

Timed Transcript for Museums for All Informational Webinar

0:02

Welcome to our Museums for All Informational Webinar. My name is Ashley Jones, and on behalf of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, I'm pleased to welcome you to this webinar about one of our national initiatives, the Museums for All program.

0:22

There are three speakers during today's session.

0:25

In addition to myself, we'll be hearing from Brendan Cartwright, who is the program manager at the Association of Children's Museums and he's the coordinator for this special initiative.

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And for a participating museum perspective, we will also hear from Eliza Kozlowski, who's the Senior Director of Marketing and Engagement at the George Eastman Museum.

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To set the stage for the more detailed information we'll be going over about the program, I'd first like to present some general introductory information.

1:02

So, what is Museums for All?

1:05

Museums for All is a cooperative venture with the Association of Children's Museums, which has a goal of expanding access to the nation's museums by offering free or reduced admission for EBT, or electronic benefit transfer, cardholders.

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And over the past seven and a half years of this initiative, which started in 2014, IMLS has been working closely with ACM to recruit museums as program participants.

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One of the strengths of this nationally branded program is name recognition, meaning that the member museums are united in an effort to provide increased access to those who might not otherwise be able to visit their sites.

1:49

And another strength is that the access provided by this program is not limited to certain days or specific times. Museums for All participants are dedicated to providing access to everyone during their normal operating hours every day of the week.

2:06

And we began the program with a pilot for the children's museum community.

2:11

But since then, participation has been opened up to all museums around the country, and we're happy by how much the program has grown and flourished, but we think there's always room for more museums to participate. And that's why we're happy that you all have joined us today.

2:27

I'm going to hand it over now to Brendan, who will present the initiative's guidelines.

2:35

Thank you, Ashley.

2:37

The goal of Museums for All is to be easy for all museums to adopt and potentially to adapt.

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We have a set of broad minimum guidelines that make it an easy-to-use program, ready out of the box.

2:56

Those guidelines include offering a general admission rate of no more than \$3 per person for up to four people when one individual displays a SNAP EBT card from any state.

3:09

This is an easy way to identify a visitor who qualifies as having a financial need in a minimally intrusive way.

3:16

Museums have the freedom to decide what their admission price will be, free \$1, \$2, et cetera, and you're only obligated to offer that price for a basic general admission.

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If there are add-on attractions at your exhibits, you are not obligated to include them in your Museums for All offering.

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The Museums for All rate would be offered during all normal operating hours.

3:44

And as I mentioned, museums can adapt their offerings as well. They can include WIC or Medicaid or other forms of identification that they accept for Museums for All.

3:56

They can include discounts on special exhibits or events and some museums choose to offer discounted membership.

4:07

We've seen massive success for this program so far.

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In the seven and a half years that it has been going, over 900 museums have begun participating. It's almost 950 at this point.

4:22

This includes museums in all 50 states, and the District of Columbia, and even the US Virgin Islands.

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Ashley mentioned we piloted the program in children's museums, but now every type of museum is represented. We have history museums, art museums, zoos, aquariums, multiple presidential libraries, and so on.

4:47

There are museums in cities. They are in rural areas. There are large museums and small.

4:55

This is a slide that was a little more dynamic when there were not 50 states, but this is a visual representation of where museums are participating in Museums for All. Everywhere.

5:09

In case you're wondering how your particular region is doing, here's the breakdown there.

5:16

New England looks like it's lagging a little bit, but there are over 30 sites that are counted under this single banner of Historic New England, so it is a little more even than that.

5:28

Many states are doing well, but California, Ohio, Florida, and Pennsylvania have the most participants. New York has been growing very rapidly as well.

5:44

As I mentioned, the Museums for All program was piloted in children's museums, which is one reason we see the large number of children's museums that participate.

5:54

We have seen quite a lot of enthusiasm in history museums and art museums as well.

6:00

Some of these museums are free admission anyway, but choose to participate to really drive home their commitment to extending the invitation to every member of their community to visit.

6:15

As you can see, there has been steady growth over time. With our latest round of reporting, we are at over four million visitors that have used the Museums for All program to visit a museum.

6:28

The visitor numbers took a bump last year due to shutdowns and diminished capacities, but people still used the program.

6:40

A similar program to Museums for All is Blue Star Museums, which gives free admission to military members and their families during the summer. There are around 2,000 museums that participate in that.

6:55

And Museums for All, which runs year round and is aimed at helping families with financial need, is close to 50% of that total, so we are pretty excited for that.

7:09

One phenomenon that we have begun tracking are Hub Cities, or cities that have three or more museums that participate in Museums for All.

7:19

As you can see, there are many big cities on here that you might expect, like New York, Houston, and Chicago.

7:27

But there are also places like Greenville, South Carolina, Missoula, Montana, and Springfield, Illinois.

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And I should mention too, it didn't happen in time to make the slide, but Rochester, New York, where Eliza is from, just made the list as well.

7:47

So, in a Hub City, museums can work together to really strengthen their Museums for All offerings and they can also recruit other museums to join or at least demonstrate the benefits of joining.

8:03

We have seen that in places like Richmond, San Antonio, Pueblo, and Grand Rapids, where people have really kind of reached out to their neighbor museums to get everyone on board. We will talk more about Hub Cities later and we will maybe hear a little bit about recruitment, as well.

8:27

So, registering for Museums for All is very easy.

8:31

We have a dedicated website, which you can see, the URL there, WWW dot Museums for All dot org, with the number four, and there's a button to register there.

8:43

The actual process should take less than five minutes, and it is free to do.

8:48

We provide support materials, like access to branded collateral, a group site, virtual hangouts, webinars like these, and more.

8:59

We will also send you a window cling to use at your site, and there is a searchable map where all the participating museums are listed.

9:11

Some of the other resources that we provide include previous webinars that have been archived, infographics that you can use on your social media, press release templates, examples of every state EBT card, since each state has a different one, and this program is open to holders from any state.

9:38

We do have some staff training recommendations as well.

9:44

We periodically create and add more resources. So, don't be shy in telling us what you would like to have.

9:51

We have created some resources, specifically for those Hub Cities that I mentioned, as well. Some tailored sample press releases and template agendas and slide decks for holding meetings as a collective.

10:05

So, now that you've seen some of the background of Museums for All and gotten an idea of who's participating and what kind of support is offered, Ashley is going to let you know why participating in the program can be valuable to your museum.

10:24

Thank you, Brendan. I'm going to talk with you a bit more about the value of participating in Museums for All.

10:32

So, Brendan has told you all about the guidelines and who is participating in the initiative, and now you are probably wondering, well, why should my museum join Museums for All?

10:44

And there are so many reasons to participate, but most importantly, it affirms that museums are meant for all members of their community, and that the participating museums are committed to equitably expanding their community outreach.

10:58

And what's great is that this effort typically fits easily within a museum's mission, vision, and inclusion plans.

11:06

Also, Museums for All is yet another way to increase community access to your research, your collections, your programs, and your exhibitions, as it reduces barriers.

11:17

And additionally, as Brendan was noting, we make it as easy for you as possible by providing free, customizable collateral, such as press release templates and branding opportunities to make it even more successful.

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Another benefit we are observing is the power of participation among multiple museums in a single city.

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Forming these hubs is allowing museums to market the program jointly and thereby offering a menu of rich opportunities for families in their cities.

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They work together to build new partnerships with social service organizations and other community-based organizations, and this also helps them to have a louder and more unified voice when approaching municipal leadership or local funders for support.

12:11

So, we would like to share a couple of comments here which we've received from participating museums that we think show the value of this program for their visitors.

12:21

They can be vulnerable community members who really just want to experience something normal and fun. They may have taken a risk just coming to the museum, not knowing if they could afford to visit.

12:34

We also see that people can experience a change in their life, either going onto food assistance due to hard luck or getting off of it due to better fortune.

12:45

But in any circumstance, we think that these visitors will remember that the museum was there for them when they needed it most.

12:56

But much better than reading quotes from participants, we have a real museum participant with us today.

13:04

At this time, I would like to turn it over to Eliza Kozlowski of the George Eastman Museum to talk about their experience.

13:14

Great, Ashley, thank you so much, and thank you to both you and Brendan, for inviting me to be able to share our Museums for All story.

13:23

It was great being in Boston with a great panel at the AAM, the American Alliance of Museums Conference, and just being reminded of what great work other museums are doing as part of this. It really lit another fire under me, so the timing was great to pull some information together for this. So, a little bit about the George Eastman Museum first.

13:46

We are located in Rochester, New York, and we were founded in 1949, and we're a unique institution in that we're not only the National Historic Landmark Mansion and Gardens of George Eastman, who was the founder of popular photography. We're also a museum of photography and cinema. So, we have our mansion that's restored to look as it did when George Eastman lived here, and beautiful, lush gardens, as well as our galleries for our photography, exhibitions, and then a 500 seat theater where we show films not only from our collection, but other films that we borrow from distributors and that sort of thing. Ashley, I think you're able to advance. You and Brendan did it so seamlessly. I didn't know whether I'm supposed to say like next slide.

14:36

That works for me. So, if you want to go to the next slide.

14:41

Sorry about that. So, here you see a little bit. From the standpoint of photography, cinema, mansion, and gardens, so much to see here. If you want to go the next slide, we are

primarily a tourist attraction, about 65% of our visitors are from outside of Rochester. We see really high attendance rates during the tourism season. Beginning in May, Rochester has a huge Lilac Festival which really signals the beginning of tourism season, and then through September, even into October a bit, as a shoulder season, because of all the leaf peepers that come to New York State.

15:18

We do see a lot of people from outside of Rochester and within what we offer, our photography of exhibitions appeal to a lot of photography enthusiasts. Our film programs in our theater appeal to a lot of film lovers, and so our challenge has always been over the years, what can we do to really appeal to the broadest local audience?

15:41

What can we do to bring people back who embrace the history of George Eastman and the Mansion and the Gardens? There are three events that we do throughout the year. Our busiest time of the year has now become the holidays when we do gingerbread displays as part of our Sweet Creations exhibition, and we see a huge number of people that then come to visit during that time.

16:04

We have now been doing it for about 27 years. Dutch Connection is in February when we have tulips. And I'm sorry, I realize I should have put in photos of these because we could all use a little bit of gingerbread and tulips right now. The tulips are just beautiful. It is a tradition that George Eastman had, where he brought back tulips from a trip to Amsterdam, and so he used to force them in the Mansion. We now, for three weeks in February, have thousands of tulips blooming. And so, again, that brings in a lot of local community.

16:34

Then, right now, we have Eastman Entertains. This is our sixth year where we do these tablescapes throughout the Mansion and other parts of the museum celebrating George Eastman's love of entertaining. It's called Eastman Entertains at the Movies. Community members and businesses take themes from various movies and they interpret them in these tablescapes, so those are three times of year where we do start to see more local people coming in.

17:01

However, even though we've been seeing larger attendance during these times, we still were not seeing really the broadest audience possible, and we recognized that admission rate is a factor.

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The tourists, for the most part, are not price sensitive. What we do see is that in order to bring in, if they're not members who come in for free, what can we do to bring in the broadest audience?

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It was interesting to hear the timing because I guess I had forgotten exactly the idea of Museums for All being a pilot first, and then launching in 2014. Somebody from our development team had been at a Blackbaud conference, if people know of Blackbaud, and came back and shared. Maybe they were learning about the pilot that was being done at

children's museums because they came back sharing that some museums were offering free admission to SNAP EBT card holders.

17:57

That's what got us thinking about it. What you see here is the press release, where we announced in 2013, that we were going to admit SNAP card holders for free. We decided to make it free admission in the spirit of Eastman. George Eastman was really known for giving back to the community. We felt that this was a great way for us to give back and open the doors for the broadest community possible.

18:29

We announced it in 2013. There is a fundraising campaign every year around in December called ROC the Day where various non-profits choose a program that they want to highlight on Giving Tuesday.

18:48

We chose our SNAP EBT card holder campaign to be the opportunity to announce it and to try to raise money to help support bringing this program to life. We introduced that as of January 2014, all SNAP EBT card holders and their families, and there's no limit to how many people want to come in, were invited to come and be able to start visiting the museum.

19:18

As far as our level of engagement, and when I look at these numbers, particularly starting out, I think we were not aware, other than the initial announcement of it, and then trying to really identify the resources to be able to promote.

19:33

It frustrated us that we weren't seeing higher numbers and weren't really able to put that attention toward the program. We received great reviews from people that did come, that there was great appreciation for people that did come, but you'll see we started to build some momentum and started to get some higher numbers.

19:50

And then interestingly, and Brendan and I have had this conversation, I thought we were part of Museums for All. When I heard of it, we had talked to somebody on my team, I thought we are registered. It seems like we came to it late in the game, but that's because we thought we were already a part of it. So, in November of 2020, and I don't have our 2020 numbers here just because of the time period we were closed because of COVID, and we've all sort of decided, forget 2020.

20:13

I'm sure, if I can pull those numbers, I'm sure we saw more people that sadly needed that extra assistance and probably welcomed them.

20:24

I'm glad that we were able to be there for those people who needed to rely on some assistance to be able to come to the museum. We officially joined in November of 2020 and then were full on as far as 2021. We've seen a steady increase. We've had very positive feedback, but the challenge really was figuring out what is the best way to promote. Some of the things we did do, is we have a rack card that promotes the program. There's something

in our community where police officers, along with someone from neighborhood programs, go door to door, just to meet neighbors in targeted areas, and hand out leaflets of things happening. At no charge, it was just the cost of printing the rack cards, we were able to provide those to be distributed to those neighborhoods. We had some various library programs we were doing that were family programs, and we would bring the rack cards to that.

21:21

We also have a really, very robust public market that's three days a week. There are radio spots that can be announced as part of the public market and they were willing to do those radio spots for us for free. Those are just some of the things initially that we did to help get the word out.

21:42

There is definitely some other outreach that we did, and I'm glad that I've learned about this, certainly, from hearing from other participants of Museums for All, and then also what Brendan had mentioned, the Blue Star program. In our drive-in theater where we show films, we are also admitting the card holder and family to the films. We've had less of a push for that.

22:05

I feel as though, if we do more family films and matinees, that would probably be something that would be more of appeal, but that's not a program that we have right now in the theaters. While we do allow it, it's more of a passive program, but at least we do promote and we do get certainly get some people who take advantage to come see our films. We also didn't anticipate what a great boost this would be for our relationships with Rochester City Schools in bringing in some school groups. When we share with them that we are free to SNAP and EBT card holders, that benefits a lot of the students that end up coming from the city schools. Also, some of our social services programs, when we bring some adult groups from the various social service programs, we are able to admit them for free. Brendan mentioned Blue Star. We've participated in Blue Star for several years, and from the beginning, rather than just participating during the summer, we participate all year long.

23:00

We admit active military and their families for free all year long, which is a perfect blend with Museums for All. I love that anytime I participate in one of these webinars, or also at the conference in Boston, I hear from other Museums for All participants about similar programs that they're doing to expand on the SNAP EBT and Blue Star. I look forward to hearing more about those.

23:26

We've also, for a number of years, had what's called a VIP pass through our local libraries, where people can check out a pass. It's a BOGO, so it's a buy one, get one. It's not completely free, but it's still at least a discount. Somebody can check it out, bring that card, and use it as a buy one, get one, and then return it back to the library, and that's been growing as far as the number of libraries that have been participating in that.

23:50

Then we have our Rochester Area Community Foundation, which is a very important fundraising organization that helps return funds to the community. They've been eager to

hear more about how we can all build on what we're doing for SNAP EBT and our VIP passes. Pre-COVID, they had connected with a Rochester Institute of Technology class to get the students to start to think about how we could make an online program that would make it easier for people. This was interesting, because the idea was called, was it Card to Culture, Brendan, I think, was that in Boston?

24:30

Yeah, in Massachusetts, it's the Card to Culture program. That's similar to what we're talking about in Rochester.

24:41

I've seen others give feedback that sometimes people are reluctant to show their SNAP EBT card. We've not seen it to be too much of a barrier, but we do hear from some people, and so in Rochester, we've been looking into what program could we do so that there is a direct connection with our, you know Monroe County Office, our state office, so that someone can go online and if they have a SNAP EBT, they can automatically print out something that will admit them, not only to museums, but performing arts organizations, either at a discount or for free. That's something that we're continuing to explore.

25:19

That leads into next steps. As Brendan shared, we are now, I'm so excited, a Hub City, as of this month. We, along with the Rochester Museum and Science Center, and then, most recently, the Seneca Park Zoo. They are both offering discounted admission. It's now the three of us. Our art gallery is potentially also because they are offering some SNAP benefits. We hope to be able to have them join, and as a Hub City, I'm really looking forward to exploring what more we can do together. I think there's certainly strength in numbers. We already saw a bit of a boost when the zoo announced that they're part of the county and the county executive announced that he was going to be seeking legislation for the zoo to be able to do a discount. The more we can get the word out among the three of us, I think we'll certainly all benefit.

26:10

We are in the position, it's been quite a number of years since we've increased our pricing, both for the museum and the drive-in theater. I think this is a great opportunity to just reinforce SNAP EBT as an offer, that while our prices aren't going up, with this and other programs, we want to remain affordable, as affordable as we can to families.

26:33

I mentioned Rochester Area Community Foundation. It's something I'm excited about. We'll see what happens with that as we get back to it. Interestingly, my other next step, I'm reminded anytime, and again, it's been our friends in Boston, who talk about the Office of Transitional Assistance. I'm sure you're all the same, where you may be on a webinar, and you make a note of something you're going to do and then you get onto other things and you don't do it. Then you hear about it again, and you're like, OK, I need to do this. So, writing it in my next steps, I'm going to do this even before this webinar.

27:03

I reached out, and I found that New York State has the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and then there is the county connection as well.

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I'm getting a little bit further and now with my Hub City colleagues, we can, as a group, reach out both locally through the county, but also through the state to see what we can do to raise awareness of our participation in the program.

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Brendan also mentioned that New York State is growing. My goal is to get New York State to be the top participating. I have the privilege of serving on the Museum Association of New York Board and want to see further who is participating and who is not, and how can we get more New York State museums participating, and then promoted via New York State tourism, making sure that I Love New York knows. The other thing that I learned, or I guess it hadn't occurred to me, that a SNAP EBT card, whether it's from Kansas or New York State, we're still going to accept it.

28:03

Whatever we can do for any people that are coming into our community, coming into our state, to be aware that this is a benefit for them as a cardholder. And then lastly, really looking forward to continuing to leverage the resources from Museums for All. Again, at that conference, and what Brendan's just shared here, as well. A reminder that there's a great toolkit on the website, and there's resources that are available to us to use, to continue to promote our involvement, and just get the word out as broad as possible.

28:34

I'm happy to connect with anybody who's thinking about being part of the program, if they have any other questions, or anybody who just wants to brainstorm ideas for how we can market in our own communities.

28:47

I think that idea of all of us together working to help each other and sharing each other's ideas is just going to benefit the program across the whole country. So, thank you so much, and I look forward to hearing everybody's questions and ideas and continuing the conversation.

29:08

Thank you, Eliza, that was great. I really enjoyed hearing all about what you're doing at the George Eastman Museum.

29:15

It's also nice to hear that, you know, the stuff that we're doing is being made use of in such great ways.

29:23

So, Eliza touched on this as well, and we had mentioned it a little bit earlier, but as you know, museums have been affected very greatly by COVID-19.

29:37

Even now, some museums are still operating at reduced capacity.

29:44

But in something of a surprise, we still saw about eight museums a month continue to register for Museums for All during the height of the pandemic, even if the museums were closed at the time.

30:00

Since the beginning, we've increased the number of participating museums by over 400. Almost half of our total number of museums have come in the last couple of years.

30:15

It proves the continuing necessity of the program's mission.

30:20

Unfortunately, it has been the case that some of the museums that were participating in Museums for All have had to close permanently.

30:28

But I think there was just one exception. Every other museum has kept their commitment to offering Museums for All rates to its visitors.

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So, if the museum stayed open, they kept Museums for All. I think that one that stopped offering it then came back, and later, started offering it again.

30:50

We also saw that a couple of museums compensated for their reduced capacities by offering their Museums for All rates to every visitor.

31:02

It's not something that we're expecting you to do, but that's a nice thing. They already had the program in their bag.

31:14

There have been some operational changes that have been made during the pandemic, so to ensure reduced capacities, most museums were requiring guests to buy their tickets online, or at least to pre-register. A lot of them are still doing that.

31:33

It's a bit of a challenge to museums for all visitors who merely had to show their snap EBT cards at the admission desks before.

31:42

So, when you're building out these new admission systems, it's very important to keep in mind how your museum is still going to accommodate Museums for All visitors.

31:54

Are you going to have an option at that ticket price on the menu? Will folks have to present their SNAP EBT card in person when they show up?

32:06

Will you just direct museums for our visitors to buy their tickets in person? There's no right answer on this.

32:14

Whatever your museum chooses, it should be explicit and easy to follow on your website so that folks know how to get their tickets.

32:24

When you're allotting the tickets by time, make sure that there are enough for Museums for All visitors.

32:31

On average, about 3% of a museum's attendance is coming from Museums for All visitors. That does vary a little bit by type of museum.

32:41

It can be a bit higher for children's museums, a little bit lower for art museums, and so on.

32:49

One other thing that museums have done during the pandemic, while they've been closed or unable to welcome as many guests as they'd like, is to really increase their community outreach.

33:01

Whether that's offering virtual museum tours and activities, or distributing STEM kits to schools, the museums are embracing their roles as community pillars and making active overtures toward their communities.

33:16

And at its core, that's what Museums for All is all about, extending an active invitation to everyone and making sure that they know that the museum is for them, and that the museum wants them there.

33:32

Museums recognize that access and inclusivity are important, bedrock organizational values and Museums for All is one way to help with those DEAI efforts.

33:44

An organization's commitment to inclusivity usually extends beyond just Museums for All, and in fact, Museums for All works best when it's part of a suite of offerings.

33:57

Many museums offer reduced admission for seniors, children, perhaps educators, or military.

34:05

Many will offer some sort of monthly free day or even have memberships that can be checked out of the library, similar to what Eliza mentioned.

34:15

All of those are wonderful, and Museums for All supplements them rather than taking the place of any of them.

34:23

While the only requirement to participate in Museums for All is to accept SNAP EBT cards, several participants also accept WIC. Some also accept Medicaid.

34:37

The Madison Children's Museum, for instance, has 21 different identifications that it will except for their \$1 admission fee. So, we set a base and you're welcome to build on top of that to whatever works best for your institution and your community.

34:56

About 10% of the participating museums also offer some sort of reduced membership program as well, so they're taking that next step of getting people in the door on daily admissions and then turning them into members with more solid museum going habits.

35:13

Some of them are also using the opportunity to catch visitors that museums from might be letting fall through the cracks.

35:22

At the Omaha Children's Museum, they're expanding their reduced membership to include families that qualify for reduced school lunch, rather than just the free school lunch that it had been.

35:35

There are families that might just exceed the threshold of qualifying for food assistance, but still can find visiting a museum to be cost prohibitive.

35:46

These museums are stepping up and supplementing Museums for All in other ways to try and catch as many of those families as possible.

35:55

I'll also just share, real quickly, that there was a group that does mentoring in Santa Barbara, California that just reached out. They found out about the program and wanted to know if their mentors could bring their mentees who are usually children that came from households where there were SNAP recipients, but the children didn't have the cards and the mentors didn't have the cards.

36:25

That was one of those little things that might have fallen through the cracks, but I was able to connect that person with the museum directors of Santa Barbara County, who had formed a Hub City, and they are working now together to get that group into their museums, using the Museums for All rate, as well. It's a nice little story that we had recently.

36:57

One part of joining Museums for All is broadening your visitor base, but another part is taking the time to work on assumptions and biases that exist within your own staff.

37:12

One participating museum that was located in a college town was surprised to see how many grad students were using Museums for All to visit. They hadn't expected that many to be on food assistance.

37:24

There are some wonderful resources around diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion on the AAM website.

37:32

And the Cultural Competence Learning Institute, or CCLI, is another fantastic way of museums looking to improve their own approaches to inclusivity.

37:44

One complaint that does come up is why people on SNAP assistance deserve this admission discount, or rather, why can't someone not on food assistance get the same rate?

37:56

For our purposes, a cutoff had to exist somewhere, and we felt that a government issued card would work well and be the least intrusive way to demonstrate the need for those for some help in removing a financial barrier.

38:11

One of the reasons that we think that Museums for All works best as a suite of options is so that those who don't have the SNAP EBT, some kind of appropriate price can be found for them.

38:25

I'll turn things back over to Ashley.

38:29

Thanks, Brendan. So, sometimes museums, or their boards can be wary of joining Museums for All.

38:38

They might see that it calls for very deep admission discounts, in some cases, and worry that it would be a hit to their budget, so we took a look to see if that would be the case.

38:53

In 2018, we engaged Aurora Consulting to do an evaluation of Museums for All and the experiences that the participating museums were having with the program.

39:04

And the complete results of this evaluation are available now at this URL here on the slide, which is on the IMLS website, as well as on the Museums for All website. We'd like to share some pertinent findings with you.

39:20

The evaluation found that only one of the museums that responded reported a decline in their revenue since implementing the program. Most reported no change. Over a third of the respondents actually said they saw increases in ticket sales and attendance and 25% saw increases in development revenue and membership and program sales.

39:43

Museums for All is great opportunity, we think, to add new development streams either by soliciting funding that directly pays for the program or finding grants and sponsorships that will help.

39:56

It's a great program that helps the entire community and there are often foundations or banks or other funders that want to be a part of it.

40:05

And this is encouraged, but perhaps most importantly, we can see that there's no overall deficit to being a part of Museums for All, and oftentimes, we've heard it can be a revenue generator.

40:20

One of the other things that we try to do regularly with our participants in Museums for All is connect them with other museums in their city or area that also participate in the program.

40:32

We have found that museums, as Eliza has told us already, museums can do really great things in a collaborative effort to promote this program within their community.

40:43

As I mentioned earlier, we started calling cities with three or more participants Hub Cities.

40:50

As we were noting this phenomenon, we decided to host a convening. This was in late 2018. We invited representatives from seven of these Hub Cities.

41:01

This included San Diego, Chicago, Akron, Missoula, Chattanooga, Worcester, and Grand Rapids.

41:08

We invited them to attend a convening so we can determine how museums can work together to get the most out of Museums for All.

41:18

And at that convening, we found that several opportunities for cooperation exist, and not just between museums.

41:26

They can use Museums for All as an entry point to establish or deepen their connections with local food banks or transit authorities in ways that can overcome other barriers that potential museum visitors face in making it to a museum.

41:42

These actions can help build trust within the organizations of a community, but also with the people, and it shows that the museums are serious about their commitment to having everyone visit.

41:54

The invitation that is being extended is real and genuine, and the museums are willing to put in the work on their end to make it happen.

42:02

They are spaces for everyone, truly, and if you'd like to review the complete report, it is available on the Museums for All website.

42:13

We wanted to note some additional activities we've done more recently. Last year, we convened a group of Hub Cities again in a series of listening sessions.

42:22

These cities included Richmond, Cincinnati, Providence, Tulsa, San Antonio, and San Diego.

42:29

We wanted to learn from them how we could better support them. Based off of these listening sessions, we created some new resources specifically for Hub Cities.

42:39

These include a special press release template, a flyer for distributing around the community, a one pager to give to local SNAP offices, as well as sample meeting agendas for recruiting other museums or potential funders.

42:55

We also created a slide deck for them to use in those meetings. These resources are available for all museums in Hub Cities to use.

43:08

So, if all of this sounds intriguing to you, we want to remind you that it's very easy and free to register for Museums for All at the website, which is Museums 4 All dot org, and that is the number four.

43:25

And in closing, we certainly hope that the information shared today has interested you in becoming part of the Museums for All participant family.

43:34

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact any of us. We've listed here on this slide the names and e-mail addresses for Brendan, Eliza, and myself.

43:46

We're more than happy to answer any questions you have about the program. You can also contact the general mailbox for Museums for All, which is info at Museums 4 All dot org.

43:58

Again, that's with the number four. We also encourage you to connect with all the latest Museums for All news on Twitter, which is a fairly active Twitter account, I have to say. The handle is at Museums for All.

44:14

So, we look forward to hearing you, and we thank you very, very much for joining us today.