Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

Sample Application MH-258225-OMS-25
Project Type: Large Project ($100,001-$500,000)

Clark Atlanta University
Art Museum

Amount awarded by IMLS:	$152,440
Amount of cost share:	$156,328

The Clark Atlanta University Art Museum (CAUAM) will expand capacity to serve its community by establishing a Museum Educator position to expand access to the collection, foster partnerships with CAU faculty, and enhance programs for the public at the museum. Project activities will include establishing the position of Museum Educator, establishing connections with at least five faculty members in at least three different departments, developing and presenting customized programs for those faculty and the students, and evaluating their effectiveness. The Museum Educator will bring the museum's resources to light and enhance student education and experiences across the Atlanta University Center, a consortium of CAU, Spelman, and Morehouse, impacting approximately 8,500 students.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the current Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

The Clark Atlanta University Art Museum (CAUAM) requests $152,440.00 to support the new position of Museum Educator for two years. This project meets IMLS' Agency Goal 1, Objective 1, to champion lifelong learning and advance shared knowledge and learning opportunities for all. It addresses IMLS Program Goal 1, Objective 1.1 to development , enhance, or expand public programs, exhibitions, or school programs. Adding a Museum Educator to the staff will also meet the other three objectives under Program Goal 1 in that it will improve the museum's professional management, expand access to the collection, and foster partnerships with CAU faculty, and enhance programs for the general public at the museum.

NEED

The Clark Atlanta University Art Museum was founded in 2015, but its genesis is the Atlanta Art Annuals started by Hale Woodruff in 1942 and continued until 1970. Woodruff, a classically trained artist, used his Harmon Foundation connections to fund the juried art show. Nine hundred formally trained Black artists were represented in the Annuals, one of the few places that exhibited African American artists. It became a national forum for artists of African descent that included a cash prizes and critical feedback about their work. Of the museum's 1,200 piece collection, 291 works that won in various categories of the competition are the core of the museum's permanent collection.

As more opportunities for African American artists to show their work arose the significance of the Atlanta Annuals diminished. CAUMA's acquisitions, therefore, shifted to artists who were either contemporaries of the participants during the first two decades after the Annual was discontinued (e.g., Margaret Burroughs) or contemporary artists residing in the South (e.g., Sheila Pree Bright, Alfred Conteh, Fahamu Pecou, and Phoenix Savage).

Historic and modern art is the largest component of the collections. It is anchored by paintings from some of the earliest formally trained African American artists, many of whom are part of the canon of African American artists of the mid-twentieth century (William H. Johnson, Charles White, Elizabeth Catlett, Sam Gilliam, Jacob Lawrence, and Norman Lewis). **The museum's collection of modern and contemporary art is one of the most important collection of African American art in the United States. (**See Attachment 11, the *Director's Brief,* for more information.)

CAUAM is in year four of a five-year pilot program to significantly upgrade the professional management of the museum and increase its sustainability within the

university. The program, titled the History and Cultural Access Consortium (HCAC), is led by the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) and includes four other HBCU museums and archives. Core elements of this pilot include digitizing and making universally available the collections of consortium member institutions, building staff capacity through adding and training a digital humanities manager, interns, and fellows in each institution. It also provides the museum/archives directors and their university administrations strategic planning and support consultation to align museum/archives work with campus-wide priorities and embed the museums/archives within their university's publicly stated goals and plans, insuring long-term sustainability.

Under the HCAC pilot, CAUAM has thus far benefited from **1)** digitizing 85% of its remarkable collection (including the cleaning and digitizing of the six magnificent Hale Woodruff mural panels, *The Art of the Negro*), **2)** adding a digital humanities manager staff position, and **3)** working with five interns and one fellow. Thanks to an FY 2024 IMLS/AACH grant, the museum's small staff now includes a Registrar who will become part of the permanent staff at the end of the grant period. Overall, the museum's staffing has grown from two to five.

From the beginning of the HCAC pilot, CAUAM and the University's top administration identified the need and desire to **build strong relationships with faculty so they could work with the museum and its outstanding resources to enhance and broaden their students' education.** To achieve that goal, it is essential for the museum to have an educator on staff. With the Curator and Registrar on board and the greater intellectual control of the collection, now is the appropriate time to add this crucial position.

Although the museum has one of the finest collection of modern and contemporary art and receives requests for loans frequently, it is hampered by the lack of a skilled museum educator who can better serve the community, starting with CAU's faculty. A highly qualified Museum Educator can bring the museum's incredible resources to light and enhance student education and experiences across the Atlanta University Center, a consortium of CAU, Spelman and Morehouse, impacting approximately 8,500 African American students. This is the next step in the museum's long term plan to share its amazing resources and achieve sustainability.

Primary Audience and Ultimate Beneficiaries

The initial primary audience is the Clark Atlanta University faculty. The new Museum Educator will work with individual faculty members to understand their needs and how the Museum can enhance their educational goals through access to the collections and programs for students. The Museum Educator will then establish programs to meet faculty needs and interests. An outstanding Museum Educator is crucial for the long-term sustainability of the museum within the university and its service to the wider public.

The relationship-building with faculty has already begun. Under a grant from the Teagle Cornerstone Foundation, 15 faculty participated in a workshop on "The Art of the Negro" and included the shared information into a lesson plan for one of their classes. It became clear that there was interest in forming a relationship with the museum, but it will be imperative that a Museum Educator works with faculty to create programs beneficial to faculty objectives.

The ultimate beneficiaries are the university faculty, the university students, and the general public in Greater Atlanta, an area of 2.6 million people of whom 47% are Black and most of whom do not know about the CAUAM. (Eventually, CAUAM will expand to serve public school educators and students.)

As became more apparent in the 2018 HBCU Museum and Archives Summit that led to the HCAC pilot, HBCUs have quietly held the historical and cultural patrimony of African Americans over 150 years. This CAUAM project is integral to amplifying those voices and enlarging the essential story of America.

PROJECT WORK PLAN

Activities and Sequence

Upon notification that the grant has been awarded the CAUMA Director will post the position widely using both the university's outlets and her own wide network of HBCUs and art museums. (See the position description in Attachment 8.) Past experience suggests it will take three months before the new person can be on board.

The new incumbent will then spend a month working with staff to learn about the museum's current policies, protocols, the existing programs, and to become intimately familiar with the collection. The Educator, depending on background and experience, may also research successful museum/faculty collaborations, especially those at HBCUs.

In month four and ongoing, the Museum Educator will begin to meet with faculty and build relationships where possible, building on the work accomplished under CAU's Teagle Foundation grant, Talented 10^{x} Cornerstone Project. The Woodruff murals were used in this project as classic texts with workshops that trained faculty to teach them.

The Educator will reach out and meet individual faculty members especially in such departments as African American Studies, History, Art, English, Honors, Mass Media Arts and Communication, Chemistry, Psychology, Education, and Online Learning and Continuing Education. Earlier conversations with Cyber Physical Systems faculty attest to their interest, and they will be included in the first outreach effort.

Starting in month six and ongoing the Educator will work with individual faculty members to develop and offer tailored museum programs and experiences for their students.

The Museum Educator will be the key person to develop each program's content (with participating faculty) and to deliver the programs. The Curator, Registrar, and Operations Manager will be intimately involved in providing curatorial information, access to collections, and logistics coordination.

Internal evaluation by the Director, the Museum Educator, and the faculty involved will be conducted after each faculty program. An evaluation rubric will be established by the Director, the Educator, and the participating faculty. The overall question will be: "Does this activity/program meet the needs of the faculty and improve students educational experience?" The rubric will be designed to elicit information that answers the main question. The Director and the Museum Educator will work with the School of Education to develop an overall evaluation program that will be conducted as part of a student project.

In Year II, the Museum Educator will continue working with faculty and will develop and offer a schedule of general public programs aimed at the University community and the Atlanta population at large.

Risk and Mitigation

The goal for the faculty portion of this project is to establish relationships and present museum-based resources to at least five faculty in at least three departments. The stretch goal is to reach at least eight departments within the School of Arts and Science and School of Education.

Although the long-term aspirations of the museum are much higher, there is a risk that it may take longer to firmly establish the faculty-museum relationships and programs. Therefore, we consider Year I as a pilot project and have set a goal we hope to exceed. By monitoring the progress monthly, the Director and Educator will adjust the plan if roadblocks occur. The HCAC pilot has intentionally created a strong community of practice among the project's participants who consult with one another on issues that arise and CAUAM staff will be able to draw on their cohort to advise and strategize if necessary.

Planning, Implementation, and Management

The Director will create the overall plan before the Museum Educator is in place. After the Educator's orientation s/he and the Director will invite faculty members from three different departments to join in creating the Educator's outreach effort and will together add details and specific benchmarks to the plan.

The Educator will implement the outreach and program plan, and with the Director monitor its success on a monthly basis.

The Museum Director will manage the project, overseeing the Educator's work and the budget. She will use the detailed plan and benchmarks, the budget, and the attached Schedule of Completion to monitor progress.

The Director will also actively participate in the outreach to faculty.

Time, Personnel, Resources

The Director, Dr. Danille K. Taylor, will serve as project manager, devoting 10% of her time. In addition to overseeing the Educator, the Director will be intimately involved in the search and hiring process, and in onboarding the new Educator. Furthermore, as mentioned above, she will help the Educator build faculty relationships through her own faculty network.

Dr. Taylor holds a B.A. from Princeton University and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Brown University and is deeply versed in American Civilization and Afro American Studies. She also studied African American visual art history under Edmund Barry Gaither at Boston University, who also founded of the National Center of Afro-American Artists in Boston, taught at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago, and served on the Board of the DuSable Museum. She is a professor of African American studies and before becoming CAUMA Director, Taylor served as Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. (See Attachment 7 for a fuller resume.)

The Museum Educator will work on this project 100% of the time. He or she will become highly knowledgeable about the museum and the collection. General qualifications for this position include at a minimum a college degree in art history, museums studies, informal education or related fields, a minimum of two years of experience working in education and interpretation in a museum or other informal education settings, and excellent interpersonal and communication skills. (See Attachment 7, position description.)

A modest amount of money will be set aside for materials and supplies that may be needed to develop and present programs or experiences for participating faculty and for the purchase of a laptop computer for the Museum Educator's use.

PROJECT RESULTS

Intended Results

The intended results in Year I of this project are **A)** to establish the ongoing position of Museum Educator; **B)** to build a strong relationship with at least five faculty members in at least three different departments; **C)** develop and present tailored programs for those faculty and the students; and **D)** evaluate their effectiveness. The intended results in Year II are to **E)** continue to offer and expand the faculty program and **F)** to develop, offer, and evaluate a small series of outstanding programs for the general public, including university students and area residents.

The Museum Director and Museum Educator will work with faculty in CAU's Schools of Education to create and implement a three-year evaluation plan based on the project's goals and intended results.

Addressing the Need

Establishing and filling the post of Museum Educator is essential to meet the goal of serving the faculty and their students through the use of the museum's incredible collection. It is also essential to making the collection better known to the general public, thereby enlarging the story of America's art, history, and culture.

Affecting Change

The collection works tell a story about the African American experience in gripping visual explorations of daily life, political currents of the artists' time, and other internal and external forces that affect life in the Black community. They not only bring to life events and issues studied in the classroom and demonstrate expertise in art creation, but the works also offer an opening for academic debate, study and exploration. By

using such strategies as Visual Thinking Skills and Habits of Thinking models, the Museum Educator will help train students in critical thinking and promote critical reflection.

Through the study of the art with the guidance of faculty and the Museum Educator, students will enhance their understanding of the academic subject and learn about the important Black artists who persisted in creating masterworks while being marginalized in the American art world. Students will be exposed to fine art that expresses the African American experience created and interpreted by artists in the Black community.

Models, Tools, Accessibility

The main tools will be the artworks themselves interpreted by the skills of a trained art educator working side-by-side with faculty members. Encounters will be tailored to the specific needs and content of the course. By introducing the museum in this manner university students will understand they are welcome anytime and can use the museum's resources for their own pleasure, learning, or for reflection that is often hard to find in a busy academic setting. The general public programs offered in year II will provide similar experiences for a varied audience.

Sustainability

The pilot work by an inaugural Museum Educator will demonstrate the power and capability of the Museum to support and enhance the work of faculty and to provide an impactful experience for students within and outside of the university. A successful pilot will provide an impetus for making the position permanent.

Furthermore, the CAU leadership signed an MOU with NMAAHC's HCAC program that clearly states a primary commitment of HCAC partners is to create a sufficiently staffed and funded museum. Through the HCAC program, the President, Dean/Provost, Advancement, the museum Director meet regularly with Robert Bull of The Compass Group, These meetings are designed to align the museums goals and resources to the university strategic plan, and to actively find long-term financial support to this end and work to achieve that sustainability through grants, the operating budget and endowment is underway.

A significant indicator that the new Museum Educator position will become part of the museum's operating budget after the grant period ends is that the recent IMLS funded registrar position will become a permanent staff member at the end of the grant period.

Clark Atlanta University Art Museum

Schedule of Completion

	2025						2026								
Activity Year I	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**
Post Position															
Hiring Process															
Onboarding/Immerse in Collection															
Establish Faculty Advisory Group															
Introductions/Meetings with Select Faculty															
Establish Detailed Project Plan/Benchmarks															
Develop and Present Programs for Faculty Participants															
Evaluation of each program															
Benchmarks for Faculty Participation															
Benchmarks for Programs Presented															
Overall Project Evaluation															

	2926						2927								
Activity Year II	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**
Review Y I; Set Goals Year II															
Continue Faculty-Museum Programs															
Continue Evaluation of Faculty Programs															
Develop Year II Public Programs															
Offer Public Programs															
Evaluate All Programs															

Clark Atlanta University Art Museum

Schedule of Completion

	2027						2028								
Activity Year II	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**
Continue Faculty-Museum Programs															
Continue Public Programs															
Continue Evaluation of Faculty, Public Programs															
Develop Atlanta Public School Program															
Offer School Program															
Evaluate School Program															
Evaluate Overall Program															
Final Report															