



Museums for America

Sample Application MA-11-16-0426-16
Project Category: Learning Experiences
Funding Level: \$5,000-\$25,000

Clark Art Institute

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$24,847

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Abstract
- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing narratives for FY2017 applications differ from those that guided the preparation of previous applications. Be sure to use the narrative instructions in the FY2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

STERLING AND FRANCINE CLARK ART INSTITUTE
HEAD START WITH ART PROGRAM
ABSTRACT

The Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute seeks support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to strengthen and expand the Clark's partnership program, Head Start with Art.

As a result of federal sequestration beginning in 2013, Head Start programs nationwide were forced to cut staff and the number of children receiving services, as well as eliminating program elements deemed non-essential. In Berkshire County, all field trips and enrichment services were cut, in addition to reductions in students and classrooms. The need for these types of enrichment activities has been identified by Head Start program staff. Working with local Head Start classes, Clark educators have developed Head Start with Art to help students gain kindergarten readiness skills and supplement classroom programs. Head Start educators have asked the Clark to help them expand the program to other Berkshire County classes and have encouraged Clark staff to share the program statewide with other Head Start programs.

The Clark requests support from IMLS to conduct the following activities:

- To undertake a formal evaluation of the current program curriculum and its success in meeting program goals, led by an Early Childhood Educator, and to revise the program curriculum as recommended
- To expand the existing Clark program to two additional Head Start classes locally
- To conduct a training session for up to 15 pairs of Head Start teacher/museum educator partners from across the state's 31 Head Start programs, introducing the program and sharing the Head Start with Art curriculum and other materials, and to provide additional support and consulting individually to partnerships interested in launching their own Head Start with Art programs

All activities will take place during the October 2016-September 2017 grant period. Head Start with Art classes will take place across the school year. The formal program evaluation will begin with the first class held during 2016-17, to allow time for curriculum revisions to be completed before the partners training session in late March 2017 and to be implemented with at least half the Head Start with Art programs during the grant period. Consulting sessions will take place during the six-month period after the late March training. Project performance measure surveys will be conducted throughout the grant period.

Head Start programs, their students, and students' families will benefit from an expanded Head Start with Art program. The project will increase the number of students served by the Clark by adding two classes in Berkshire County to the program and will support the development of additional programs for underserved audiences throughout the state of Massachusetts. In addition, participating museums, including the Clark, will benefit, as students' families come to see the museum as a resource for family recreation and a place to spend quality time together through their own participation in the final program session at the museum.

This project will address the lack of enrichment programs available to students after significant cuts to Head Start due to sequestration, as identified by Head Start program staff. With funds from IMLS, the Clark will both directly provide enrichment programs to additional local Head Start students and also assist the development of similar programs for Head Start programs across the state of Massachusetts through training and consultation.

Success will be measured using surveys, interviews, and formal program evaluation to assess progress in meeting the program's goal of helping students gain kindergarten readiness skills; parents' attitude and behavioral changes; and museum professionals and Head Start educators understanding and ability to inaugurate Head Start with Art programs in their home institutions.

STERLING AND FRANCINE CLARK ART INSTITUTE
HEAD START WITH ART PROGRAM
NARRATIVE – LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Statement of Need

The Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute seeks support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to strengthen and expand the Clark’s partnership program, Head Start with Art. Working with local Head Start classes in nearby North Adams, Massachusetts, Clark educators have developed Head Start with Art to help students gain kindergarten readiness skills and supplement classroom programs. A grant from IMLS would allow the Clark:

- To undertake a formal evaluation of the current program curriculum and its success in meeting program goals, led by an outside Early Childhood Educator, and to further refine the program curriculum as recommended
- To expand the existing Clark program to additional Head Start classes locally
- To conduct a training session for up to 15 pairs of Head Start teacher/museum educator partners from across the state’s 31 Head Start programs, introducing the program and sharing the Head Start with Art curriculum and other materials, and to provide additional support and consulting individually to partnerships interested in launching their own Head Start with Art programs

Head Start, a program of the US Department of Health and Human Services, was established in 1965 to provide comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. The program's services and resources are designed to foster stable family relationships, enhance children's physical and emotional well-being and establish an environment to develop strong cognitive skills. Head Start serves over one million children and their families each year. In Massachusetts, 31 programs provided services to 12,501 children in FY14 (latest figures available), including the Berkshire County Head Start program.

In 2013, federal sequestration mandated across-the-board cuts to all federal programs. The impact on Head Start programs was immediate: according to a study by The Pew Charitable Trusts, about 57,000 fewer slots for children and infants were available in Head Start and Early Head Start programs as a result of the cuts and more than 18,000 staff suffered job losses or pay cuts. In Massachusetts, an estimated 200 jobs were lost and 2,015 fewer children were able to receive Head Start services, according to Pew. For the Berkshire County program, one classroom (of 19) was closed, and all field trips and enrichment activities were eliminated.

Dr. Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, the Clark’s Director of Adult, School, and Community Programs, contacted the Berkshire County Head Start Development Program soon after news of the sequester’s impact on Head Start was reported to offer the Clark’s help as a community partner. Working with Head Start classes in the adjacent city of North Adams, Clark educators developed a four-session program, which begins with an introductory visit to the class by museum educators, followed by three visits to the museum. During the last visit, family members and caregivers are invited to participate, introducing them to the museum and making them feel welcome and included. The Clark provides funding for school bus transportation as well as the costs of all curriculum, art-making, and other materials used in the program.

The program was launched with a pilot program working with one classroom in late 2013; during the 2014-15 school year, all four North Adams classes participated in Head Start with Art, as is planned for the current school year. The curriculum is designed to meet Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Frameworks, as well as Common Core Pre-K Learning Standards. (The complete curriculum, including addendum addressing Learning Standards, is included as Supporting Document 1). In Session 1, “Pre-visit to Head Start Classroom,” Clark educators visit the class to introduce the museum, prepare children for their

upcoming museum visits, and engage in an art activity to practice looking closely. The following sessions, held at the Clark, include opportunities for art-making, exploring the galleries, and meeting many of the people who work in museums, from curators to security staff. In the final session, student artwork created during previous visits is on display in the museum classroom for family members and caregivers to see; there is also free time in the galleries, a simple art-making activity, and refreshments and socializing with a goal of making all participants feel welcome and included in the museum space. Coordinator of Family and Community Events Hanna Leatherman conducts all sessions with experienced Clark docents who have been specially trained.

With this beginning, the Clark requests support from IMLS to strengthen and expand Head Start with Art through the following activities:

- 1) Looking to improve the model and with two full years of Head Start with Art programming completed by the end of the current school year, the Clark would like to have the program formally evaluated by an outside Early Childhood Educator. The evaluation, to take place during fall 2016, will include a review of the curriculum and the learning standards it supports, observation of each of the four sessions, and interviews with participants and stakeholders. The evaluation will be undertaken by Sherry Monte (MS, Special Education), who has over 25 years of experience in preschool education and has worked with the Clark previously in evaluating programs. Upon delivery of the report, Clark educators will work with Head Start teachers to revise and enhance the curriculum, based on the recommendations.
- 2) Stacy Parsons, Executive Director of Berkshire County Head Start, has asked the Clark to expand the number of Head Start with Art classes by adding two classes from nearby Adams, Massachusetts. As in North Adams, the median household income in Adams is 60% of the statewide median income, and more than half of all kindergarten students are economically disadvantaged. A grant from IMLS will support staff time and travel, school buses for six roundtrips to the museum, and program materials. The Clark will continue its commitment to the four North Adams Head Start classes by underwriting direct expenses from its operating budget, as it has for 2014-15 and 2015-16.
- 3) Building on the Clark's experience in sharing education program models nationally and internationally, Clark educators look to introduce the Head Start with Art partnership model across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Berkshire County Executive Director Parsons is interested in bringing the program to additional Head Start classes in central and south Berkshire County, working with other local museums. She has also indicated that she believes Head Start programs throughout the state would be interested in establishing Head Start with Art partnerships with local museums.

Clark educators propose a two-track program to share curriculum materials, resources, and best practices with Head Start teachers and educators from their local museums. First, a training session will be held in March 2017 at the Clark in Williamstown for up to 15 pairs drawn from the 31 Head Start programs throughout the Commonwealth and local museums. While the Clark program was developed for use in an art museum, the curriculum has been designed so as to be easily adapted for other kinds of museums. Funding from IMLS will be used to support travel for 15 teams to Williamstown to participate in a one-day training program; each team will leave training with a "start-up kit," including art supplies and curriculum materials, to support a pilot program for their Head Start-museum partnership. The training program will be led by Director of Adult, School, and Community Programs Tulgan Ostheimer with Head Start Executive Director Parsons, Education Coordinator Leatherman, and Clark docents.

Over the following six months, Tulgan Ostheimer will provide additional support and consulting individually to partnerships interested in launching their own Head Start with Art programs through a free one-day consultancy. IMLS funds will support both the training session and the 15 days of individual advice and support.

The Clark's Education Department is uniquely qualified to carry out this project. The department's mission is to engage the general public with the Clark's collection and exhibitions through programs that create valuable, meaningful, and even transformative experiences for all visitors, with an overarching goal of helping people realize that engaging with art can enhance their lives. This mission is fulfilled both through the presentation of a full series of programs at the Clark and innovative outreach designed to share programs and experiences with museums and schools both in the US and internationally. On-site offerings include New Parent Gallery Talks, designed for families with children under the age of two; Start with Art, free Saturday morning sessions for art-making and exploring for families with young children; painting and drawing workshops for all ages; and courses co-sponsored with the local Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in both fall and spring semesters.

Building on its successful programming, Clark staff, particularly Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, has extensive experience in bringing its programs to other museums. The Clark's juvenile justice program RAISE (Responding to Art Involves Self Expression), for example, was developed in 2006, working with officers of the Massachusetts Juvenile Court System. Across five sessions, RAISE students participate in a combination of activities that help expand their sense of human experience, including a more constructive perspective on their own place in the larger world. As a member of the French Regional-American Museum Exchange (FRAME), the Clark raised awareness of this program, and Tulgan Ostheimer has worked with museums in Strasbourg, Lisle, and Montpelier in France, as well as the Saint Louis Art Museum, to implement a project model called Talking Art, adapting as appropriate to the needs of each venue. RAISE received an ICOM Committee for Education and Cultural Action Best Practice Award in September 2015. Building on the Talking Art model, Tulgan Ostheimer is now working with FRAME on a new program, Curating a Culture of Respect, a violence prevention project connecting schools and students with art museums as a place to explore and contemplate social issues and problems, from bullying to terrorism, and encouraging students to consider their power in shaping their own worlds and the future. Eighth-grade/fourth level students and teachers at the Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter School in Adams, Massachusetts, and the Hans Arp College in Strasbourg, France, are participating in this pilot project.

What need, problem, or challenge will your project address and how was it identified?

As a result of federal sequestration and mandatory across-the-board program cuts, Head Start programs nationwide were forced to reduce the number of children receiving services and staff, as well as eliminating program elements deemed non-essential. In Berkshire County, all field trips and enrichment services were cut, in addition to reductions in students and classrooms. The need for these types of enrichment activities has been identified by Head Start program staff. Out-of-classroom programs provide innovative learning experiences, particularly for the underserved and lower income audiences from which Head Start students are drawn. The lack of these kinds of programs for Head Start students and their families is felt far beyond the North Adams Head Start classes with which the Clark began to work in late 2013. In particular, the Executive Director of Berkshire County Head Start has identified the need for similar programs for other Berkshire Head Start classes and has asked the Clark to assist in helping expand Head Start with Art for these classes working with other local museums which are closer to south and central County classes; she has also indicated that such programs would be welcome for the other 30 Head Start programs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Who or what will benefit from your project?

Head Start programs, their students, and students' families will benefit from an expanded Head Start with Art program. The project will increase the number of students served by the Clark by adding two classes in Berkshire County to the program and will support the development of additional programs for underserved audiences throughout the state of Massachusetts. In addition, participating museums, including the Clark, will benefit, as students' families come to see the museum as a resource for family recreation and a place to spend quality time together through their own participation in the final program session at the museum.

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

In its dual role as a public art museum and research center, the Clark is dedicated to advancing and extending the public understanding of art. In the Clark Strategic Plan *Vision 2020*, building the public education program beyond its current capacity to serve student and adult audiences is a priority under Strategic Initiative 4: Build and Engage New Audiences. Major Tasks in the Plan which this project fulfills include: Intensify regional role in public education and Create public education programs with a goal of replication by other museums. Ongoing activities which also meet the mandate of this initiative include special efforts to enhance access to the Clark by underserved audiences such as our school bus subsidy program, free library passes, and the RAISE alternative sentencing program, which has been replicated by museums elsewhere in the US and in France.

How will your project address the goals of this program: IMLS supports the unique ability of museums to empower people of all ages through experiential learning and discovery. Successful projects provide high-quality, inclusive educational opportunities that address particular audience needs.

The IMLS project to expand and strengthen the Head Start with Art program fulfills the goal of the Learning Experiences program. As described above, the Head Start with Art program was developed specifically in response to the federal sequestration cuts to the Head Start program. Working with the local Head Start Executive Director and teachers, Clark educators took action to create a program that addressed preschool Common Core learning standards and Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Frameworks, provided opportunities for out-of-classroom experiences and enrichment activities, encompassed a variety of inclusive learning experiences, and helped introduce the museum as a resource and a welcoming presence for local underserved students and their families and caregivers. Program activities are tailored to meet the unique needs of each class, as established by Head Start educators and discussed with Clark program staff.

2. Impact**Performance Goal, Performance Measure Statement and collection and reporting of data**

The Performance Goal selected for this project is "Train and develop museum professionals." The Performance Measure Statements selected are:

- My understanding has increased as a result of this program/training
- I am confident I can apply what I learned in this program/training

Project Director Tulgan Ostheimer will develop a project survey instrument with these two statements and corresponding responses, as outlined in the IMLS Museums for America guidelines; she may incorporate additional questions regarding both the training content and program logistics. All training session participants, including Head Start educators as well as museum professionals, will be asked to complete the survey at the end of the training session. In addition, as Tulgan Ostheimer conducts her on-site consultations over the following six months, participants will be asked to respond to these questions again, to see if there is any difference in the level of understanding and/or confidence once the participants return to their home organizations and begin to plan implementation of Head Start with Art programs. The survey results will be reported in the Clark's final report to IMLS; project success will be measured by the number of partners who successfully inaugurate Head Start with Art programs in their home institutions.

Project's intended results

This project will address the lack of enrichment programs available to students after significant cuts to Head Start due to sequestration, as identified by Head Start program staff. With funds from IMLS, the Clark will both directly provide enrichment programs to additional local Head Start students and also assist the development of similar programs for Head Start programs across the state of Massachusetts through training and consultation.

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

The program helps Head Start students gain kindergarten readiness skills and provides experiences outside the classroom not currently available to these students. The Head Start with Art curriculum was developed to meet the specific learning standards of Head Start pre-school programs in areas including Initiative & Curiosity; Reasoning & Problem Solving; Language Development; Art; Self, Family, & Community; and Social & Emotional Development. This project will strengthen and enhance these learning experiences through program evaluation and curriculum revision and enhancement. The program evaluation conducted by Early Childhood Educator Sherry Monte will allow the Clark to assess its progress in meeting the Head Start with Art program goal of helping students gain kindergarten readiness skills.

Head Start educators also conduct pre- and post-program assessments with students' parents and caregivers (included in the attached Head Start with Art curriculum as Addendum 2) to gauge changes in attitudes and behaviors about museums in general and the Clark in particular. Pre-visit questions focus on the family's history of visiting museums, challenges to museum accessibility, and goals for a museum visit, to help inform the design of the program for individual classrooms. Once the four sessions of Head Start with Art have been completed, parents and caregivers are asked about their own experiences visiting the Clark during the final session, what they believe their children learned through the program, and how their attitudes toward visiting museums has changed as a result.

In addition, the knowledge and behaviors of the museum professionals and Head Start educators who participate in the training session will be surveyed and assessed as described above.

Tangible products

Tangible products resulting from this project include:

- Revised and enhanced Head Start with Art curriculum, designed to be adapted to any type of museum and to be used with a wide range of preschool/Head Start programs
- Training program syllabus and materials suitable for replication in other locations
- "Start-up Kits" for 15 training program participant pairs which contain all materials to support inaugural Head Start with Art programs, including art supplies for all hands-on activities and curriculum materials and resources

Sustainability

The Clark is committed to continuing its school bus subsidy program, which underwrites the costs of transportation for any school within a one-day's field trip and is funded through the operating budget up to a total of \$50,000 per school year, and will assume the additional costs of the Adams Head Start classes' buses after the grant period. With the completion of the campaign to support the expansion project, the Clark's Advancement Department efforts are focused on providing the resources to sustain and support the Institute through a variety of new and existing funding sources, including operations and endowment goals and increased earned revenue opportunities on the expanded campus. Potential private individual and foundation donors are cultivated with a goal, in particular, of supporting new initiatives across the museum, education, and research and academic programs at the Clark.

3. Project Design**What specific activities, including evaluation and performance measurements, will you carry out?**

The 12-month project work plan allows adequate time for Clark and Head Start educators to plan and carry out all aspects of the project to strengthen and expand the Head Start with Art program. These activities include:

- Head Start with Art program implemented with six classes, including two additional classes from Adams, Massachusetts (October 2016-June 2017)

- Formal evaluation of the Head Start with Art program:
 - curriculum and learning standards review (October 2016)
 - observation of all four sessions (October 2016)
 - interviews with Head Start teachers and parents and/or caregivers (October-November 2016)
 - evaluation report prepared (November-December 2016)
 - curriculum revisions based on report recommendations (January-February 2017)
- Training and program expansion statewide:
 - outreach, promotion, and recruitment of partner museums and Head Start programs through existing professional networks and personal contacts by Clark and Berkshire County Head Start staff (October 2016-January 2017)
 - develop one-day training session agenda and attendant materials, including curriculum and kit of materials for partners' first session in their home institutions (February-March 2017)
 - arrange for travel stipends for participants, including lodging option for those traveling more than 3 hours each way (February-March 2017)
 - hold training session (late March 2017)
 - conduct one-day consulting visits to statewide programs (April-September 2017)
 - new pilot programs inaugurated (September 2017)
- Program evaluation activities:
 - evaluation instrument developed by Clark staff (early October 2016)
 - surveys and interviews with teachers, partners, and museum stakeholders at the end of each class session and after consultation visit (October 2016-September 2017)
 - report prepared by Clark staff (September 2017)

Who will plan, implement, and manage your project?

Dr. Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, Project Director and Clark Director of Adult, School, and Community Programs, will oversee all aspects of the project. A member of the Clark's Education Department since 1999, she will be responsible for project planning, working with the evaluator, supervising the Coordinator of Family and Community Events and Clark docents in conducting Head Start with Art classes, leading the training program, consulting with partners on implementing their programs, and compiling performance measurement results.

Hanna Leatherman, Clark Coordinator of Family and Community Events, joined the Clark in 2015. She will lead Head Start with Art sessions in both the classroom and museum, working with Clark docents. She will also assist with curriculum revisions and will help plan and implement the training session for partners.

Clark Docents will assist with the Head Start with Art sessions, leading smaller group activities and gallery tours. Volunteer Docents participate in bi-weekly four-hour training sessions throughout the year. Docents are trained and reviewed by the Director of Adult, School, and Community Programs.

Sherry Monte, Program Evaluator, has taught the Side by Side Inclusive Preschool Program at Williamstown Elementary School for more than 25 years and has previously evaluated preschool initiatives at the Clark and other educational organizations in the region. She will review the existing program; observe all four sessions for the first Head Start with Art class of the 2016-17 school year; conduct interviews with teachers and other stakeholders; and prepare a report assessing the program's success in meeting its goals and recommending revisions to the curriculum as necessary.

Stacy Parsons, Executive Director, Berkshire County Head Start with Art Development Program, will work with Clark educators to undertake the program evaluation and curriculum revision; recruit new partners for training and inaugurating additional Head Start with Art programs; and participate in the training session.

When and in what sequence will your activities occur?

All activities will take place during the October 2016-September 2017 grant period, as outlined above. Head Start with Art classes will take place in six four-week sessions across the school year, with schedules arranged around school and holiday vacation periods. The program evaluation will begin with the first class held during 2016-17, to allow time for curriculum revisions to be completed before the partners training session in late March 2017 and to be implemented with at least half the Head Start with Art programs to take place during the grant period. Consulting sessions will take place during the six-month period after the late March training. Evaluation surveys will be conducted throughout the grant period.

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

Financial: A grant from IMLS will be used to cover the costs of an outside evaluator for the Head Start with Art program; direct expenses for buses and program materials for two additional classes of Head Start with Art at the Clark; and all expenditures for the one-day training session, including travel for all participants, optional lodging for those traveling more than three hours each way, and a start-up kit of program materials. IMLS funds are also requested to support Clark staff direct time and travel in presenting Head Start with Art programs for two classes in Adams, Massachusetts; working with the evaluator and revising the Head Start with Art program based on her recommendations; and conducting the training session at the Clark and offsite consultation sessions. The Clark has demonstrated its capacity to carry out project activities within approved budgets in five previous IMLS grants (2006, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2014)), as well as other federal grants.

Personnel: As identified above, required personnel include Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, the Clark's Director of Adult, School, and Community Programs; Coordinator of Family and Community Events Hanna Leatherman; and Clark volunteer docents. The project allocates time devoted to the project for these two members of the full-time Clark staff. The time allotments for conducting Head Start with Art classes are based on current implementation of the program, both preparation for and conducting sessions in Head Start classrooms and at the museum. Estimates of staff time for undertaking the training session, including preparations, and consultations are based on previous experience in helping other institutions replicate Clark education programs.

Non-Clark personnel includes Early Childhood educator Sherry Monte, who will evaluate the program in the fall of 2016, and Executive Director of Berkshire County Head Start Stacy Parsons and Head Start educators who will also be critical partners in the project. IMLS funds will support the work of Sherry Monte: Head Start personnel are compensated through federal grant support so salary support for Head Start personnel is not included in this grant proposal.

How will you track your progress toward achieving your intended results?

Progress on planned project activities and expenditures will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by Project Director Tulgan Ostheimer. Performance measurement evaluations will begin during the training session (March 2017) and will be ongoing during consultations with 15 pairs of program partners. In addition, the formal curriculum evaluation will also help assess achievement in meeting the the Head Start with Art program goal of helping students gain kindergarten readiness skills.

How and with whom will you share your projects results?

Clark educators will share their experiences with other educators and museum professionals through such outlets as conferences, listservs, professional organizations, and other resources, including the New England Museums Association, FRAME, Massachusetts Cultural Council, and ICOM. Tulgan Ostheimer will share information about this program with an international network of education colleagues, as she has with other Clark program initiatives. The program is highlighted on the Clark website; the pilot class in late 2013 was covered by the local newspaper (article attached as Supporting Document 4), and a press release on the program's expansion will be prepared. It is also anticipated that Head Start educators will share news about the project and its results through their internal communications systems.

