



Museums for America

Sample Application MA-21-17-0293-17

Project Category: Community Anchors

Funding Level: \$5,000 – \$500,000

Missoula Art Museum

Amount awarded by IMLS: \$24,999

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.

Abstract

The Missoula Art Museum (MAM) proposes **CARES: Catalyzing Access, Research, and Education Solutions** to engage museums, libraries, civic agencies, and educational partners from Missoula and across Montana in an assessment and design process to increase community access to the MAM Collections and create shared preservation resources. Confirmed and targeted project partners include the University of Montana School of Art, Native American Studies Department, and Archives and Special Collections at Mansfield Library; Salish Kootenai College of the Flathead Reservation; City and County of Missoula, Missoula Redevelopment Agency; ARTS Missoula, Missoula Public Library; regional K-12 schools; Montana Arts Council and institutional members of the Montana Art Gallery Directors Association.

In a rural state like Montana, collections that document and preserve our diverse cultural heritage are isolated and underutilized. Conservation resources adhering to best practices are rarely available and often accessible only at great expense. Museums are amassing archives and libraries are collecting art; interdisciplinary solutions are needed to keep our vital resources safe, meaningful, and accessible to the region, state, and increasingly, the nation. Leveraging MAM's capital campaign to create much-needed collection infrastructure, CARES will explore the potential of a new collection facility to include lab and programming spaces dedicated to physical and digital storage, conservation and preservation, and research and education.

CARES will occur from November 1, 2017 to October 31, 2018. Participants will complete a collections self-assessment and participate in two professional development workshops to learn best practices in archive management and preservation. An architect will facilitate a series of design charrettes that generate community-based vision statements and identify shared needs for storage, conservation, research, and education. The process will stimulate collaborative relationships and generate architectural designs with broad support needed for a successful campaign.

The project's benefits will include:

- **Engagement of museums, libraries, and educators in the development of our local community.** Input will contribute to a vision for access and learning based on our common needs and shared values, such as community, justice, and diversity.
- **Creation of essential partnerships.** Increasing dialogue and exploring possibilities at design charrettes will anchor Missoula's cultural community in a geographically isolated region and help to formalize future interdisciplinary collaborations.
- **Access to conservation training for museum and library professionals.** Assessments and training in the care of archival materials will help partners articulate how a new facility could serve similar needs for storage and preservation.

The project and its outcomes will advance MAM's strategic goals to promote MAM as a vital part of a healthy and engaged community, foster organizational excellence and innovation, and to preserve and provide access to our creative culture.

Narrative

1. Project Justification

The Missoula Art Museum (MAM) proposes **CARES: Catalyzing Access, Research, and Education Solutions** to engage museums, libraries, civic agencies, and private partners from Missoula and across Montana in a needs assessment and design process focused on community access to the MAM Collections and preservation resources. CARES will determine the potential for collaborations in research, education, collection storage, preservation, and conservation efforts. The process will include surveys, training, and design charrettes to support a new facility operated by MAM in Missoula, Montana, the state's second largest city and cultural hub. The integrated facility will house the rapidly growing MAM and Missoula County Art Collections. CARES will allow the community to contribute to the development of the facility and influence shared resources, such as research and conservation labs. Our innovative approach catalyzes interdisciplinary connections between stakeholders from the arts, humanities, and social sciences, as well as from museum, library, education, and government sectors.

Confirmed and targeted partners include the University of Montana School of Art, Native American Studies Department, and Archives & Special Collections at Mansfield Library; Salish Kootenai College of the Flathead Reservation; Missoula City & County, Missoula Public Library; regional K-12 schools; Missoula Redevelopment Agency; ARTS Missoula; Montana Arts Council and members of the Montana Art Gallery Directors Association (see letters of commitment). The architect who designed MAM's current building will facilitate charrettes and use community input to create architectural renderings for a new facility and the re-use of MAM's existing collection spaces. A conservator and an archivist will provide trainings in best practices for care of works on paper and information management. Partners will create shared vision statements for collections research, education, and stewardship. The articulated support of museums, libraries, and educators will foster future collaborations and enhance MAM's ability to catalyze cultural resources for our community.

Need: We will address the following three community needs, prioritized by the degree to which each need threatens the safety of collections.

(1) Limited access to cultural collections. MAM's facility no longer provides adequate physical and intellectual access to a significant art collection and archival information. We have outgrown a 2006 building expansion and received "at-risk" results in a self-assessment for museum storage created by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property. Our collection has doubled in size since the expansion, filling the vault to capacity with works by internationally known artists, such as Robert Rauschenberg and Ursula von Rydingsvard, as well as native Montanans Peter Voulkos, Rudy Autio, and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (Sqelix'u, Métis, Shoshone). Our research center now serves too many purposes to meet best practices. Space to examine original works must also function as a shipping and receiving room, photography studio, conservation lab, file/archive room, media center, crate and bookstore storage room, and administrative office. We receive steady requests to loan, reproduce, and study our holdings, and most frequently for the Contemporary American Indian Art Collection, which has toured internationally. Local government is committed to helping MAM thrive. In late 2015, the Mayor of Missoula invited us to consider how the city and museum might share a secure storage facility, if one were constructed. Institutions across the state have similar space

shortages, leaving our diverse cultural heritage collections isolated and underutilized. In summer 2016, the Missoula Public Library (MPL) invited MAM to consider becoming an innovative branch library dedicated to the arts, which would help alleviate MPL’s crisis-drive policy of delisting one book for every new title added, as well as improve cataloging of our research materials.

(2) Limited resources for preservation and conservation. Montana is a rural state; the nearest professional conservation resources are hundreds of miles away in Denver and Seattle. Meanwhile, our needs have expanded as the collection has grown: 400 works in 1998, 800 works in 2008, and nearly 1,900 works in 2016. Acquisitions are rising exponentially—nearly 10% growth in 2016 alone—as the first generation of Montana modernist art collectors ages and passes away. MAM is documenting hundreds of artworks held in bequests and significant supporting archives built by lifelong collectors. Meanwhile, the City and MAM are opening Missoula’s first public sculpture park, prompting offers of sizeable outdoor works that bring new challenges for care. Discussions at the statewide museum conference reveal that our peers share the struggle to provide for large-scale organization and storage. Ancillary needs for crating, framing, matting, photography, and conservation strain limited resources even further. In fall 2016, libraries and archives in Missoula began meeting informally to discuss physical and digital storage needs, and the UM Mansfield Library asked MAM for contacts for climate control solutions.

(3) Limited learning opportunities for collection professionals. Since 1972, museum professionals have exchanged information at the annual Montana Art Gallery Directors Association (MAGDA) conference. Otherwise, there are limited museum studies programs in the northern Rocky Mountain and adjacent Plains states. In fall 2016, MAGDA asked MAM to provide guidance on found-in-collections issues and suggested that the 2017 conference focus on “collection conundrums.” Disciplines and preservation responsibilities are co-mingling—for example, MAM is positioned to receive art collectors’ archives and MPL is accepting gifts of artwork—but cross-discipline knowledge of best practices isn’t keeping pace.

Community Benefits: CARES creates opportunities for ~58 targeted project partners to learn about collection management and preservation, articulate needs, and collaborate on solutions.

Table 1. Number and Representation of Beneficiaries						
Museums	Libraries	Higher Ed	K-12 Ed	Local & State Gov’t	Non-Profit	Total
30	2	3	15	4	4	58

Benefits include the following:

- (1) Engagement of museums, libraries, and educators in the development of our local community.** Input will contribute to visions for access and learning based in our common needs and shared values, such as community, justice, and diversity. Vision statements for Physical & Digital Storage, Conservation & Preservation, and Scholarship & Education will influence the design of shared resources within the new facility. For example, the building might house a Native American Art Research Fellowship, in which qualified students from UM and Salish Kootenai College students use expanded access to the MAM Collections to conduct scholarly research for publications and exhibitions.
- (2) Creation of essential partnerships.** Relationships fostered at design charrettes will anchor Missoula’s cultural community in a geographically isolated region and ground

future interdisciplinary collaborations. Significantly, City, County, and State agencies will be at the table with local museums and libraries. A possible partnership may be the creation of a MAM-MPL visual arts library branch. Or, K-12 schools participating in the Kennedy Center initiative “SPARK! Any Given Child Missoula” may help MAM to design a collection exhibit space that expands the impact of MAM’s Fifth Grade Art Experience, which provides 1,900 students with docent-led tours and hands-on art experiences.

- (3) **Access to archive management and conservation training for museum and library professionals.** A conservator will provide a self-assessment for partners to gauge facilities, equipment, climate, documentation, policy, and procedure related to archival collections. Voluntarily-shared results will help guide the design of two workshops providing best practices training in archive management and conservation. The survey and workshops will help partners to articulate how a new facility could serve common needs for physical and intellectual access and preservation. An example would be the design of a shared lab for photography, digitization, and basic care of works on paper. This resource could help museums to link digital archives and object collections. MAM and the Holter Museum of Art in Helena, MT, who co-own a collection, or MAM and Missoula County, who co-manage collections, could benefit from infrastructure that supports innovative collaborative in collection and information management.

Strategic Advancements: CARES will advance MAM’s strategic goals to:

- Promote MAM as a vital part of a healthy and engaged community
- Foster organizational excellence and innovation
- Preserve and provide access to our creative culture

MAM articulated these needs within *40 Forward Campaign for Sustainability and Strategic Growth*, a four-year, integrated, strategic, capital campaign plan created by MAM’s Board of Directors in 2015 (see Strategic Plan). CARES leverages *40 Forward’s* collection goals in support of service to regional museums, libraries, and educators, making MAM a Community Anchor as defined by IMLS.

This project uses our strategic focus on **Community Connections, Organizational Excellence** and **Artistic Innovation** to respond to **Collections** and **Infrastructure** priority areas. The project will strengthen and create interagency and public-private partnerships, such as between MAM and the Missoula Redevelopment Agency. Training will support the professional development of museum and library colleagues. They will apply knowledge in charrettes, which will produce tangible designs to expand access to collections through shared research, education, and stewardship facilities.

Museums for America Goals: CARES activities align with MFA’s strategic plan.

Table 2: Alignment of Goals, Objectives, and Activities		
MFA Goal	MFA Objective	CARES Activity
1: IMLS places the learner at the center & supports engaging experiences in libraries & museums	1.3: Facilitate partnerships among museums, libraries, and other education providers to expand	Professional staff from 58 museums, libraries, K-12 schools, higher ed, community non-profit organizations, and City, County, and State agencies are invited to participate in the design of a facility to

that prepare people to be full participants in local communities & our global society.	learning opportunities for the public.	create access to collections and preservation resources needed by museum and library professionals.
2: IMLS promotes museums & libraries as strong community anchors that enhance civic engagement, cultural opportunities, and economic vitality.	2.1: Invest in projects that strengthen libraries & museums as core components of a broader community learning and service infrastructure.	Libraries, museums and other partners collaboratively author visions for collection-based learning and stewardship resources.
		Libraries, museums and other partners contribute to critical concept and design phases for a new collection facility.
	2.3: Ensure public & private sector leaders have info to make strategic policy & investment decisions leveraging infrastructure & expertise of museums and libraries.	City, County, & State agencies, including the Missoula Redevelopment Agency, will participate alongside non-profit partners.
		Digital assessment ensures broad input from rural stakeholders.
3: IMLS supports exemplary stewardship of museum & library collections and promotes the use of technology to facilitate discovery of knowledge & cultural heritage.	3.1: Support the care and management of the nation's collections, to expand and sustain access for current and future generations.	Materials and data shared with all partners and local and state officials and published online.
		Museums & libraries complete a self-assessment pertaining to physical and intellectual access to their collections.
		Best practices training for museum & library partners focuses on paper, book and document preservation and archive management.
		Design for collection facility will respond to needs for shared resources and access, such as a documentation and digitization lab.

2. Project Work Plan

Table 3: Work Plan with timeline and measures		
Activity	Time	Performance measure
Design collection self-assessments and evaluation tools	Nov 2017	Digital assessments target four sectors (library, museum, education, civic) on community collaborations. Shared responses increase understanding of contents and needs. Conservator provides self-assessment for collection management. Evaluator designs formative & summative tools.
Implement and analyze surveys	Dec-Feb 2018	Digital surveys sent by MAM to museum and library directors and collections staff, higher ed deans and department chairs, K-12 educators, local officials, Montana Arts Council, Humanities Montana, MAGDA members, and Montana Library Association. Responses collected and analyzed according to the evaluator's timeline. Results presented at charrettes. Team progress report issued at six months.
Host design	Mar-	Three half-day charrettes occur at MAM or partner sites, as

charrettes	May	needed. Focus areas are Preservation & Conservation, Physical & Digital Storage, Education & Scholarship. Session generate collective vision statements. 90 participants representing museums, libraries, education, and government are anticipated.
Provide archive management and conservation training	Apr, May	Visiting Conservator and local Archivist present two half-day workshops in conjunction with the Preservation & Conservation charrette and the Physical & Digital Storage charrette. Attendees have increased understanding of best practices in archive management and preservation. Knowledge is applied in charrettes. 32 total participants anticipated.
Design collection facilities	June-Sept	MAM's architect incorporates community input into architectural drawings for new and existing facilities.
Evaluation	Oct	External Evaluator provides formative, summative, and impact assessment.
Dissemination	Oct	MAM composes and disseminates reports, including data, vision statements, workshop resources, and architectural drawings, to participants, partner institutions, civic leaders. Project Team presents at the annual MAGDA conference.

Risks: In a small community, the myth of scarcity can create competition and divisiveness, which can hinder innovation. CARES will foster dialogue and model shared resources to inspire collaboration and unity. Pragmatic risks include partners being unable to attend the charrettes. We will attempt to accommodate participants and offer mileage and training stipends to reduce burden. CARES will start on the heels of MAM's second AAM reaccreditation, which will generate a site visit report and recommendations. We anticipate AAM best practices will not conflict with, and only strengthen, this proposal's direction and priorities for collection care.

Planning & Implementation: MAM's four-member Project Team, consisting of three staff and the consulting architect, reflects excellence and experienced leadership. See Resumes for information on the contracted Conservator, Archivist, and Evaluator.

Project Director and MAM Senior Curator Brandon Reintjes will oversee all aspects of the project, participate in charrettes, and be the primary liaison with community partners. Senior Curator at MAM since 2015, he oversees MAM's integrated exhibition, collection, and education program. He has 15 years of experience with Montana's art community, having also served also as curator at UM's Montana Museum of Art & Culture (MMAC) and the Holter Museum of Art in Helena, and adjunct professor on Contemporary American Indian Art for the UM School of Art. He has participated in MAGDA since 2001 and was elected to serve as President of this statewide organization for 2016-2018.

MAM Executive Director Laura Millin will guide and formalize institutional collaborations, particularly with government officials, participate in all charrettes, and ensure that the project both serves and benefits from the *40 Forward Campaign for Sustainability and Strategic Growth*. In 2015, on behalf of MAM, she accepted the Montana State Governor's Award for the Arts in recognition of 25 years of leadership and sustained growth. Since 1990, she has developed MAM's emphasis on education and outreach while improving the facility and collections care. In 1993, she steered the institution through national AAM reaccreditation and

transitioned MAM from a county agency to a private nonprofit. Her negotiations resulted in a successful relationship in which the County provides MAM with benefits, including fine arts insurance, and MAM provides ongoing care of the Missoula County Art Collection. From 2001-2006, Millin spearheaded the successful renovation and expansion of MAM's historic building with support from local and state government, foundations, citizens, and businesses. In 2016, with the vision of MAM emerging as the leading contemporary art museum in the Rocky Mountain West, she helped to develop the Missoula Art Park, a creative placemaking project made possible through the partnership of MAM, City of Missoula, Adventure Cycling, and the support of the Missoula community. Millin is the first-ever Montana member of the American Association of Museum Directors (AAMD).

MAM Registrar Jennifer Reifsneider will contribute to all aspects of the project. Reifsneider was MAM's first Registrar and Curator of Collections from 1998 to 2008. During this time, she received training at the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Museum Studies, participated in MAP, CAP, and AAM reaccreditation reviews, and served as a Project Director for an NEA-funded collection research and education program, *Montana Connections*. She returned to MAM in 2016, after developing data expertise as the Research and Grants Specialist at Cal State University, Northridge, one of the largest four-year campuses in the nation.

Architect Warren Hampton will facilitate design charrettes and develop conceptual architectural drawings. He designed MAM's state-of-the-art renovation and expansion in 2006, led community design charrettes and advocated for adaptive reuse of the historic Carnegie Library building in which MAM resides. He is intimate with specialized museum collection and education needs. He earned a graduate degree from the University of Arizona, where he was a faculty member until he returned to Montana in 2001 to work for OZ Architects in Missoula.

Schedule: CARES will occur December 1, 2017 through November 30, 2018. In Q1, MAM, the Conservator, and the Evaluator will design and distribute various self-assessments and baseline evaluations. Feedback is analyzed into Q2. MAM will host two workshops and three design charrettes with event evaluations in Q2 and Q3. The Architect will develop designs throughout Q3 and into Q4. MAM will circulate designs and other project materials, make a statewide conference presentation, and disseminate the Evaluator's final report in Q4.

Needed Resources: CARES requests one-time fees for an architect, archivist, conservator and evaluator, participant and Project Team travel, and training stipends. MAM's Executive Director, Senior Curator, and Registrar will provide staffing at no cost to the grant; ensuring care and use of the collections and community partnerships are essential responsibilities.

Progress & Evaluation: The Project Team will meet bi-monthly to review assessments and evaluations and issue a progress report at six months. To ensure inclusiveness, the Team will adjust approaches, materials, and schedules and invite new partners as needed.

Formative and summative assessments will measure how project activities fulfilled the goals and objectives outlined in Table 2. Areas for evaluation include:

- Perception of museums and libraries as full participants in the local community.
- Museum & library staff as engaged learners; knowledge of stewardship issues.
- MAM's role as a community catalyst for enhanced civic and cultural opportunities.

An impact evaluation will seek to determine what interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaborations have been created or strengthened as a result of project activities.

Disseminating Results: MAM will use a free, cloud platform to share workshop materials, vision statements, and conceptual drawings with participants and partner leadership. MAM will summarize the assessment and outcomes for City, County, and State officials. The Project Team will present findings at the annual Montana Art Gallery Directors Association conference.

3. Project Results

Performance goal with measures: CARES primary performance goal is **to strengthen museums and libraries as essential partners in addressing the needs of their communities.** Through digital surveys and event evaluations, MAM will gather participant data, such as size, type, service area, audience and collection profiles, and track project participation. An evaluator will design formative and summative tools, establish baselines, and measure changes in knowledge of best practices, needs, perceptions of museums and libraries as full participants in the local community. An impact evaluation will assess the potential for future collaborations. MAM will use and share Survey Monkey, a low-cost, user-friendly digital analytics tool to administer surveys. The Project Team will report internal and external findings to each participant and leadership at partner organizations and make public via the MAM website.

How intended results address the stated needs:

- **Need #1, Limited access to cultural collections:** Museums, libraries, educators, and civic partners will contribute to architectural designs that increase physical and intellectual access to the MAM and Missoula County art collections.
- **Need #2, Limited resources for preservation and conservation:** The architectural designs will respond to shared community needs for stewardship resources, such as conservation facilities, photography and digitization studios, or other workshops and labs.
- **Need #3, Limited learning opportunities for collection professionals:** Archive management and preservation workshops will increase knowledge of best practices for more productive charrettes, and model collaboration to serve community partners.

Changes: Participants will have increased knowledge of community collections, and feel less isolated in stewardship and more empowered to pursue interdisciplinary collaborations that serve shared needs and goals. MAM will have new avenues to create physical and intellectual access to its collections. The perception of MAM as a community catalyst will increase among museums, libraries, civic, and educational partners. Workshop participants will have increased knowledge of conservation and archives best practices.

Tangible Products: CARES will produce conceptual architectural drawings that MAM will use to develop a new collections facility by 2020 as part of the *40 Forward Campaign for Sustainability and Strategic Growth*. Project activities will generate three community vision statements: Physical & Digital Storage, Conservation & Preservation, and Scholarship & Education. MAM will provide progress & final reports to partners, civic officials, and the public.

Sustainability: CARES is integrated with MAM's four-year strategic plan. The plan, which the Board will review annually and modify as needed, includes parallel activities to develop an endowment and public-private partnerships that will fulfill the visions generated by CARES. MAM will update partners on construction at three, six, 12, and 24 months.

