-ID; visitorship will increase to the C-ID; and awareness of the rich, authentic cultural experience of the C-ID will also grow. Significantly, the project will also result in the training and professional development of staff and volunteers, helping to ensure the ongoing stewardship of the C-ID by the next generation of community leaders. Successful benchmarks will include:

- APA community members will be empowered to tell their own stories (measured by participation by 8 CAC members on the project team, at least 10 oral histories by

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community members for tour content, training of 8 Interpretive Leads and 8 Volunteer Docents);

- C-ID businesses and cultural organizations will join together to build the vitality and strength of the C-ID (measured by participation by at least 12 C-ID businesses and cultural organizations on the neighborhood walking tour);
- Students, families and the general public will experience the C-ID as an authentic cultural experience, resulting in a 10% increase in visitorship to the C-ID over the project period (measured through formative and summative evaluation surveys and quantitative data captured through Galaxy);
- Broad public will gain greater awareness of the C-ID as a historic and cultural neighborhood (measured through features in 1 print and 4 online outlets; print marketing materials reaching 11,440 households; social media contacts of 1,870 Twitter and 2,590 Facebook)
- Museum staff and volunteers will gain skills to present APA stories, share APA culture and engage visitors in interactive, participatory ways (training for 11 staff and 8 volunteers with front-end and summative evaluation surveys for skills gained)
- Museum staff will gain skills in efficient and effective use of admissions software (training for 3 staff with front-end and summative evaluation surveys for skills gained)

Tangible products from our project will include: revised tour scripts and content; training materials for tour staff and volunteers; training materials for admissions software and ticketing system; revised marketing materials for ongoing promotion; and description of community-based process for tours and neighborhood work on website.

The Wing anticipates the restructured Tour Program to be sustainable well after the grant period through: training materials, for both tours and Galaxy software, that will be revisited annually to ensure staff and volunteers are up to speed on content and procedure; marketing efforts that will increase online presence of the Tour Program; and growth in earned income through a diverse source of revenue including general admission.

Our Asian American Hometown will offer a meaningful way for all visitors to connect with the C-ID and hear personal voices of its community members. We hope that after participating in a tour, visitors will be inspired to visit the neighborhood on their own and share their experience with others which can spark further community-enriching activities to benefit us all. Jean Nakayama, owner of Maneki Restaurant which was first established in 1904 in the original Nihonmachi district in the C-ID, recently sent a note of thanks that demonstrates how The Wing serves as a community anchor: “We would like to thank you for all your wonderful work this past year. Double thanks to all the Tour guides that painstakingly provide the best service to our neighborhood. Such loyal, sincere and educated guides are an asset towards achieving the recognition the Museum has brought to us all.”

**Schedule of Completion | Wing Luke Memorial Foundation dba
Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience**

**Our Asian American Hometown – Anchoring Community Vitality through Culture
October 1, 2013 - September 30, 2015**

YEAR 1

ACTIVITIES	13-Oct	13-Nov	13-Dec	Jan-14	14-Feb	14-Mar	14-Apr	14-May	14-Jun	14-Jul	14-Aug	14-Sep
Evaluation of The Wing's current Tours; research local and national tour programs; begin development of new Tour program												
Confirm participants for Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and begin monthly meetings												
Continue Tour program development with CAC; begin development of objectives, activities and content for Historic Hotel and neighborhood walking tours												
Continue development with CAC; begin script development; evaluation of pilot neighborhood walking tour												
Update sales, payments and invoicing system for tours through Galaxy software												
Continue development with CAC: revise script based on evaluation; evaluation of select activities for Historic Hotel tour; begin implementation of select activities for Historic Hotel tour												
Begin development of marketing and publicity plan												

Year 2

Activities	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15
Complete Tour program development with CAC												
Continue fabrication and install of activities for Historic Hotel tour and development of marketing plan												
Complete training materials for staff and volunteers												
Develop, recruit and train volunteer docent program												
Update Galaxy software with advanced and online ticketing capabilities for new Tours												
Begin implementation of marketing plan												
Launch new Tour program												
Evaluate new Tour program and refine marketing strategies												