



Museums for America

Sample Application MA-11-17-0320-17

Project Category: Learning Experiences

Funding Level: \$0 - \$25,000

Bechtler Museum of Modern Art

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$22,648

Amount of cost share: \$0

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Abstract
- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing applications for the FY2018 Museums for America grant program differ from those that guided the preparation of FY2017 applications. This year, the maximum that may be requested from IMLS is \$250,000. Be sure to use the instructions in the FY2018 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

Bechtler Museum of Modern Art
IMLS – Museums for America / Learning Experiences Grant Application
Access and Inclusion: Museum Memories
Abstract

The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art is more than a museum, providing art-making and education opportunities tailored for those who have limited options to experience cultural life. Now in its seventh year of operation, the museum understands the importance of giving back to the community that supports its programming by strengthening ties through innovative outreach programs. Access to art challenges those with differing perspectives to consider the shared aspects of the human condition.

“Museum Memories” adheres to this philosophy and engages those in the community with early-stage dementia and their care partners. Based in part on the highly esteemed ‘*Meet Me at MoMA*’ program in New York, trained guides provide special gallery tours where conversations about the artwork help stir memories shared by the individual with dementia and care partner. Participants can then work together to create their own artworks in a series of facilitator-led workshops. Affiliated with the Western North Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association as well as Southminster Retirement Community’s Memory Care Center, the pilot-year of the program has proven to be a source of stress relief for care partners, a safe space for patients and a way to increase social connections for all involved. Attendees return month after month which speaks eloquently to the meaning and value the program holds for the participants.

The Learning Experiences grant requested from IMLS would support this project and give the Bechtler the ability to make *Museum Memories* a premier program of its type in the region. Through funding, the museum will be able to contract with teaching artists to deliver the art-making portion of the program and purchase necessary supplies, as well as offset marketing costs, including website updates. A portion will be dedicated to enact and document assessment and evaluation and, most importantly, a portion will help fund free memberships for life to the museum for the patient with dementia and care partner.

The Bechtler’s art outreach programs offer inventive pathways to connect with underserved audiences by providing customized art-learning and art-making experiences, technology-based tours and unique opportunities to explore their creative outlets. Partnerships with community service organizations are essential for identifying and developing much-needed programs for their constituents who can benefit greatly as a result but who are consistently excluded due to means or circumstance. The Bechtler’s mission-driven commitment to access and inclusion increases cultural learning opportunities for non-traditional museum audiences with programs that expand typical boundaries by embracing and advancing innovation while serving as a catalyst for the community to evolve.

NARRATIVE – LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Project Justification

What do you propose to do?: Outreach and accessibility programming, such as *Museum Memories*, offers a 21st century response to the cultural enrichment needs of the non-traditional museum visitor. Through IMLS funding, the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art seeks to collaborate with local and regional partners to make the museum accessible and relevant to individuals with dementia and their care partners. This program will enhance the quality of life for those living with this disease by providing an expressive outlet, artistic exploration and a forum to connect the past with the present as their memories are fading. Through dialogue, questioning methodologies, writing, guided tours and art-making projects, participants have a richly rewarding experience by having the opportunity to access the Bechtler collection in a uniquely customized manner. The Museum Memories Planning Team (MMPT), a committee comprised of museum staff and professionals working in the field of dementia, meet regularly to ensure the success of the program and are tasked with planning and implementing program elements to identify the challenges in working with this population as well as evaluate successes and communicate results. At the conclusion of the initial program (October, 2018), it is the museum's intention that the program will continue to serve this population while gathering more data and evaluating program deliveries in order to encourage other cultural entities in the area to replicate it.

What need, problem, challenge will you address?: We believe that the arts are essential to the health and well-being of all individuals of every age and that everyone should benefit from them, regardless of economic conditions, geographic isolation or disability. These factors can restrict access to, and inclusion in, arts programming for chronically underserved populations. The museum overcomes many of these obstacles through outreach programs tailored for individuals who have little to no options to experience culture in their lives. These programs are delivered both on and off-site through collaborations with many community organizations.

Museum Memories, a program for individuals with dementia and their care partners, meets the cultural enrichment needs of this inadequately served population. A 2015 publication by the Alzheimer's Association estimated that in North Carolina more than 160,000 individuals are living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. If each patient is being cared for by just one family member, more than 320,000 North Carolina residents are dealing with the daily realities of this disease. The report further suggests that by the year 2025, North Carolina will see a 31% rise in Alzheimer's and dementia diagnosis.

Dementia is a universal word used to describe a group of brain disorders of which Alzheimer's disease is the most common. Those suffering from dementia have difficulties with communicating, learning, thinking and reasoning and can suffer from memory loss,

have difficulty performing familiar tasks, have problems with the use of language (spoken and written), become easily disoriented, show a decrease in judgment, develop problems with abstract thinking, show changes in mood, behavior or personality and lose will and initiative. Hundreds of thousands of care partners experience stress, loss, emotional and physical fatigue as they live with the daily reminder that their loved one is not as they used to be. Programs such as *Museum Memories* offer an outlet for participants to interact with art and a chance to discuss color, light, mood and memories from the past. It also gives them the chance to make art, be creative and think abstractly. Care partners benefit as well by engaging with their loved one in the present as they share creative experiences while also networking and connecting socially with other care partners. Finally, both participant and care partner will receive lifetime memberships to the museum so they can return as often as they wish, and in their own time.

Who or what will benefit from your program?: The Bechtler Museum has entered into partnerships with the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and Southminster Retirement Center, specifically, their Memory Care Facility, where some of the art classes are held. People with dementia and care partners are able to access cultural resources and build skills, knowledge, confidence and empathy through communication, collaboration and creative expression offered in this program. The museum's staff has learned new skills and how to effectively work with this audience to assess local needs and resources to further the program's outcomes.

What are the performance goals and intended results of your project?: Performance goals for this program are based on specific goals established in conjunction with partner organizations:

- Individuals with dementia will feel more connected to their care partners and the community through this shared creative experience.
- Care partners will feel more connected to their community and will experience a decrease in caregiver anxiety and stress.
- All participants will feel more confident about creating art and/or discussing artworks.
- The Bechtler Museum, partners and participants will better understand how art museums can serve as community catalysts for non-traditional audiences.
- The Bechtler Museum, partners and participants will better understand the benefits of art education and instruction for non-traditional audiences.
- The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art views this program as a model for other arts organizations to reimagine the museum's role in non-traditional programming.

How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan?: The museum's five-year Strategic Plan (FY2014 to FY2019) seeks to identify ways that the museum can bring value to the Charlotte community through: Appreciation, Education, Inspiration, Change and Sense of Place.

Appreciation: The museum seeks to create appreciation for its collection and its distinctiveness by making art accessible, approachable and part of everyday life just as the Bechtler family would have wanted.

Education: The museum seeks to stimulate intellectual curiosity by raising the level of appreciation and knowledge of modern art in the community.

Inspiration: The museum seeks to create joy and promote creativity and creative feelings.

Change: The museum seeks to become a source of community pride and a catalyst for change in the Charlotte region.

Sense of Place: The museum seeks to serve as a gathering place for all people within the community where anyone can go to enhance their life balance.

Project Work Plan

What specific activities will you carry out?: After completing a one-year pilot in FY17 (October 2016 – June 2017), the Bechtler Museum will begin year-one of an established and measurable two-year program. The program has two simultaneous tracks – facilitator-led tours of the Bechtler and art-making classes. Both program tracks are designed to be flexible and to accommodate the participant's needs. In year-one, the museum has planned a minimum of 6 tours and 6 art classes.

Tours are scheduled to be an hour and a half. This allows time for participants to sign up for their free membership, fill out a photo release form and participate in a pre/post survey. Participants with dementia and their care partners are given a 45-60 minutes tour of the galleries where open-ended questions are used to maximize discussion amongst all participants. Rolling chairs are available for participants and care partners so they may sit and discuss a maximum of three artworks. Because of the size of the group, facilitators are able to make sure all attendees are able to participate. The environment is engaging yet casual enough so that if one participant becomes anxious they may leave at any time or split from the group with their care partner to experience the art in a way that is more personal.

Art classes are also designed with the participants in mind. Each course consists of three two-hour sessions. Participants are welcome to work individually or as partners to create an expressive piece of art. Courses are diverse as the program covers a wide range of 2D and 3D media such as collage, painting, printmaking, fibers, drawing, and sculpture.

Participation for the tours and art courses is limited to a total of 12 (6 individuals with dementia and 6 care partners). Successes from the pilot-year has informed the program elements planned for this two-year study.

Programs, including art classes and tours are based on current exhibitions, prominent Bechtler permanent collection artists as well as other narrative themes. The Bechtler's program was built by modeling the Museum of Modern Art's *Meet me at MoMA*.

Who will plan, implement and manage your project?: The program will be guided and directed by the Bechtler Museum's Vice President and Director of Programming, Christopher Lawing. Lawing has created and managed education programs for more than 20 years at a variety of arts organization throughout North Carolina. Assisting him will be Mykell Gates, the museum's School and Community Programs Manager, and Lacy Nance, the museum's School and Community Programs Coordinator who will collectively devote 25% of their time towards this program while still managing other signature programs (Jail Arts Initiative, Low to No Vision Access, and InReach, a program tailored for adults with developmental disabilities). Gates and Nance will also serve as Museum Educators and will be leading the programs. Bechtler Teaching Artist, Marie Bivens, will teach the art-making workshops. Preparation includes watching all of MoMA's training videos for teaching artists and museum staff, community partner workshops and special training sessions. Additional museum staff serve as assistants and observers as well as documentarians. The Bechtler Museum's Education and Marketing staff will assist the Vice President with creating the initial findings report and be responsible for its dissemination to cultural institutions and elder-care organizations in the region. The museum's development team is responsible for communicating successes to funders.

When and in what sequence will your activities occur?:

The following is a general timeline of activities and outcomes.

Key Action Steps	Responsibilities	Completion
Planning & Development: -Meetings with the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and other community partners such as Southminster to review the pilot year and discuss goals and objectives for year-one of the official program. -Project scope, partner's desired outcomes and specific needs are identified. Project session dates, times and locations are set.	-Bechtler Vice President (VP) and Program Manager (PM) -Partner staff (PS) -Teaching Artist (TA) -Museum Educator (ME)	Oct./Nov. 2017
Project Design. -PM and TA create session plans and review with VP and PS. Art materials are ordered and assembled when necessary. -Bechtler Museum staff assists PM in creating participant handouts.	-Bechtler VP -Bechtler PM -PS -TA	Dec. 2017

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Narrative

Program Implementation: -PM, ME and TA deliver project sessions according to the schedule. PM has ME observe and coordinate documentation.	-Bechtler VP -Bechtler PM -Bechtler ME -PS -TA	Jan. 2018 to June 2018 (depending on schedule)
Surveys/Questionnaires: -Participants complete survey before each session. Care partner and individuals with dementia complete take-home questionnaire after each session and mail, fax or email back to the Bechtler Museum.. -After each session, PM, ME and/or TA complete an oral survey and discuss the session. -PM completes evaluation report after each session and reviews with VP.	-Bechtler VP -Bechtler PM -TA -ME - Participants -Care partners	Jan. 2018 to June 2018 (depending on the program and session schedule)
Focus Groups and Program Evaluation: -PM conducts three focus groups comprised of staff from participating partner organizations and select care partners. -PM compiles data and meets with VP and PS to discuss project successes, improvement opportunities and plans for the future.	-Bechtler VP -Bechtler PM -PS -Select Care partners	Feb., April and June 2018 (focus groups) Sept. 2018 (evaluation)
Reporting: PM creates findings report questionnaire. -Bechtler Museum Marketing staff publishes preliminary findings and distributes to local cultural and elder-care organizations. -The PM works with Bechtler Museum Development staff to fulfill reporting requirements to funding organization.	-Bechtler PM -Bechtler staff	Oct. 2018

What financial, personnel and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?: The museum has already made a significant investment in personnel to effectively carry out its mission-driven outreach programs, including the pilot year for “Museum Memories.” For year-one of the two-year study, \$25,000 is needed from IMLS to plan, implement, document, evaluate and publish results. After this period, the museum will be well-positioned to apply for further implementation and expansion grants and to continue fund-raising from private, corporate and foundation resources.

How will you evaluate your project?: A minimum of 12 sessions (6 tours and 6 art classes) are held over a 9-month period. The program is assessed using similar evaluation criteria used in the “*Meet me at MoMa*” Alzheimer’s Project assessment plan.

Quantitative and qualitative evidence is gathered using survey instruments, collected observation data and observations of group discussions. The program leader will facilitate a short verbal session of “yes and no” questions for participants with dementia and their care partners and will send them home with a longer survey that they can fill out on their own and mail back (See attached evaluation instruments).

How will you track your progress toward achieving your performance goals and intended results?: The planning process will be reviewed continuously. Ideas will be drafted, discussed, and revised as necessary. The planning process will be reviewed continuously and revised as needed. Over the course of the project, two “milepost” meetings will be held by the MMPT to discuss progress to date and a review of the evaluation materials.

How and with whom will you share your project’s results?: Lessons learned from the implementation and evaluation processes will be disseminated among organizations and individuals across Mecklenburg County. The museum will share outcomes and successes with cultural and elder-care institutions in the region via a findings report. It is the museum’s intention to publish preliminary results and share those results in print, on the museum’s website and at regional and national conferences, including the state-wide Alzheimer’s Conference, AAM and NCCA, the National Center for Creative Aging.

PROJECT RESULT

How will the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes of the intended audience change as a result of your project?: During the pilot-year of the program, the museum staff gained valuable training and experiences and new skills as they worked closely with the participants and partner organization professionals. Specific needs were assessed and local resources were minded to further the program’s outcomes. Program participants reported a greater sense of well-being, safety and connection to their care partners and community. Partner organization professionals observed positive mood behaviors, a decrease in care partner stress and anxiety and increased participation in social activities. As this program progresses, future partners could include the Centralina Area Agency on Aging, Memory Center Charlotte and other elder-care facilities specializing in the care of people with dementia.

What performance indicators will you use to measure this change?: Bechtler staff will facilitate a minimum of 12 sessions over a 9-month period, observe sessions and track comments and feedback. A participant survey will be administered before each session to assess each patient’s emotional state going into the session. A take-home survey will be completed and returned via mail or email within three (3) days post session. Museum staff and partner staff will serve as observers at each session and will meet to discuss observations. Information learned will be recorded. Bechtler staff will collect and analyze data from sessions, as well as photo-document art projects. After each session, evaluation reports will be created to be later used in a final Findings Report. This report

will be published and disseminated to regional cultural institutions and elder-care organizations.

What are the proposed targets for these performance indicators?:

Target 1: The museum will complete a minimum of 12 sessions (6 gallery tours with discussion sessions and 6 art-making sessions) within a 9-month period. Each session will have a maximum of 12 participants (6 participants and 6 care partners).

Target 2: >80% of the participants will feel more connected to their care partners and community, as well as feel more confident about viewing and creating art. >80% of care partners will feel more connected to their community through social networking in order to decrease caregiver anxiety and stress.

Target 3: >80% of partner organizations and care partners will have a better understanding about how museums can serve as a community resource, as well as the benefits of art in the lives of individuals with dementia.

Target 4: >80% of area cultural institutions and elder-care organizations will rethink the role museums play in non-traditional programming.

How will you compare the proposed targets to actual outcomes? Actual outcomes will be compared to proposed targets 1 through 4 through written evaluation reports throughout the project period.

What tangible products will result from your project?:

The following tangible products will result from this project:

- Documentation, including written responses, oral comments, photographs
- Participants' artwork
- Evaluation materials
- Dissemination of pilot project progress to partner organization
- Summative Findings Report on pilot project to be distributed to local cultural and elder-care organizations
- Publish Findings Report on museum website
- Cultivating continued relationships with partners

How will you sustain the benefits of your project?: Project successes will be used to secure funding for subsequent years of this program. Bechtler Museum development staff will seek funds from foundations and corporations already engaged with the museum's additional access and inclusion programs. Members and private donors with a vested interest in this type of outreach program will be identified and approached for support.

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 Schedule of Completion

2017-2018

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Plan & Develop Program Curriculum												
Project Design w/materials												
Program Implementation												
Participants' Exhibition												
Program Evaluation												
Dissemination of Findings												