



American Latino Museum Internship and Fellowship Initiative

Sample Application ALIF-256549-OMS-24

Arte Américas

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$555,195
Amount of cost share:	\$0

Arte Américas: The Mexican Art Center will partner with the State Center Community College District, the University of California Merced, and California State University Fresno to implement a museum-based undergraduate internship program. The internship project will be implemented at seven campuses across five counties in California's Central Valley. Project activities include field trips to cultural institutions across the state of California, the production of seasonal public programs, and mentorship with professional museum staff. The funds will support the purchase of museum equipment for interns to use, student stipends, travel costs, one full-time internship coordinator. The resulting outcomes include the production of a digital inventory for Arte Américas' collection of masks, a digitization of the "Caminos" exhibition with the Fresno State Special Collections team, along with professional hands-on museum skill development for participants.

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 most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program to which you are applying.

Arte Américas Undergraduate Internship Program (AAUIP)

Project Justification

Introduction

Arte Américas' Undergraduate Internship Program (AAUIP) is a museum-based internship opportunity for undergraduate students throughout California's Central Valley who are carrying out studies in American Latino life, art, history, and culture in the following Institutions of higher education: State Center Community College District (SCCCD)¹, University of California, Merced (UC Merced) and California State University, Fresno (Fresno State).

The project will be implemented by Arte Américas, the largest arts and cultural center in the Central Valley, whose mission is "to celebrate, nurture, and preserve Latinx arts and cultures". Our internship program will be open to seven campuses in total, and accessible to undergraduate students across all five counties that comprise the San Joaquín Central Valley: Fresno, Madera, Merced, Kings and Tulare. Our project consists of a six-month planning period followed by three one-year-long internship cohort cycles. Arte Américas will function as a professional setting for a cohort of five students per academic year who will gain hands-on experiences aimed at deepening their understanding of the diversity of careers in museums, the arts, and cultural institutions.

Mission

The primary mission of AAUIP is to engage historically underserved undergraduate students from the Central Valley through informed, hands-on learning experiences that prioritize their educational objectives. This program will integrate knowledge and theory of Latinx arts and cultures with emphasis on practical applications and skill development within a professional and welcoming setting.

Goal

As an institution designed to welcome, represent, and empower our community, this project enthusiastically aligns with ALMIFI goal 1: "Support museum-based undergraduate internship programs designed to advance careers of individuals in the study of American Latino life, art, history and culture".

Objective

Our proposed project aligns with Objective 1.2: "Expand and enhance existing museum-based internship programs for undergraduate students pursuing studies relating to American Latino life, art, history, and culture." This funding is an opportunity to establish a model internship program for the Central Valley, creating a case for sustained funding to be obtained by Arte's development and marketing team.

Project Needs

Need 1: The Central Valley's underserved undergraduate students (53% Latino population, many first-generation students) need paid internship opportunities that will serve as entry points and pathways for career success.

¹ State Center Community College District (SCCCD) includes Fresno City College, Reedley College, Clovis Community College, Madera Community College and Madera Community College at Oakhurst.

Narrative

Central Valley Higher Education Consortium (CVHEC) reports that 83% of Central Valley undergraduates are economically disadvantaged and 42% of them are first generation students. This means that most of these students:

- Are more likely to come from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Need to work multiple jobs to support themselves and their families.
- Are more likely to be historically underrepresented and under-served in higher education.
- Lack guidance about college and career development from family members.
- Lack professional networks.

These are among the many barriers that students in our region face even after being accepted into college. The financial hardship they experience while studying makes it more difficult for them to obtain their degree. Unpaid internships are not an option for our organization or community.

Need 2: Arte Américas was created because cultural identity and representation in art are needed in our valley. Promoting access to our Latinx-focused permanent collection, by expanding documentation and online availability, will result in increased access to the traditions, beliefs, and experiences that have shaped decades of artistic creation and cultural persistence.

Arte Américas permanent collection includes original works of art by approximately 325 artists from across the Central Valley, United States, and Latin America. Arte's collection is made up of approximately 400 works in various mediums and valued at over \$250,000.00. Highlights of the collection include a 700-year-old *Remojadas* figure from present day Veracruz, collections of masks and textiles from across Mexico, commissioned contemporary paintings and *papier mâché* figures by Pedro Linares (produced in residence at Arte Américas), contemporary print portfolios, and original multimedia pieces by acclaimed artist, Narsiso Martinez (b. 1977, Oaxaca, México). Many of the works in our collection resonate with our audience as they demand attention, amplify our ingenuity, and humanize the experiences of our community.

It is estimated that creating a digital inventory of our entire collection will take us one year, and we anticipate having portions of it available by December 2025. By having our permanent collection accessible to our community, we will expand educational access and curatorial explorations, opening new perspectives and new ways of understanding Latinx cultures. As we work to expand access to our permanent collection by creating a digital inventory and assets (available via our new website - slated to launch in August 2024), we understand the valuable educational opportunities inherent to this process.

Need 3: Our K-12 educators and students need culturally competent curricula that integrates local history, art, and culture. Digitizing our collection and expanding online resources including digital lesson plans, will result in increased access to Latino arts and cultures for community members of all ages.

Interns will have the chance to contribute to the ongoing development of educational resources including lesson plans, gallery resources, and interactive content, giving them hard skills in visual and written communication. Interns will also contribute to our ongoing outreach efforts that involve partnerships with the region's school districts.

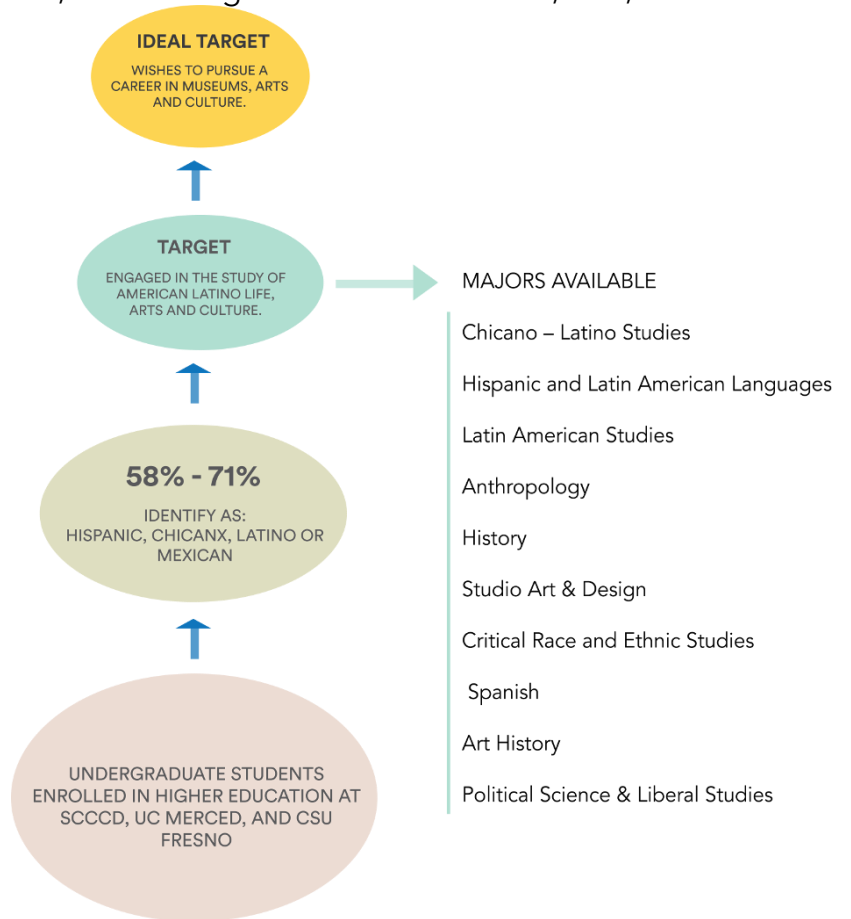
Target

Narrative

Arte Américas has a history of proactively engaging with our target population with seasonal six-month or summer internship opportunities. These internships have been, nonetheless, subjected to school budgets or individual donors and have not been designed for year-long learning, nor to create a cohort inclusive of the geographical scope of this proposed internship project. We have seen the necessity to develop a longer internship experience that gives local undergraduate students an unprecedented opportunity to engage professionally in various aspects of arts and culture work.

For this internship program we wish to expand opportunities with institutions of higher education including: State Center Community Colleges (which includes 5 colleges total) and UC Merced. Our target size includes approximately 8,000 Latinx students enrolled in schools of Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences, and Liberal Studies. We identify our target to be enrolled in the Majors identified in the chart above and which are engaged in “the study of American Latino life, art, history, and culture.” Included in our planning phase is the development of a marketing campaign designed to identify students who, in addition, are seeking a career in museums, arts, and culture.

We know our target, Latinx undergraduate student population well and aim to better serve them through this program. Many undergraduates in our region come from rural and farm working backgrounds --current and past interns have shared among their work experience picking blueberries and grapes from an early age-- they are hard working and often commute to Fresno to pursue higher education. In addition, a majority of our current full-time staff began as interns at Arte Américas. After interning at Arte Américas, not only did they obtain their degrees, but their experience encouraged them to pursue careers in the arts within an institution that prioritizes their professional growth, affirms their cultural identity, and affords them the opportunity to mentor others.



Why Now? Measure P: Despite decades of strategic disinvestment in the Central Valley, Measure P (described in Supportingdoc6) is a new initiative that creates consistent investment in Fresno’s arts and culture organizations for the next 30 years. Developing a robust undergraduate internship program now makes sense for our community and is aligned with local civic investment that will create more job stability within the realm of the arts and cultural institutions. Given that the Central Valley is majority Latino, investment in students

Narrative

currently pursuing the study of American Latino life, culture, art, and history is investment in most of our community.

Beneficiaries

Immediate

Five interns per year from the target populations described above. Total of fifteen undergraduate interns who will exit our program with a nuanced sense of self and skills to compete in this field.

Secondary

The valley's diverse Latinx communities, who will gain access to our rich permanent collection and expanded educational materials designed by interns in our education department.

Long Term

Society at large will be affected by having more access to Latino art and programming, and by placing more Latinos in museum and arts professions. Art impacts society by developing opinions and influences. By inviting more Latino cultural identities into museum spaces, they can influence and enhance curatorial and cultural perspectives. Latino arts and cultures are integral parts of American history and society. Expanded access to American Latino art, culture, and history will enrich understanding of our nation's heritage, history, and identity.

Work Plan

Our workplan will be divided into two phases: A. Planning phase, and B. Internship Phase.

A. PLANNING PHASE

August - December 2024 (one full semester)

Once notified of funding, we will activate our networks of former interns and university partners to refine our plan and hire a qualified internship supervisor to oversee logistics. Arte Américas has identified three partners who have agreed to collaborate with us for our Undergraduate Internship Program (SCCCD, CSU Fresno and UC Merced, letters of support attached). During the planning phase, Arte Américas staff will work with committed university chancellors & deans to identify key actors (professors and advisers) as well as marketing channels for each of the six campuses included in this partnership. During the six-month planning period, Arte Américas will:

- Hire an Internship Program Coordinator.
- Expand upon a detailed three-year timeline.
- Develop an onboarding program
- Develop assets that include but are not limited to: intern schedules, evaluation plans, quarterly check in guides, recruitment and hiring plans, payment procedures, job descriptions.
- Identify key partners (professors, internship coordinators, and advisers) within each campus.
- Identify job fairs, internship fairs and other outreach channels
- Establish a meeting schedule with partners and schedule site/outreach visits for each campus.
- Develop promotional & marketing assets.
- Update our internship handbook.
- Schedule professional development field trips and on-site workshops.
- Activate an advisory committee of colleagues from across the country that have already committed to reviewing capstone projects to ensure viability and student success.

B. INTERNSHIP PHASE

January 2025 - July 2027 (with possibility of extension with our own budget until December 2027)

Narrative

In 2025, we will welcome our first cohort of interns. Arte Américas will function as a professional setting for a cohort of five students per year who will gain hands-on experience and deepen their understanding of the diversity of careers in museums and cultural institutions. AAUIP internships will last one year to provide as much real-world work experience for interns as possible. Final schedules will be discussed during the planning phase. We anticipate that interns will work part-time while in school and full-time for one month in the summer; students will work 18 hours a week during School Sessions and 30 hours a week during Summer Sessions.

Our project will be designed – from the hiring process and initial needs assessment surveys to exit interviews – to be tailored to the individual needs of selected students. Given the broad pool of students from which we will be recruiting, our objective is to make this a realistic, competitive and sought-after opportunity. All cohorts will receive training that exposes them to the diversity of careers that exist within an art institution. Students will have a unique blend of exposure to curatorial practice, museum education, digital archives, art handling, and inventory maintenance, all while expanding their knowledge of Latinx arts and cultures. By creating a cohort of students from across three very different institutions of higher learning we will create a diverse peer learning environment where students will learn alongside fellow Latinx students. Interns will be paired with a staff mentor who will be their primary point of contact throughout their year with Arte Américas.

All interns will benefit from:

- A well-rounded internship experience: Exposure to the inner workings of the largest Latinx Cultural institution in the Central Valley. Hands-on experience in museum education, collections management, and art exhibitions of a medium-size museum.
- Networking: Networking opportunities within the growing arts and cultural sector of the Central Valley.
- Mentorship: The chance to be mentored by Latinx professionals that can serve as role models and career advisors.
- Professional Development: Each cohort will visit relevant art exhibitions in California. Field trips to local institutions will occur regularly during this program. Once a year, interns will travel to San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles, or San Diego to see a relevant exhibition and meet colleagues at institutions outside our region. Students will also participate in two workshops at Arte Américas to strengthen their professional skills in arts administration, education, art handling, etc.
- Community engagement: Interns will assist with seasonal events and/or public programs that will strengthen their connection to our multigenerational Latinx community while practicing their communication and interpersonal skills. Following the successful completion of their internship in November (2025 and 2026), interns will be celebrated by their community at our December Posadas.

Our Internship Phase will be divided into four sessions:

1. ONBOARDING

Length: One full month (March)

Narrative

Goal: To ensure we clearly understand the needs of student interns and that they understand how to ask questions and seek support when needed.

Description: During our Planning Phase we will design an Onboarding Program. Our plan is for an intern's onboarding to be a welcoming process that encompasses everything required when new employees start work at any museum or cultural institution. We will design an engaging plan to make introductions to all Arte Américas' community including all departments. We will dedicate time to communicating expectations, establishing role definitions, goal setting, and performance indicators. Ongoing feedback and support to new interns is critical and should be included in our onboarding program.

2. SPRING SESSION

Length: Three full months (April - June)

Goal: Interns will be introduced to best practices within Museum Education and deepen their understanding of their own community and cultures.

Description: (after onboarding), interns will be placed in the Education Department where they will gain hands-on Art-Education experience. Arte Américas Education Department provides arts learning experiences to a multi-generational audience by offering school tours and programs such as our Bilingual Storytime, our Artmaking Workshop on Saturdays, and our Sala Art Workshop Series on Sundays. The Education Department is constantly developing lesson plans that integrate art into classrooms, gallery education resources, program development and educational museum-based activities. Within this training, students will deepen their understanding of Arte's mission, values, and the needs of our various audiences. They will develop public speaking skills, by facilitating tours and reading to the public during Bilingual Storytime programming where they will work with an early childhood specialist.

During the Spring Session interns will:

- Be trained to become gallery educators. Participation in gallery education training sessions will enhance communication and presentation skills, immediately impressing upon students that they have a voice at Arte.
- Be stationed in galleries during Art Hop where they will engage with visitors of all ages, providing insightful information about works of art on view. Art Hop is a monthly event that takes place in Downtown Fresno that brings artists from all over the area to showcase their work. Arte Américas contributes to the event by opening its gallery to the public free of charge. For interns working at Arte, this is a unique chance to experience firsthand what it's like to interact with artists and the community.
- Our interns will learn from our team of educators to develop art and culture-based curricula
- Interns will assist with the planning and implementation of community outreach activities, including: Día del Niño y Día del Maestro

3. SUMMER SESSION

Narrative

Duration: one full month (July)

Goal: Students will be paired directly with a professional teaching artist deepening their understanding of a particular artistic medium and discover how a learning experience is scaffolded for student success.

Description: All interns will have the opportunity to expand their understanding of Latino arts and cultures by supporting the work of professional Teaching Artists as full-time Teaching Assistants during Arte's three-week Summer Arts Camp² for students in grades 4-6. Arte Américas Summer Arts Camp consists of three sessions lasting one week each. In each session we accommodate up to 60 students from 4-6 grade from 9:00am to 12:00pm. Our summer camp curriculum highlights the diversity of Latinx arts and cultures, from visual to performing arts including such: Latin Dance & Creative Movement, Latin Beats Drumming Lab, Cartonería (Mask or piñata making emphasizing three-dimensional art through traditions), Poetry, and Print making.

4. FALL SESSION

Duration: three full months (August - November)

Goal: Students will focus on one area of our permanent collection and contribute to the digitization and production of online educational resources.

Description: While their mentor will remain the same, all interns will spend time working with our Collection Coordinator focused on our permanent collection. Interns will work with their supervisor to select from a list of digital projects that can be completed by the end of their year at Arte Américas. In addition to standardized professional development opportunities described, they will be responsible for seeing this project through to completion and will have staff support in completing their goal. Designed to offer choice within structure, each digital capstone project will relate to our permanent collection and organization's history. These projects will afford students the opportunity to conduct research on artists and develop skills in art writing by producing descriptive and educational content. In addition to enhancing their own career opportunities, all internship capstone projects have been designed to enhance Arte Américas' capacity as a community resource, ultimately increasing access to Latinx arts and cultures for the entire Central Valley and propelling local Latino narratives and history beyond California.

Examples of Capstone Projects within our permanent collection include:

Project 1: Arte Américas Permanent Collection – Mas(caras) Masks of las Américas

This project will culminate in the production of a digital inventory of Arte's collection of masks. Interns will learn to properly handle art objects of a variety of age and material. This project will focus on creative ways to interpret collections and promote access by using online tools such as ArcGIS.

Project 2: Arte Américas Curriculum Development

Narrative

Students interested in research will have the opportunity to expand upon existing curriculum resources to create lessons that focus on specific works of art or themes of specific relevance to rural Central Valley communities. Materials will be developed for online and in person audiences with careful consideration to the development of meaningful discussion questions and hands-on, creative activities that enhance understanding. Ongoing curriculum development involves creating unique lesson plans that expand upon existing resources that focus on indigenous and food sovereignty, Chicana feminism, Latin American social movements, cultural persistence, migration, and migrant histories of the Central Valley.

Project 3: Caminos digitization

Students will work with Arte Américas curators of the exhibition *Caminos* which has been exhibited in three iterations around the Central Valley. *Caminos* traces valley Latino history from 1772 to the present. *Caminos* has traveled to Visalia (2022) and Merced (2023) receiving thousands of visitors. It is a point of pride in each community it reflects. With digitization of this project currently underway by Fresno State Special Collections staff, interns involved in this project will have the opportunity to learn directly from library professionals and contribute to the continued documentation of oral histories from parts of the Central Valley that have not yet been included.

Project 4: Boom Oaxaca - Curriculum Development

Boom Oaxaca: Conversaciones de Campo a Campo is an exhibition and programming series that encourages local and transnational conversations around food sovereignty and Indigenous sovereignty through art and cultural practices. Over 8,000 visited this exhibition in 2021 when it was shown at Arte Américas. Now, as a traveling exhibition it has received 5,800 visitors. This capstone project will reimagine one aspect of the online presence of Boom Oaxaca³ and education materials associated with it to promote continued access and interpretation of the subjects of indigeneity and food sovereignty that are at the center of this exhibition.

Project Risks

Risk 1. Students in the Central Valley face unique obstacles to participation including financial instability and lack of professional support networks

As part of the interview process, students will engage in a needs assessment survey that will provide Arte Américas with insight into the types of support students will require to successfully complete this internship. This will allow project staff to distribute our transportation budget equitably and pair interns with mentors who have the appropriate skills to support and connect students to relevant colleagues and campus support within their university.

Risk 2. Lack of clarity regarding project

Based on interviews with former interns, we know that there is a risk associated with hiring an intern without a structured plan, who eventually ends up being an “extra pair of hands” without prioritizing the student’s educational needs or abilities. In this case the risk is mitigated by having a structured plan, regular meetings with a dedicated supervisor, clear expectations, training, and consistent opportunities for students to give oral and written feedback.

³ More details and lesson plans on this exhibition can be found at: <https://boomoaxaca.com/>

Narrative

Risk 3. Intern has other commitments and is not able to fulfill the full term of their internship

Arte Américas will do everything possible within the hiring process to obtain interns that will be able to benefit from the full length of this year-long program. If for some reason, student’s circumstances change, we will have to go through the process of hiring a new intern whose ability to fulfill a full year with us will be contingent upon timing.

Risk 4. Intern Burn-out

Based on interviews with previous interns there is risk associated with working too many hours because “there’s always work to do”. This risk will be mitigated by tracking intern hours through Timeworks Plus and making sure that the intern does not hold the responsibility of keys or alarm codes to our building. Interns will always be accompanied by full time staff and while welcome to work on homework or other projects at their desks during our regular, public hours, their internship hours will be restricted to no more than 18 hours a week during School Sessions and 30 hours a week during Summer Sessions.

Risk 5. Intern lives too far away

We know that within the Central Valley it is normal for undergraduates to commute long distances for educational opportunities, by paying students and offering mileage stipends, interns will not bear the burden of their commute making it possible for students to benefit fully from this internship without undue stress. The risk of the intern getting tired of the commute will be mitigated by having a structured 3-day a week commitment. The financial expense involved in commuting is included in the stipend Arte Américas will provide students with and is reflected in our budget and budget justification for this proposal.

Project Results

Need	Description	Resource	Result
Financial & career mentorship	Central Valley’s underserved undergraduate students (53% Latino population, mostly first-generation students) are suffering from financial stress, lack of career mentorship and professional network, making their road to career success more difficult.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Living-wages for internship participants. -Gas Mileage Reimbursement or Amtrak train fair covered. -Mentorship and career advice. -Career-related network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interns will be paid well above minimum wage and will be paid on a consistent schedule to reduce their need for outside employment. -Arte will provide career mentorship that will support interns in pursuing their degree. -This program will open the door to career opportunities and will increase hireability.

Narrative

<p>Cultural identity & representation</p>	<p>There is a need for Latino cultural representation in the Central Valley that comes from underrepresentation in art museums and culture in general.</p>	<p>-Inventory and digitizing efforts that ensure our Latino focused collection is documented and accessible online for our community.</p>	<p>-Increasing accessibility to art and history reflective of American Latino experiences will result in increased understanding of our traditions, beliefs, and experiences that have shaped decades of people and policy in the Central Valley.</p>
<p>Latinx cultural awareness in TK-12 classrooms</p>	<p>Our K-12 students need curricula that integrate learning from art works made by Latino artists.</p>	<p>-Having art lesson plans and educational resources available online, will result in increasing access to Latino arts and cultures at an early age.</p>	<p>-Learning Resources (lesson plans, workshops, art activities and interactive content) will be developed together with interns in collaboration with Arte Americas Department of Education Staff.</p> <p>-Partnership with Central Valley School District will expand within the completion of our three-year grant.</p> <p>- Fostering a sense of belonging and pride in our heritage.</p>

