



# Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

Sample Application MH-251592-OMS-22

## Haitian American Museum of Chicago

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$50,000
Amount of cost share:	\$0

The Haitian American Museum of Chicago (HAMOC) will create a new education program for students in grades 6 to 12 aligned with arts and social studies curriculum standards in Illinois. The museum will hire an educator to assess HAMOC's current education program and develop a new program to improve upon its challenges. The program will include afterschool activities, classroom visits, field trips, specialized lectures and presentations, artist-led workshops, and resource guides for teachers. As a result of this project, HAMOC will provide free to low-cost educational opportunities to underserved communities, broadening students' understanding of the diversity that exists in Chicago and throughout the global Black Diaspora, as well as increasing their understanding of racial and social justice issues.

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 to which you are applying.

## **Proposal Narrative: Museum Grant for African American History & Culture**

### **1: Project Justification**

#### **Project goal and objectives**

This request will address the required objectives for Goals 1.1. and 1.2. and Goals 2.1. and 2.2. of the Museum Grants for African American History & Culture. The goal of this request is to obtain funding to build up the capacity of the Haitian American Museum of Chicago (HAMOC) by hiring a museum educator to enhance its education programming and its ability to serve its community.

#### **The need, problem, or challenge the project will address**

As a less than 500 square foot museum with a short-handed staff and an average operating budget of \$40,000 per year, the Haitian American Museum of Chicago (HAMOC) will need outside assistance in order to take its mission to the next level. This project will address HAMOC's lack of a museum educator and standardized education program. HAMOC needs a paid museum educator position to create a Haitian-specific education program for grades 6-12 tailored to meet state, local and national education standards. This program will include after-school activities, visits to schools, field trips, activities that utilize the museum's collections, specialized Haitian library, lectures and presentations, artist-led workshops, and resources for teachers and students to use.

The museum has not raised enough funds to hire additional staff and is now at risk of hitting an institutional glass ceiling. The HAMOC team is having increased difficulty setting aside time and resources for the development of a solidified education program. In particular, the volunteer museum educator has taken on the lead on grant writing duties due to the urgent need of these funds. This is not fully ideal because it takes away time from working on the education program. The funding from this grant will give the museum a professional educator who can solely devote their time working on this key outcome for HAMOC.

The establishment of the education program will feed into the momentum of Chicago's affirmation of the Haitian Founder of Chicago, Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable and help HAMOC highlight other marginalized histories. As the only Haitian-specific institution in the Chicagoland and Midwest area, HAMOC is the main cultural outlet that represents Haitians, a culturally unique part of Chicago's Black Community. The museum is a symbol of the cultural diversity that exists within Chicago's Black Community and the history that African Americans share with other Black Diasporic people. The first documented persons of African descent in Illinois were brought from Haiti (then the French colony of St. Domingue) as slaves by French settlers in the 1720s. As part of an effort to acknowledge Chicago's Black history, the city changed the name of Lake Shore Drive, a major city street, to Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive in June 2021. HAMOC has worked with community partners across Chicago to advocate for the acknowledgement of this unique and underrepresented part of the city's Black history.

Funding from the grant will complement work in this area and help to provide free to low cost educational programming to Uptown and other underprivileged communities and students. HAMOC is located in the Uptown neighborhood, one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the city. As of 2021, the total population of Uptown is approximately 57,182 residents with around 46

percent of these residents being Black (17.8%), Hispanic (14.6%), Asian (10.5%), or another non-white racial group (2.9%) according to Chicago Agency Metropolitan Agency for Planning estimates. About 25 percent of all Uptown residents are foreign born. In regards to household income from 2015 - 2019, the survey suggests that approximately 26% percent of residents made less than \$25,000 per year.<sup>1</sup> With this in mind, the museum keeps admission at the low price of \$5 to be as accessible as possible. On occasion, the museum provides free admission as well. Because of this low admission fees for revenue, HAMOC does not have funding to provide free education programming for schools. Compounding these problems, Chicago Public Schools do not have additional funding to compensate HAMOC for programs. This has caused HAMOC to have problems reaching out and attracting their attention. This is problematic because museums serve as an important complementary component to schools, especially for those located in disadvantaged communities. [According to the American Alliance of Museums](#), museums provide close to an additional 18 million hours of additional instructional and educational opportunities for students.<sup>2</sup> Museums also on average devote close to third-quarters of their spending on educational programs. HAMOC's limited budget fits this figure. HAMOC would like to be in a position to improve the quality of the museum educational program and continue to be financially accessible to schools, organizations and community members. These grant funds will be a major contributor to keeping education at the core of HAMOC's mission.

### **Target group for the project**

The target group for this project are grades 6-12 students who go to schools in the Chicagoland area. The museum has previously struggled to connect to Chicago schools and develop readily available educational programming that would attract the attention of students, teachers, and schools. The museum already has a network of volunteers and supporters who recognize the value of a complete and sustainable museum education program. This network includes college and university professors, artists, activists, and educational community partners. All HAMOC needs is someone to oversee the implementation of the program and translate ideas into a concrete course of action.

Students in Chicago Schools need accessible and readily available programs to complement their in-school education. According to statistics collected from [Chicago Public Schools](#), of the 340,658 students enrolled in CPS schools, 35.8% are African American, 46.7% are Hispanic, 4.3% are Asian, 1.3% are multi-racial, and 10.9% are White. The majority of these students, 63.8%, are considered economically disadvantaged.<sup>3</sup> As a school system populated mainly by minority and economically disadvantaged students, having a program that focuses on crucial questions relating to race and social justice is important to the education and intellectual development of these demographics.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Uptown: Community Data Snapshot Chicago Community Area Series August 2021 Release," Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, accessed November 1, 2021, <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/126764/Uptown.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> "Museums and P-12 Education," American Alliance of Museums, accessed November 1, 2021, <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/museums-and-p-12-education/>

<sup>3</sup> "Stats and Facts," Chicago Public Schools, accessed November 1, 2021, <https://www.cps.edu/about/stats-facts/>

As a predominantly Black-led museum, HAMOC programming highlights Haitian art, culture, and history, and the intersectionalities it shares with African American and Black Diasporic experiences. As such, the museum has a history of attracting volunteers and interns who are BILPOC (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and people of Color), especially those from Chicago's Black community. Many of HAMOC's previous volunteers and interns have used their positions with the museum as an entryway into careers in the arts, museum related professions, libraries, and other cultural institutions. For these reasons, the proposed educator position will be considered an entry-level position and will provide an excellent opportunity for a young educator looking for a way into the museums and cultural institutions field. The work of the educator will also provide the Haitian, Black, and BILPOC community an enhanced set of educational programs and opportunities that speaks to their shared experiences.

### **The ultimate beneficiaries for this project**

The ultimate beneficiaries of this project will be HAMOC, Chicago schools, grades 6-12 students, the Haitian American community in Chicago, and anyone with an interest in Haitian art, culture, and history. HAMOC will benefit by having one devoted museum educator who can help fulfill a core part of the museum's mission. This can help further draw attention to the museum, allowing for HAMOC to become more of a fixed institution in the community. The 363 Chicago Schools will benefit by having a developed education program, for free or low cost, available to them that highlights the cultural diversity that exists within the Global Black Diaspora and Chicago's history. This will help satisfy diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals and complements Chicago's [Curriculum Equity Initiatives](#).<sup>4</sup> The approximately 340,658 students within Chicago Schools will benefit by having programming that is culturally responsive and reflective of the unique needs of Chicago's diverse student body. Black and immigrant students will benefit in particular as it will allow for them to compare and explore the intersections of their own racial and ethnic identity. The Chicago Haitian community, made up of approximately 30,000 persons according to the Chicago Consul General of Haiti, will benefit by having an education program that can address their specific cultural, heritage, and identity needs and ensure the sustainability of HAMOC as a Haitian-specific outlet for art, culture and history.

## **2: Project Work Plan**

### **Specific activities and sequence**

The main activity HAMOC will carry out with this project is the hiring of a museum educator that will create a solidified museum education program that can be utilized in-person and virtually. This program will include after-school activities, visits to schools, field trips, activities that utilize the museum's collections, specialized Haitian library, lectures and presentations, artist-led workshops, and resource guides for teachers and students to use. Once the program is complete, the Museum Educator will do several trial runs of the activities with HAMOC volunteers, collaborators and close community members. Once tested and

---

<sup>4</sup> "Chicago Public Schools Unveils Skyline — Chicago's First-Ever Universal Curriculum Accessible to All CPS Educators," Chicago Public Schools, accessed November 1, 2021, <https://www.cps.edu/press-releases/June-17-2021/>

adjusted the museum educator will outreach to Chicago Schools to let them know of the program at the museum and invite them to engage with the work. HAMOC aims to reach students from 10 different schools within the grant period.

The first step in the project is finding the right candidate for the position. The hiring and interviewing process will take approximately two to three months. Once the grant is awarded in June 2022, HAMOC will post the job on several different job notification platforms. Once hired, the museum educator will access HAMOC's current educational offerings and resources. This will help the educator and staff identify specific challenges HAMOC's education program, such as the lack guidelines, structured lessons, and inconsistent outreach schools. Once the museum knows what specific challenges the education program faces, the educator can start making plans for the program, reaching out to educators for advice, and search for resources to deal with those issues. This will start work on the creation of the solidified education program. The museum educator will collaborate with other team members in different departments at HAMOC to build lessons and activities around the museum's collection, specialized Haitian library, presentations and workshops. To make sure the education program is easily understood to a broader audience, the educator will test the activities with HAMOC and community members. This will create feedback which will be used to make a more refined program. Once feedback from these test trials is incorporated, the educator will start reaching out to CPS and Chicago schools in the area. Each of these activities will come with an assigned set of expectations and goals to fulfill.

The museum would like these lessons and activities to complement existing art and social studies standards in Illinois. The educator will study or have already learned these standards by the time being hired. To match the quality of educational programs at more established museums, the educator will design a portfolio of educational programs, both in-person and virtual, that HAMOC can use for field trips, after school activities, and community-oriented events. The educator will study how other museums utilize STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) educational approaches to create meaningful experiences for students and visitors. STEAM educational approaches are popular with museum education departments because they create fluid, integrative, and dynamic learning experiences that allow for the simultaneous learning of different skills and encourage deep analytical thinking. A multi-disciplinary STEAM approach toward learning activities will allow HAMOC to address crucial scientific topics such as climate change and geography while maintaining the museum's traditional focus on the arts. The educator will be responsible for developing a Haitian and Black Diasporic STEAM education program. By the end of 2023, HAMOC expects the educator to have successfully established connections with at least 10 schools, facilitate at least one virtual or in-person educational program every two months, and have a fully developed educational program for the museum.

### **Risks to the project and mitigations strategies**

The main risks associated with this project are going to depend on conditions associated with the Pandemic. Most Chicago museums have yet to restart their field trip programs and are still practicing social distancing, mostly through virtual programs. As the threat of the Pandemic recedes, museums are expected to gradually restart their in-person programs while balancing public health needs. HAMOC's board and educator will need to handle this pivot and will need to

be able to respond reflexively to changing conditions. To mitigate these risks, HAMOC will create a hybrid model for the full education program, which will allow for both in-person and virtual educational activities.

Other risks include the frequent challenges that small museums like HAMOC face. As a small ethnic museum, HAMOC does not get much exposure. This issue is partially attributed to the lack of consistently available and accessible education programming. However, renewed attention toward racial and social justice issues presents HAMOC and the hired educator an opportunity to fill a void for schools and communities. Another challenge that may emerge is the limitations of HAMOC's small physical space. Chicago school classroom sizes are often large. This might discourage them from engaging with the museum's physical space. HAMOC will reach out to larger partnering organizations to help promote HAMOC's education program and use their space as venues for larger groups. Another significant concern is the growing gentrification of the Uptown neighborhood. Census data show that the non-white population dropped from above 50% in 2010 to 46% in 2020 and the number of foreign-born residents dropped from 32% in 2010 to 25% in 2020.<sup>5</sup> This is both a challenge and an opportunity for the museum. The educator will calibrate programs in ways that encourage and appreciate diversity.

### **Time, financial, personnel, and other resources dedicated to the project**

The funding from this grant will be used to fund the educator position for the duration of the one year grant period. Financially, the \$50,000 reward from this grant will be split in five ways. \$35,000 from the grant will be used to pay the part-time educator's salary for a 17 month period. \$3,000 will be saved to cover the cost of educational resources, library books, and art supplies. \$2000 will be used to cover consulting fees. \$2000 to ensure programs are prepaid for and free for up to 400 students coming to the museum. \$800 to help cover school transportation for students coming to the museum. \$1200 to cover the educator's transportation expenses. \$6,000 will be saved to cover the cost for attending IMLS designated meetings.

### **Tracking progress and intended results**

HAMOC will track the number of schools, students, and programs. HAMOC's executive director will keep track of progress through biweekly check-ins with the museum educator. The museum will also organize test runs for program drafts and educational material made by the educator with participants from HAMOC's staff. The museum educator will evaluate the responses from these test runs and make necessary changes. When changes are made, they will be considered ready for public use. At the end of each program, HAMOC will hand out surveys to teachers to evaluate the effect of the program on their students. Responses from teachers will be used to help the museum educator and HAMOC make continued improvements to the program.

## **3: Project Results**

### **How will the project address the identified need, problem, or challenge?**

---

<sup>5</sup> "Uptown: Community Data Snapshot Chicago Community Area Series August 2021 Release," Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, accessed November 1, 2021, <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/126764/Uptown.pdf>

The intended results of this project is the creation of a standardized education program for the museum and an effective program run by a museum educator. This will address HAMOC's need for a Haitian specific education program that is tailored to students in grades 6-12 and meet state, local and national standards. This will benefit these students by providing them the opportunity to advance the knowledge of Haitian history, art, and culture, broaden their understanding of the diversity that exists in Chicago and throughout the global Black Diaspora, and increase understanding of racial and social justice issues. It is important for students to think about these issues as they start becoming more active participants in society. By investing in HAMOC and hiring a museum educator, this program will ensure that young people have a well-rounded perspective on Haitian and Black Diasporic culture that will enable them to create their own opinions through new narratives and process real life challenges they may encounter in their future.

The introduction of a paid educator will be a huge organizational milestone for HAMOC. This position will benefit HAMOC by having another paid professional able to lead the museum with the executive director. With the nucleus of this team in place, the museum will be able to stabilize programming, generate funds, engage communities and continue to advance the organization's capacity. Additionally, as an institution with a diverse, intergenerational team, the museum educator position presents an opportunity for a young professional to start their career.

For schools, teachers and students, the Haitian-specific education program will benefit them by addressing important questions relating to race, culture, ethnicity, class, gender, and social justice issues. This will introduce them to more diverse narratives and experiences while helping to enhance the skill sets necessary for diverse critical thinking. The program will be a catalyst for more complex and analytical thinking in more elaborate and culturally relevant ways. Most importantly, the diverse experiences introduced through the program will benefit all students in the school system by exposing them to Haitian American and Black Diasporic cultural heritage and challenging negative narratives about Afro-Diasporic societies.

### **How the project will change the targeted group's knowledge, skills, and behaviors**

As a result of the project, the targeted groups will develop the skills and knowledge necessary to promote positive social change. It is HAMOC's aim for the education program to inspire the kind of changes in attitudes necessary to create an social environment open to discussing racial and social justice issues. By using Haitian art, history, and culture as a case study, students will be provided examples they could use, compare, and contrast when confronting and processing diversity and equity issues in their day to day lives. The cumulative results will help to set the future tone of ongoing discourses on these issues. The program will also help generate knowledge about Haitian culture, society, and the unique connections with Chicago and its African American community through historical events like the Haitian Revolution and figures like Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable. The establishment of the education program and work of the educator will also hopefully set the tone for Chicago schools as they work on developing more inclusive and diverse lesson plans and curriculums that tell a more comprehensive understanding of Black history.

### **How will the project improve the care, access, or use of the museum collections**

The museum educator will have the opportunity to work with the museum's collection specialist. This will present an opportunity to showcase parts of the collection and use them for educational activities. The educator will also utilize HAMOC's oral history collection, digital museum library and exhibition platform. This will improve public access to the collection and the museum's ability to use it for educational purposes.

**Products that will result from the project**

The main result of this project will be a sustainable and long-lasting educational program for the museum. This program will have the flexibility to be taught in-person and virtually. In total, the program will aim to have a portfolio of 15 lessons and educational activities that utilize the museum's collections, specialized Haitian library, lectures and presentations, artist-led workshops, and resource guides for teachers and students. The portfolio will have comprehensive lesson plans, policies, videos, photos, content, and a directory of schools.

**How will the project's benefits be sustained**

During the grant period, the museum will intentionally seek contracts with schools for the upcoming school year. HAMOC will plan on having fundraising events to fund the educator position and programs. The museum will also look for sponsorships for the programs in order to pay for them. HAMOC will also later on pivot from providing free programs to paid programs with a minimal fee in order to help cover costs. HAMOC will also work to extend the duration of the museum educator position by applying for additional grants that could provide these funds. HAMOC will also include the educator position as a line item in the annual budget for the museum. To ensure the program will carry on, the museum educator will create a manual with instructions and documentation on the program for future use for staff and personnel. To maintain the education program and its benefits, HAMOC will also continue to create connections with schools, teachers and students. To do this, the museum will send frequent updates to highlight the program's availability and will adjust the program to meet the needs of schools, teachers and students and as conditions demand.





A Gathering Place for Exploring Haitian Art, Culture and History

### **Schedule of Completion**

**June 2022** – Award notification

**July 1, 2022** – Project start (per grant specifications)

**July 2022** – August 2022 – Post Museum Educator job post, post is live during these dates

**August 2022** – September 2022 – Interviews of candidates for Museum Educator position

**September 2022** – Hiring of Museum Educator

**September 2022** – **November 2022** – Assessment of Museum’s current education program and offerings by the Museum Educator

**November 2022** – **May 2023** – Creation of Education Program by Museum Educator

**May 2023** – **July 2023** – Internal test of Education Program, adjustments will be made from feedback. Outreach to schools

**July 2023** – Launch of Museum’s new Education Program

**July 2023** – November 2023 – Implementation of new Education program with students

**November 2023** – December 2023 – Evaluation of Education Program. Adjustments recommended and made

**December 31, 2023** – Project end