



Program Overview – Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

The Museum Grants for African American History and Culture (AAHC) program support projects that build the capacity of African American museums and support the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums.

The AAHC program supports projects that nurture museum professionals, build institutional capacity, and increase access to museum and archival collections at African American museums and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). IMLS welcomes applications from museums of all sizes and geographic areas whose primary purpose, as reflected in their mission, is African American art, life, history, and culture.

Distinguishing features of successful AAHC projects are:

- *Institutional Impact:* The project builds the capacity of a museum and/or supports the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums and/or HBCUs.
- *In depth Knowledge:* The project reflects a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter.
- *Project-based Design:* The work plan consists of a set of logical, interrelated activities tied directly to addressing the key need or challenge identified in the application.
- *Demonstrable Results:* The project generates measurable results that tie directly to the need or challenge it was designed to address.

Project Activities

Projects designed to build the capacity of African American museums may involve increasing the number of museum professionals working at African American museums to enable the museum to expand educational programs, engage the community, enhance organizational operations and resiliency, or provide for enhanced care of collections. IMLS encourages museum professionals and institutions to share and adopt best practices and innovations by creating skill-building and capacity-expanding programs that are applicable across all levels of museum staff to ensure the highest standards in all aspects of museum practices and operations.

Projects to support the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums may involve hosting paid internships at African American museums; creating mentorship opportunities for emerging and mid-career staff to connect with, learn from and engage with senior leaders and founders in the African American museum community; creating learning and growth opportunities for museum staff to build skills, enhance knowledge and expertise in museum-related subjects and areas of need.

Funding Levels

There are two funding levels in the Museum Grants for African American History and Culture program, and they differ in cost share requirement.

- Projects requesting between \$5,000 and \$50,000 in federal grant funds do not require a cost share.
- Projects requesting between \$50,001 and \$250,000 must include at least a 1:1 cost share.