



Museums for America Grants

Sample Application MA-245800-OMS-20
Project Category: Lifelong Learning

University of Illinois (Krannert Art Museum)

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$250,000
Amount of cost share:	\$250,000

The project description can be viewed in the IMLS Awarded Grants Search:
<https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded/ma-245800-oms-20>

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing applications for the FY2021 Museums for America grant program differ from those that guided the preparation of FY2020 applications. Be sure to use the instructions in the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

What need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified? Are others addressing this need? What other studies or best practices have you used in developing your project?

Krannert Art Museum (KAM), in collaboration with the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, seeks \$250,000 from the IMLS to implement the reinstallation of its internationally acclaimed collection of ancient and colonial Andean art. Though KAM's collection, comprised of approximately 700 objects in a range of media, is one of the most significant repositories of ancient Andean art held by a public university in the nation, the Andean installation is currently the least visited of all KAM's galleries. This lack of attention largely owes to the fact that the gallery dedicated to KAM's Andean material has not been updated since it was first installed in 1988. The current presentation lacks any interpretive framing, and there are no extended informational labels, thematic groupings, section texts, storylines, or points of entry for engaging with the objects on view. Moreover, given their light sensitivity, all of the textiles—which are among the strongest assets of the collection—have been removed from view until a proper assessment of their conservation needs has been established. As such, our core constituents, which include university faculty, students, and K-12 teachers, find it very difficult to incorporate this material into their teaching and research. Members of the broader east-central Illinois public also have no avenues to connect meaningfully with the material. This last point is particularly pressing as Champaign county has undergone a dramatic demographic shift over the last twenty years, with Spanish-speaking groups representing close to 10% of the population, and many being new arrivals to the United States. This influx has created a regional need for increased representation of Latinx and indigenous voices and histories, both across Champaign county and the University of Illinois campus, particularly in cultural spaces.

The planned reinstallation of the Andean gallery responds to these needs and has been informed by current scholarship and museum practice. In the last decade, scholars of the ancient and colonial Andes have urged peers to move beyond the specific culture or period of their particular studies and to embrace broader contextualization and greater interdisciplinary exchange for the production of new knowledge about the Andean past and its relevance to contemporary Peru and descendant communities today (Klein 2012; Urton and Standen 2019). However, few permanent collection installations in art museums have been informed by these more dynamic, inclusive approaches. Instead, ancient American collections still tend to be segregated into static silos of culture, time, and region, permitting no sense of the connectivity and mobilities of peoples, objects, and ideas across time and place. They remain focused on singular art objects, in an approach derived squarely from Euro-American traditions. Equally important, there is little engagement with how museums are implicated in the very history of the objects in their care—a necessary action for working towards decolonizing the art museum (Kolb and Richter 2017).

Earlier consultation with an interdisciplinary panel of Andean experts (see Work Plan for fuller description) affirmed that the best way to approach the reinstallation would be through an intersectional, theme-based treatment. Such an approach would reflect the great cultural diversity and historical depth of Andean cultures, but would do so by revealing transcultural connections, artistic hybridity, and systems of communication that reached across these regions and societies. Such a presentation would engage with how objects were, and continue to be, implicated in translocal, indeed global, networks of power and knowledge that inform(ed) the visual technologies, imagery, spirituality, and ideologies of these diverse Andean societies. Significantly, such networks would include the paths objects have traveled to arrive at KAM. Indeed, while it is important to underscore that KAM acquired the collection before the 1970 UNESCO Convention, the new installation will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss frankly the fraught histories of these acquisitions, to educate the public about the ongoing theft and destruction of archeological sites and indigenous cultural heritage in Peru, and to open dialogue with museums and community organizations in Andean states today. As such, the new

gallery will serve as an effective research and teaching tool for both university students and faculty and local K-12 teachers. Furthermore, the new exhibition will be a space where Latinx students and community members will see their histories represented with the dignity, complexity, and nuance that they deserve.

How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan?

As a university art museum that serves not only the University of Illinois campus but also visitors from the broader communities of Urbana-Champaign and the Midwest, KAM is dedicated to projects that are global in reach and that broaden our understanding of diverse cultural and artistic achievements. In this vein, the Andean gallery reinstallation presents an extraordinary opportunity for promoting public humanities learning. At once a laboratory, sanctuary, and civic center, KAM fulfills the University of Illinois's commitment to teaching, research, and outreach. The Andean reinstallation project squarely connects to all these goals. Moreover, CLACS plays a key role as a hub of Andeanist scholarship across the campus and region and is home to the oldest Quechua program in the nation. As part of the newly-formed Illinois Global Institute, CLACS also creates links between KAM and other areas studies centers and to broader, cross-campus initiatives promoting the global arts and humanities. Drawing on strengths of these units at the Urbana-Champaign and Chicago universities, the cross-disciplinary team (described in detail below) is conducting rigorous research on the Andean collection for the first time in decades. Together they bring to bear on the project new research in Andean archaeology and art history; decolonization and the history of collecting; and student-designed museum evaluation protocol. The installation is being planned with teaching of multiple audiences in mind, including elementary school, university, and central Illinois and even global publics. Trilingual interpretation in Quechua, Spanish, and English as well as in-depth, web-based resources will ensure access to the materials in both the United States and descendent communities in Peru.

How will your project address the goals of the Museums for America program and align with Lifelong Learning, the project category you have chosen?

Our project goals—to inspire inquiry, raise awareness, and create new ways of knowing and engaging with Andean art and cultural histories through increasing the usefulness of our collection as a teaching and research tool—will be realized through an installation designed with diverse audience accessibility as our highest priority. The interdisciplinary collaboration through which the project has been launched deeply informs our commitment to making an exhibition that allows different ways of learning to thrive. With texts in Spanish and Quechua as well as English, the exhibition will urge audiences to think about cultural diversity right in our own communities. Our evaluation plan explicitly includes public school instructors and community members to ensure that reinstallation will have the broadest possible impact. KAM's current facility evaluation and research on the accessibility needs of our variously abled visitors will guide the exhibition's design, while the development of an interactive digital platform will allow museum visitors and remote users alike to engage with and create their own pathways through the exhibition. Programming will build on KAM's ongoing collaborations with the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, American Indian Studies, and Anthropology faculty to explore the deep histories of the Indigenous Americas and their cultural presences today. An exhibition evaluation protocol being developed in collaboration with the university in Urbana-Champaign's College of Education will ensure that the implementation of these goals will be measurable, flexible, and revisable. In sum, the project will create wide-ranging, multilingual academic and public programming that will build bridges between our campuses, the wider central Illinois community, and peer institutions in Peru. This project will celebrate Andean arts and culture; it will also provoke new questions, produce new knowledge, inspire social practice, and demonstrate the ongoing importance of Andean arts in ensuring our collective humanity as truly global citizens.

PROEJCT WORK PLAN

What Specific activities, including evaluation, will you carry out?

During the grant period the Project Team will carry out textile conservation treatments; design and fabricate casework and object mounts; finalize exhibition themes; finalize object research; create the exhibition design and execute gallery build-out; and write trilingual object labels and wall text (English, Quechua, Spanish). The team will also design an interactive, digital platform to complement and enliven in-gallery object labels. It will provide multi-sensory strategies for learning, connect stories about objects across times and regions, and provide access to the KAM exhibition and Andean collection for remote users. Co-curators Szremski and Purpura will travel to Peru to consult with local researchers and institutional peers. The evaluation plan, developed in consultation with Rodney Hopson's Center for Evaluation at the university in Urbana-Champaign, has three major phases: 1) baseline evaluation, designed to identify more clearly KAM's constituencies and how they use exhibition space; 2) in-process evaluation, conducted in collaboration with KAM's education team and CLACS outreach coordinator, with focus groups of local K-12 teachers, students, and local families to test themes, story lines, label text, and elements of the exhibition design; and 3) post-reinstallation evaluation to analyze the use of the Andean gallery and how well it increases knowledge and understanding of ancient Andean cultures. Phase 1 is already underway: Hopson's team designed an evaluation protocol focused on gathering baseline data during Spring 2019 (see Supporting Documents) and are currently implementing it through observations and structured interviews with visitors. The same evaluation techniques will be repeated in phase 3, though the evaluation questions and survey questionnaire will be adapted in order to better understand the extent to which we have met our goals.

What is your project's maturity level?

The proposed project is at the "mainstreaming" stage. Exploratory and piloting work began in 2016 when we hosted our first interdisciplinary workshop of Andeanist faculty from the university in Urbana-Champaign as well as invited guests, Carolyn Dean (University of California, Santa Cruz) and Kimberly Jones (Dallas Museum of Art). The goal of this workshop was to determine the viability of a thematic approach to the Andean materials as well as to brainstorm potential themes and storylines. Subsequently, KAM and CLACS successfully applied for an internal University of Illinois planning grant—The Presidential Initiative to Celebrate the Impact of the Arts and Humanities—to facilitate scaling up the project. Specifically, we are using planning grant funds to hire graduate and undergraduate students to conduct object research and to coordinate and consolidate all available information on the collection into a single database. We also hired Andean textile expert Ann Rowe to conduct a preliminary analysis and evaluation of KAM's textiles in order to help create a plan for their display in the reinstallation. Finally, we will host two interdisciplinary workshops, one in November 2019 and a second in April 2020, to finalize interpretive themes and storylines and to select object groupings. Workshop participants include the core project team (see below), key collaborators from University of Illinois at Chicago and the Field Museum, and Andean experts from throughout the Midwest including Andrew Orta (anthropology), Anna María Escobar (socio-linguistics), Mariselle Meléndez (Andean colonial literature), Claudia Brosseder (early colonial history), Helaine Silverman (Andean archaeology and heritage studies), Andrew Hamilton (Curator of the Americas, Art Institute of Chicago), Mary Weismantel (anthropology), Susan Bergh (Curator of the Arts of Ancient Americas, Cleveland Museum of Art), Anita Say Chan (science and technology studies), Sofia Chacaltana (Ministry of Culture and Jesuit University in Pueblo Libre, Peru), Cecilia Pardo (Curator of Collections and Pre-Columbian Art, Museo de Arte de Lima), and Carlos Molina-Vital (Quechua). In sum, we are now well prepared to implement the planning work that has taken place over the past three years. This will result in the permanent reinstallation of the ancient Andean art collection as well as the creation of a new online portal to allow for US-based and international students, scholars, and descendent communities to access the exhibition and collection. The Andean gallery will be transformed into a vital teaching and research tool that will provide a venue for university faculty, Latinx and

other students, K-12 teachers, and the larger east central Illinois community to learn about the complex and dynamic precolonial histories of Andean societies.

What are the risks to the project and have identified ways to monitor or mitigate risks in the workplan?

There are two interrelated risks that we face. First, in the push to tell new and dynamic stories that bring these ancient objects into conversation with current issues in Andean studies, and that raise the visibility of precolonial indigenous Latinx histories, we run the risk of going beyond what the objects can actually say, potentially subordinating the rich and deep histories of the peoples who produced these pieces to modern concerns. Second, though KAM is an academic museum, we serve a much broader public that has little baseline knowledge about the Andes. As such, we must carefully balance our embrace of innovative interpretive theory with the need to remain accessible to a broad, non-specialist audience. Both our design and evaluation planning have taken these risks into account. Andean archaeologists who will serve as content specialists have been integrated into all levels of the project team (core team member Kasia Szremski is an expert on the Chancay; the project's key consultants, Brian Bauer and Ryan Williams, are Inka and Wari experts, respectively; and our interdisciplinary workshop team includes Andean specialists from a range of disciplines). These content specialists will be involved at all stages of exhibition design to ensure that we remain true to the objects. Furthermore, a key evaluation component involves working with the KAM education team and the CLACS outreach coordinator to develop focus groups with area K-12 educators and community members to test and refine our themes, storylines, and label copy to ensure that the information is conveyed in an accessible and engaging manner.

Who will plan, implement, and manage your project?

The core project team consists of Jon Seydl, KAM Director and art historian; Allyson Purpura, KAM Senior Curator and Curator of Global African Art; and Kasia Szremski, archaeologist and Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS) Associate Director. Purpura, Szremski, and Seydl will plan and manage all phases of the project's implementation. Szremski and Purpura will oversee content development for the exhibition and digital platform, and will work closely with an architect/exhibition designer to inform the design of the exhibition's physical layout. During these planning and implementation phases, the core team will work with key collaborators Ryan Williams (Associate Curator and Head of Anthropology, Field Museum), Brian Bauer (Professor of Anthropology, UIC), and Sofia Chacaltana (Associate Professor at the Jesuit University Antonio Ruiz de Montoya in Peru). The core team will also consult closely with an interdisciplinary group of Andean and museum studies experts through a series of workshops as described in detail above (please see attached letters of support from participating scholars). The core team will also secure a textile conservator to assess the treatment and display needs of KAM's textiles. University professors Robert Baird, Associate Director of Information Spaces and Technologies (ISP); Jamie Nelson, Senior eLearning Professional at ISP; and Spencer Keralis, Digital Humanities Librarian, will advise on the design and implementation of the digital component of the exhibition. The evaluation phases will be implemented by a team of graduate and undergraduate students supervised by Rodney Hopson, Professor of Educational Psychology, through the College of Education's Center for Evaluation.

How does the makeup of the project team and/or partners and collaborators provide an opportunity for the project to benefit from diverse perspectives, shared networks, and best practices?

The core project team brings a diverse set of experiences to the table. Kasia Szremski holds a PhD in anthropology and has an ongoing research project in Peru focused on Chancay archaeology. She brings a well-developed professional network of Peruvian researchers and institutions to the project, including researchers and students from the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Peru, Universidad Nacional Federico Villarreal, the Peruvian Ministry of Culture, and the National Museum of

Anthropology, Archaeology, and History. She also has connections with descendant communities in along the central coast of Peru. Allyson Purpura holds a PhD in anthropology and has served as KAM's Senior Curator for five years. She has taught courses in critical museology and has organized numerous exhibitions focusing on the arts of the Global South, including KAM's award-winning collection reinstallation, *Encounters: The Arts Africa*. KAM Director and art historian Dr. Jon Seydl came to KAM in 2017 from the Worcester Art Museum, where he was Director of Curatorial Affairs and Curator of European Art. Dr. Seydl brings to the project years of distinguished leadership in museum ethics and best practices. Project consultants Brian Bauer and Ryan Williams are both experts in Andean archaeology with connections to institutions and descendant communities in Cuzco and Southern Peru, respectively. Dr. Chacaltana, also an archeologist of Peru, is currently undertaking research in new museology methods in Peru, Ecuador and Columbia. Together, their expertise will ground the exhibition in the understandings of ancient Andean lifeways, while the broader network of workshop participants (as described above) represent a wide array of disciplinary approaches. Our university colleagues in the digital humanities bring an extraordinary range and depth of knowledge of cutting-edge technologies well suited for use in museums. We will also collaborate with public school teachers throughout the design process and, as discussed above, incorporate them into the evaluation. In sum, our team represents a wide range of diverse perspectives across the humanities and social sciences. Moreover, it will provide the opportunity for the voices of Peruvian scholars and descendent communities to be heard, while helping to internationalize the cultural curriculum for local public schools.

How will collaborations you have proposed be structured in a way that is equitable and mutually beneficial in order to strengthen your project?

The reinstallation of KAM's ancient Andean gallery would not be possible without deep and sustained collaborations with interdisciplinary faculty and graduate students at the universities in Chicago and Urbana-Champaign, the Field Museum, our colleagues in Peru, Andeanist curators from institutions across the Midwest, and public school and dual language teachers in our local communities. Our project has been informed and structured by discussions with these colleagues and stakeholders so that, from the beginning, we could define our common interests and shared goals for promoting Andean art and culture, both past and present. The future development of the project—from conceptual framing to design, evaluation, and implementation—will continue to proceed through inclusive, participatory, and open-ended dialogue with our colleagues, students, educators, and researchers, so that contributions to decision-making and project outcomes will be representative of and benefit our mutual interests.

When and in what sequence will your activities occur?

Activities supported by an IMLS grant would begin in September 2020 and end in August 2022, with the opening of the reinstallation. Conservation assessment and treatment of KAM's Andean textiles would begin in September 2020. Preliminary evaluation will begin in Spring 2020. From this time, and extending into early 2021, the exhibition checklist and design of the exhibition layout will be finalized, followed by contracting vendors for gallery build-out and the design and fabrication of casework and mounts. Co-curators Szremski and Purpura will travel to Peru in Spring 2021, and they will deliver content ideas to the project's digital platform team as they design media interfaces for the installation. At the same time, we will advance the research and writing of object labels and wall text. Once these materials are drafted, we will create focus groups with public school educators and university students. Design and fabrication of object mounts and casework will begin in early 2022. Gallery installation will begin in June 2022 (setting cases, placing objects, lighting, printing and installing labels and wall text, and installing digital media components), and culminate in the exhibition opening in late August 2022. Post-installation evaluation will begin in January of 2023.

What time, financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?

Staff resources will focus on developing and evaluating interpretative strategies and on planning and executing the installation, as described above. The project will be a dominant activity for KAM during the two-year grant period, involving nearly all museum staff, ranging from 50% effort for the curators, to 8% for installation staff, to 2-5% for compliance and education. To fulfill the project, and as reflected in the budget, KAM will hire an exhibition designer, contractors for gallery build-out, and additional support for mount-making. Consultants from the university in Urbana-Champaign will provide expertise and technical resources for developing the digital components of the exhibition.

How will you track progress towards achieving your intended results?

Progress towards our final goal of reinstalling the ancient Andean art gallery will be monitored by our project staff using the timeline delineated here. Ongoing and sharing iterative evaluation of design and didactic materials with our core team, consultants, and evaluation team will be imperative. In addition, because our evaluation is structured in phases, this process will assist us to track our revisions and modify our interpretive materials both before and even after the installation opens to the public.

How and with whom will you share your project's results?

KAM's core constituencies include university faculty and staff, scholars from across the US and abroad, local K-12 students and teachers, and the general public in east central Illinois. Publicity for the opening of the reinstalled Andean art gallery will begin in Fall 2021 through KAM's website, print calendar, member's magazine, and electronic publications. The reinstallation will be the new centerpiece for gallery teaching for K-12 audiences. In order to reach a wider audience, we will also work with the communication teams from Illinois Programs for Research in the Humanities, Illinois Global Institute, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, the College of Liberal Arts and Science, and with the University of Illinois News Bureau. In addition, the collection and exhibition will be made available to national and international students, scholars, and descendent communities through our online portal that will go live in conjunction with the gallery opening.

PROJECT RESULTS

Describe your project's intended results that will address the challenges you have identified.

By creating an updated, socially engaged ancient Andean art exhibition, our project will reframe narratives around past Andean social and artistic complexities and de-center Eurocentric approaches to global art history. It will transform the installation into an innovative teaching and research tool that better serves the needs of students, faculty, K-12 educators, and the growing east central Illinois Latinx population. Museums today must dedicate more intellectual and financial resources to making their non-Western collections accessible to the public for all that they have to offer. The presence of Andean archeological holdings in US museums, such as KAM, requires us to explore not only the compelling stories that individual objects can tell, but also the broader, often fraught histories of colonialism and collecting, in which their journeys north—where our visitors encounter them—are embedded. KAM's reinstallation will expose visitors to the historical depth, cultural richness, and contemporary relevance of ancient Andean civilizations, it will demonstrate the crucial role that the visual arts play in bringing the distant past to bear on the present. Through the use of an online interactive platform that will be developed in conjunction with the reinstallation, colleagues and community centers throughout the US and in Peru will have sustained access to and involvement with research on their own cultural patrimony.

How will the knowledge, skills, and behaviors, and/or attitudes of the intended audience change?

By taking a thematic approach that highlights the interconnectedness and relevance of ancient Andean cultures to modern societies, audiences and educators will have the opportunity to reorient themselves to ancient Andean

societies, and to see them as complex, resilient agents of their own making, rather than as timeless societies predestined for European conquest. By exploring the various uses and meanings of textiles, ceramics, and objects fabricated from wood, metal, and shell, visitors will realize that Andean arts are not merely decorative, but are integrated into the very fabric of society as important means of communicating and performing identity—as they are today. Exposure to multilingual labels will familiarize visitors to seemingly distant, exotic languages, so they will come to understand them as living languages still spoken by millions of people today, including in the region. Visitor-activated media, relatable stories, and the freedom to follow multiple pathways through the installation will also change many visitors’ perceptions of art museums as intimidating, authoritative places full of incomprehensible works of art, and experience them instead as approachable places that have something interesting and important to say about our shared humanity.

What barriers might there be for others who may wish to learn or adapt your results in developing their own projects?”

A successful project would require: access to or possession of a culturally wide-ranging collection of Andean objects such as KAM’s; deep documentation on the collection and its donor; a digital humanities infrastructure to maintain and support the online portion of the exhibition for remote users; access to language interpreters and a cohort of Andean studies experts within close proximity of the project site; and professional networks that extend to communities of origin.

What data will you collect and report to measure your projects success?

Project evaluation will center on understanding visitor demographics and on measuring visitor engagement and comprehension of exhibition content. We will work with students who have been trained through the College of Education’s Center for Evaluation in order to observe and evaluate how visitors interact with the Andean gallery. This will also include conducting surveys and structured interviews to collect demographic data, as well as measuring interest and comprehension of exhibition materials (see Supplementary Materials for evaluation protocol). Please note the protocol included here is designed to gather baseline data for our phase 1 evaluation.

What tangible products will result from your project?

KAM’s project will result in the long-term reinstallation of KAM’s Ancient Andean Art collection. This groundbreaking reinstallation will be a leader among art museums for its thematic treatment of an ancient Andean collection and will transform the gallery into a progressive space for teaching and research that can be used by local faculty, students, and public-school educators. The dramatic growth of Latinx populations in both east central Illinois and at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign make this work particularly urgent as there is a growing need for cultural spaces that represent the complexity of precolonial indigenous societies and histories. The digital component of the exhibition will also extend the impact of the exhibition by making it available to people unable to travel to central Illinois, including scholars and community users in Peru.

How will you sustain the benefit(s) of your project?

As a long-term installation, the exhibition will have a lasting and transformative impact on diverse audiences throughout the region. With nearly 700 objects in the Andean collection, the presentation will have ample opportunity to be enlivened and refreshed with numerous object rotations over time. Through the installation’s online interactive platform, colleagues and community centers in Peru will have sustained access to and involvement with research on their own cultural heritage. Increasing the collection’s utility as a teaching and research tool and creating an innovative and dynamic space where diverse audiences can learn about the complex histories and cultures of a vitally important region of ancient Latin America will also ensure that the important “work” of these objects, their historical significance, and contemporary relevance will be sustained for generations to come.

Schedule of Completion

