



Museums for America

Sample Application MA-249731-OMS-21
Project Category: Lifelong Learning

Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston

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| Amount awarded by IMLS: | \$115,000 |
| Amount of cost share: | \$325,960 |

The project description can be viewed in the IMLS Awarded Grants Search:
<https://www.ims.gov/grants/awarded/ma-249731-oms-21>

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 INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART/Boston – Project Narrative

1. PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Summary of Proposal - *What do you propose to do?* The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (ICA) requests a grant of \$115,000 to deepen and expand its engagement with teens, critical as young people face tremendous challenges brought on by the pandemic, financial crises, and endemic racism, including through a creative leadership program in a new learning environment suited to a COVID-19 world. Teens are a core audience in the ICA’s effort to promote lifelong learning and a diverse constituency that motivates, informs, and strengthens work throughout the museum. Through a variety of programs, resources, and opportunities, the ICA provides contemporary art and creative youth development experiences for thousands annually. A grant will seed a new program and support ongoing ones that emphasize adolescent social and emotional well-being through engagement with contemporary art, the support of adult mentors, and community building. While we await the resolution of the COVID-19 crisis, its repercussions will continue to adversely affect youth; these programs are designed to support, nurture, and train teens for a better future. Specifically, this grant will enable the ICA to: 1) work with 2,000-plus Boston-area teens in out-of-school programs that empower them to develop as creatives, individuals, and leaders; and 2) offer new opportunities for teen creative leadership and partnership, capitalizing on the expertise of staff throughout the museum and a new ICA space for young people, which allows for easier social distancing measures if/as needed. Over the 2021–22 school year and summer 2022, multi-faceted programs will provide opportunities for these teens (often from under-resourced schools or neighborhoods) that support strengthened identity, creative, transferable skill development, and community engagement.

Need/Problem/Challenge - *What need/problem/challenge will your project address? How was it identified?*

The project addresses three critical and inter-related needs of young people in Boston. **First:** Boston young people (particularly those from high-need backgrounds¹ and schools), currently face urgent and significant difficulty, and this will continue beyond the pandemic. Academic challenges include increased responsibilities and changed situations at home, learning styles and needs ill-suited to remote teaching, challenging economic realities, and a lack of motivation to log in.² In spring 2020, *The Boston Globe* reported that one in five students in Boston Public School (BPS) had not connected for remote learning at all since school closures in March, and as of November 2020, BPS still is all remote for all students (with high schoolers scheduled to be the last to return to in-person learning).³ The ICA’s programs—even while virtual—help address these issues. The ICA has heard from teachers and teens that the creative, flexible, and social opportunities of its programs spark motivation, learning, and joy, and ICA staff continue to see high levels of productivity and ingenuity, even among students who find remote school difficult.

The ICA is hopeful that by the start of the proposed grant period, BPS and other area districts will have returned to regular in-classroom learning, at least in part, and that the museum may offer on-site programs. However, the repercussions of this upheaval will linger. According to a McKinsey & Company report, students with remote learning for even the first half of the 2020–21 school year (very likely for BPS) and those with lower quality remote learning opportunities could have a 7–11 month learning gap, with low income, Black, and Hispanic students (already facing an achievement gap) at higher risk.⁴ The same report estimated that nationally “an additional 2 to 9 percent of high-school students could drop out as a result of the coronavirus and associated school closures—232,000 ninth-to-11th graders (in the mildest scenario) to 1.1 million (in the worst one).” In Boston (a minority-majority city) this could raise the dropout rate to as much as 13% overall, and higher at many of the high-risk schools with which the ICA works.⁵

Critically, the upheaval extends beyond the disruptions to education. Destabilization is multi-faceted, fueled by illness, loss, isolation, economic challenges, disrupted home lives, and violence, unrest, and racism that directly impact students’ lives and communities. As a result, many youth struggle with emotional and mental health and will continue to do so. In Spring 2020, Dr. Gil Noam, director of Partnerships in Education and Resilience at

¹ Massachusetts defines high-need students as those who are economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners (ELL), former ELL, or students with disabilities. Within BPS, 77% of students have high needs. See [Boston district profile](#) and [related definition of terms](#).

² <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/06/10/nation/with-some-remote-learning-likely-fall-schools-agonize-over-how-much-zoom-time-impose/>

³ <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/05/23/metro/more-than-one-five-boston-public-school-children-may-be-virtual-dropouts/>

⁴ <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/covid-19-and-student-learning-in-the-united-states-the-hurt-could-last-a-lifetime#>

⁵ <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/dropout/default.aspx?&orgtypecode=5&orgcode=00350000&TYPE=DISTRICT&fycode=2019>

McLean Hospital, told Boston After School and Beyond partners to expect a 10% uptick in psychiatric issues among young people during the pandemic. He also said, from longitudinal studies, that 30% will have broader mental health challenges.⁶ In Fall 2020, the ICA hosted a forum, “Racism, Public Health, and Contemporary Art II,” as part of an institutional investment in these topics begun in 2019 (see it [here](#)). A panelist—Harvard University’s [Dr. Kimberlyn Leary](#)—spoke of COVID-19’s cumulative impact, noting that the pandemic’s ambiguity itself is a stressor and that “each protective action we take brings on new stressors,” including a rise in substance use, domestic violence, and presumed child endangerment. Importantly given ICA Teen Programs’ diverse participants, she spoke of how this cumulative impact is disproportionate and deeper for those already under pressure, particularly due to racism. She cited a report from the Crisis Response Task Force of The Steve Fund—the nation’s only organization focused on supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of young people of color—responding to the risks and challenges of COVID.⁷ While the report emphasizes higher education and young adults, the issues they cite are true for many of the teens the ICA serves. “The multiple and intersecting marginalized identities carried by many students of color—such as socioeconomic, immigration and ability status; sexual orientation; gender identity; and cultural background—amplify these disparities [higher likelihoods of contracting COVID-19, becoming unemployed, experiencing psychological impacts] and trauma-related symptoms.” Like Leary, the report emphasized that the death of George Floyd and others and nationwide protests “have rapidly escalated the stressors already burdening communities of color.”

Through its nationally recognized Teen Programs, the ICA has a practice of integrating social and emotional wellbeing and the arts, recognizing contemporary art especially as a tool for youth development. ICA staff will bring this expertise to bear on current needs for healing, supported by advice and behavioral health resources from social worker Melissa Rocklen, formerly of Boston’s Children’s Hospital, who consults with the ICA on Teen Programs. Rocklen already has provided guidance about challenges young people are experiencing due to isolation and suggests that projects restore a lost sense of direction, promote the importance of community, give the assurance of agency, provide the space and tools to process trauma, and amplify voices. These suggestions are in keeping with ideas from The Steve Fund’s report, such as “encouraging and listening to student voices to better understand their lives” and “adopting a communication strategy that demonstrates empathy towards the injustices and inequalities students of color are experiencing.” With Rocklen’s assistance, in combination with training and experience among ICA staff, the Teen Programs team is incorporating mindfulness and moments for open reflection into their work with young people. They also recognize that as educators outside of the structures and top down performance pressures that classroom teachers face, they have the responsibility, flexibility, and pre-existing facility to be responsive to students’ needs in the moment and to ameliorate some learning loss triggers and mental health struggles for the teens with whom they can have extended relationships.

Second: The ICA has long needed more space for Teen Programs, to provide more classroom capacity, offer new types of programming, and now, allow for safe, social distancing. Beginning in 2021, the ICA has secured a space in a neighboring building where the landlord is required to provide for “Cultural and Civic” use as part of state waterfront building compliance. This space will provide teens a more expansive, welcoming, physical “home”—so core to the community that the ICA and teens build together—without creating a disconnect from the museum itself, only a two-minute walk away. While this move was underway pre-pandemic, the need for expanded space is all the more important now, as it will help the ICA safely return to in-person learning more quickly than would have been possible in the current tight quarters for teen learning at the ICA (with greater distance between work stations, portable equipment etc.). In addition, the new space allows for a teen art gallery where participants can present their own and other young people’s artwork in a sustained way. This is a stated desire by teens and a response to evaluations that reveal teens see participation in exhibitions offsite and at the seasonal ICA Watershed and other opportunities to showcase teen artwork as positive and important (See Supporting Doc 3). The newly leased space, and a pilot program designed specifically around curating and installing exhibitions there, will address these interests and develop new professional skills.

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JME1FAkI43Q>

⁷ <https://www.stevefund.org/crisis-response-task-force/>

Third: Boston teens continue to need high quality arts education programs that empower them to develop personally, creatively, and professionally. Research documents the inequity of access to the arts and extra-curricular learning: by sixth grade, middle-class children have spent 6,000 hours more learning than those born into poverty.⁸ In BPS, 72% of students are economically disadvantaged.⁹ Also, BPS tracks students' access to any high school arts instruction, finding that, while improved, in 2019 34% of high school students still have no arts access, despite an arts graduation requirement that only 62% are able to meet.¹⁰ Studies from the National Endowment for the Arts, President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, Wallace Foundation, Whitney Museum of American Art, and the ICA's own evaluations show that arts programs like the ICA's help correct some of this inequity. They show that high levels of arts engagement often correlate with positive, long-term outcomes for economically and socially disadvantaged teens and that arts education develops motivation and engagement, seen in heightened educational aspirations, focus, and intellectual risk taking; habits of mind, like problem solving and critical and creative thinking; and social competencies, like collaboration skills, valuing diversity, and self-confidence. Also, it can inspire a "lifelong relationship to museums and culture."¹¹ ICA Teen Programs fulfill these studies' promise by providing inclusive (virtual and physical) spaces for teen learning, a sense of belonging, and chances to share work, all with supportive peer and intergenerational relationships that cross boundaries of race, class, neighborhood, gender, and more. Using contemporary art, new media, and national and international artists, ICA programs build on connections between themes and social issues often explored by contemporary artists and those teens face, such as definitions of identity, social responsibility, gender, and political consciousness. As an ICA teen said, "My experience was like a metamorphosis for me."

Who Will Benefit - Who or what will benefit and how have they been involved in planning? The ICA will directly serve more than 2,000 Boston-area teens in ICA out-of-school Teen Programs and a projected 200-plus alumni. Young people are involved in planning programs, centering their voices and choices, something ICA staff, teens, and alumni note as essential to success, both in annual local evaluations and through the ICA's national initiatives like the 2018 *Building Brave Spaces* conference.¹² Teen Programs are open to all teens, recognizing the value of connecting teens from diverse backgrounds and neighborhoods. But to maximize impact, the ICA focuses outreach on BPS, where 77% of students have high needs (per Massachusetts, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners (ELL), former ELL, or students with disabilities) and the racial/ethnic breakdown is 42.5% Hispanic, 33% Black, 14% White, 9% Asian, and 1.5% Other/Multi-Racial.¹³ The ICA also focuses on those that live or go to school in the under-resourced neighborhoods of Dorchester, East Boston, South Boston, and Roxbury. The ICA identified these target areas due to their proximity to the museum (and the ICA Watershed), convenient public transit access, historically limited access to arts, economic instability, and/or high violence or dropout rates.¹⁴ The ICA aims for at least 50% of participants to live or go to school in these areas and for >70% to be BPS students.

Role at the ICA - How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan? Teen Programs educate Boston teens to be artists, audiences, leaders, and active participants in their communities. The ICA's strategic plan "A Radical Welcome" centers the museum's role at the intersection of contemporary art and civic life and cites continued service to local teens and their social-emotional learning as key elements of its work, including developing an unprecedented conference (*Building Brave Spaces* 2018), and creating pathways for young adults through mentorship and alumni programs. (See Strategic Plan Summary.) Note: With the end of the strategic plan approaching in June 2021, and in light of the changing norms of the museum, the Board of Trustees is reviewing the plan to modify, expand, and deepen it as needed, while remaining committed to the overarching

⁸ From Boston After School and Beyond: <https://bostonbeyond.org/about/>. In addition, higher-earning parents spend nearly 7x as much on enrichment as parents challenged by poverty.

⁹ See BPS At a Glance at: <https://bit.ly/2UuX8N2> "Economically disadvantaged" includes youth in one or more state-administered program: SNAP, TAFDC, DCF foster care, and MassHealth.

¹⁰ From EdVestors, working with BPS: <https://www.edvestors.org/initiatives/bps-arts-expansion/bps-arts-expansion-impact/>.

¹¹ NEA "The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth;" President's Committee "Reinvesting in Arts Education;" Wallace Foundation "Something to Say" and Whitney "Room to Rise".

¹² <https://www.icaboston.org/teen-hub/events/building-brave-spaces-mobilizing-teen-arts-education>

¹³ See *Boston district profile, related definition of terms*, and BPS at a Glance at <https://bit.ly/2UuX8N2>

¹⁴ Per the Boston Planning and Development Agency's 2020 "*Boston in Context: Neighborhoods*" report, in target neighborhoods, 37% of residents under 18 live in poverty, and 20.4% of residents have less than a high school diploma. Dropout rates are often high; at Boston Day and Evening Academy (Roxbury), which sends teens to the ICA, the rate is 37%; at Brighton High it is 11.3%. Per the 2016-17 *Health of Boston* report, homicide by firearm was the leading cause of injury mortality for 15 to 24 year olds. Homicide rates for Black and Latino residents were approx. 14 and 6 times that for White residents, and homicide/intentional injury/assault injury hospitalization rates in Dorchester and Roxbury were higher than the rest of Boston. After a 2019 20-year low, *The Boston Globe* reported homicides up by 39% in July 2020, in part attributed to the pandemic and fewer opportunities for at-risk youth. *Shootings* also are higher.

goals and strategies of “A Radical Welcome.” A vote of approval of the update is planned for March 2021.

Goals of this Program - How will your project address the goals of the Museums for America program and align with the project category Promote Lifelong Learning? In line with IMLS goals, this work strengthens the ICA’s ability to provide teens with inclusive experiential learning opportunities that foster exploration and discovery, cultivate critical thinking and creativity, encourage collaboration, and inspire lifelong learning. Programs place teens at the center of the museum experience and use the unique resources of the ICA to support young people’s engagement with their local communities and our global society.

2. PROJECT WORK PLAN

Specific Activities - What specific activities, including evaluation, will you carry out? The ICA strategically designed Teen Programs to increase student participation and learning across a spectrum of opportunities and engagement. This arc of participation may begin with low commitment events such as Teen Nights, build to weekend and/or semester long programs, and conclude with yearlong or multi-year programming such as the Teen Arts Council. (Note: While ideally all programs will be onsite for the grant period, these also can take place virtually, as they have since March 2020.) The pilot program is a pivotal addition to the ICA’s slate of more intensive offerings.

TEEN PROGRAMS, FALL 2021–SUMMER 2022 Teen New Media (TNM): Often Teen Programs focus on digital media, recognizing its importance to many ICA artists, teens’ interest in new technologies, and the transferability of digital skills. Photography, music production, and film classes enable teens to explore digital media creatively, often inspired by ICA exhibitions. Staff and/or specialized teaching artists facilitate workshops, introducing digital tools and supporting creative youth development in social and technologically sophisticated teen spaces. With the grant, the ICA will offer courses after school and on weekends and breaks for ~200 teens (free for BPS). With various starts/schedules (one-day intensives to multi-session classes), the ICA supports different levels of commitment and sequential learning. Teens looking for a deeper commitment can join extended learning groups focused on music production and digital photography that meet regularly during the school year with staff and/or teaching artists to build personal, professional, and creative skills (e.g. technical knowledge, portfolio development, and public presentation). To adapt to remote learning, the ICA is acquiring more portable equipment and software to loan to students and developing projects that work within and take inspiration from current constraints. These efforts may continue even after in-person work resumes.

Fast Forward: Fast Forward is a free, school-year-long media program begun in 1998. Divided by experience into two groups of up to 12 each, teens develop audio work and films for critique, presentation, and distribution, meeting weekly after school for three hours. (Many work on their own time too). Sessions include instruction by teaching artists; exhibition and film discussions; independent work and advising time; time to engage with peers; and visits by guest artists on topics like screenwriting or lighting. The educators and staff are mentors, providing guidance throughout all stages of the teens’ work. Teens also share work with their peers, families, communities, and field professionals, opportunities that allow teens to speak critically about their work and learn about careers. The ICA shares films on its teen website and YouTube and encourages entries to festivals.

Artists and Writers Collective: This school-year-long program convenes a cohort of creatives (~15 students) committed to expression through arts and writing. Working with professional artists, they engage in timely issues and have immersive art-making (and sharing) experiences that enrich their creative processes.

Teen Arts Council (TAC)/Teen Nights: The TAC brings together ~15 creative teens to engage with timely issues and contemporary art and positively impact their communities. Members meet weekly during the school year and have paid, decision-making roles. They work with staff, artists, and peers to create programs, events, and resources for other teens. They interview artists for the ICA teen website, with possible artists for 2021–22 (based on upcoming exhibitions) including Deana Lawson, Raúl de Nieves, or Boston artists with work on view as part of a biannual prize. They also design and implement three Teen Nights a year, free events for teens that include gallery experiences, art-making, music, and dance. Annual attendance (assuming in-person events) is

approximately 1,200–1,500, with particularly high participation in the summer. The events offer an entry point for a wide array of teens, with partnerships helping to bring new, diverse audiences; 91% of teens at a recent event said they were likely to return. (During the pandemic, the TAC has creatively pivoted to virtual Teen Nights that incorporate elements such as open mics to dance parties.) During the grant, the TAC also will shape one to two iterations of *The Current*, a youth-led program for teens to explore the intersection of social issues and contemporary art. At the end of the school year, the TAC and participants in all of the programs above will take part in a Spring Showcase, highlighting their work in different disciplines, inviting peers, teachers, families, and more. This celebration gives teens an opportunity to speak critically about their work.

Credit Initiative: The ICA works with BPS and EdVestors (a school improvement organization) to offer school credit for teens in after-school programs. Extended TNM classes, Fast Forward, Artists and Writers Collective, TAC, and independent studies are eligible. The ICA will work to make the new pilot program also eligible. The ICA has taken part since the 2012–13 pilot year to help teens meet their arts requirement (often waived because schools lack arts resources) and support academic success. The ICA projects 20-plus credits during the grant.

PILOT TEEN PROGRAM, 2021–2022: Maximizing newly leased space for teens, the ICA proposes a new creative leadership program to empower and train Boston-area teens to maintain a year-round exhibition space for young people dedicated to artwork made by teens. This program (to be named with input from the teens) will provide an understanding of exhibition making (and the various professional skills that go into it) and offer museum staff an opportunity to mentor teens and consider exhibition making through the lens of Boston youth. Approximately 10 teens will meet weekly, mentored by experienced educators, to create the Seaport’s first teen exhibition space. The group will plan and organize two exhibitions in 2021–22: one each for Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer. One exhibition will feature ICA teen artwork and the other teen artwork from an area youth, art, or educational institution or school. The ICA will collaborate with an organization in its network of partners (e.g. Urbano, BPS schools, Raw Art Works) to enhance the work of ICA teens and that of the partner’s youth.

The program will leverage the experience and knowledge of ICA staff across museum departments (education particularly, and also curatorial, production, marketing, finance etc.) to teach the broad range of skills involved in exhibition planning and production. Based on student interest and staff availability, the ICA has often paired TAC members with a staff member for shadowing during school vacations. This program will build this informal collaboration into a curriculum. Lessons and activities include topics such as: exhibition coordination (communication with artists, logistics, preparing and installing work, creating graphics); interpretation (understanding audience needs and outreach, writing didactics, in-gallery interpretation); and promotion (creating content to market exhibitions and spotlight teen artists and partners, such as blog entries for www.icateens.org, social media platforms, etc.).

EVALUATION: The ICA will track demographics, skill development, and attitudinal and behavioral changes of ICA teens via surveys originally designed by ICA staff with the evaluation firm Mendelson Gittleman & Associates. Staff, using the expertise they gained working with these and other evaluators, will update tools as needed to ensure that questions remain relevant and generate useful feedback, and to assess the success of the pilot and the ICA’s efforts to support emotional health during a time of crises. (See Project Results for more.)

Risks - What are the risks to the project and how will you mitigate them? A consistent Teen Programs challenge is recruitment/retention, as the ICA aims to work with youth who often face obstacles for success, especially in full-year programs. This *also* is representative of the ICA’s mission to support youth facing such challenges. Increasing/diversifying program staff, the BPS credit program and resulting connections with teachers, and involving alumni in recruitment are a few strategies employed to meet this risk. Since 2013–14, guidance from our social worker who helps train staff and advises them on particular cases when students are struggling has expanded the ICA’s capacity to help teens and alumni successfully navigate challenges and build long-lasting, supportive relationships with participants. As described above, her work will help staff address the additional challenges of COVID-19 and related disruptions.

A final risk, also related to the pandemic, is uncertainty around what will/will not be possible in person during

the grant period. The ICA is confident—based on virtual activity since March 2020—that it can successfully achieve its goals even if in-person activity is limited. It is, however, also mitigating this risk by requesting funds for a single year, rather than multiple ones. Staff envision that they will be better able to make long-term plans around expanded work with teens as the crisis abates and its impact becomes clearer.

Project Team - *Who will plan, implement, manage your project?* Monica Garza, *Charlotte Wagner Director of Education*, who has responsibility for all ICA education/interpretation programs and is on the leadership team, will provide senior oversight. She was formerly Associate Education Director, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Betsy Gibbons, *Director of Teen Programs*, who oversees all ICA work with youth, will support her and provide direct leadership for funded programs. She has worked with youth at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and New-York Historical Society. Sean Snyder, *Teen New Media Program Manager*, oversees teen media programs and has experience as an educator and graphic, web, and multimedia designer. Monty Alcott, *Teen New Media Program Assistant*, provides media program support and is an ICA alum. *Teen Programs Associate* Nohemi Rodriguez provides support for the Artists and Writers Collective, TAC, and new pilot program. The ICA also has a part-time TAC Alumni Assistant. Director Jill Medvedow provides guiding vision. The contract social worker is Melissa Rocklen (formerly of Boston Children’s Hospital). Staff select contract teaching artists based on relevant expertise. For the pilot, the ICA will contract an alum to assist the education team, and staff from across the ICA will be invited to share their expertise with teens and learn from the young people, as well.

Partners - *Will partners be engaged, and if so, for what purpose?* The ICA works with schools, community, art, and youth-focused organizations in/around Boston to strengthen and amplify each other’s work. A key partner is BPS, for the credit-bearing program and as teachers and administrators help identify teens who might benefit from the added support and unique learning environment, have an artistic interest the school cannot support, and/or would not know to seek out the ICA on their own. Other collaborators (e.g. Sociedad Latina, Urbano, ZUMIX) help drive attendance and provide forums for youth to share work. As discussed above, the ICA will select a local partner for one of the teen exhibitions. The ICA also has national relationships.

Project Timeline - *When and in what sequence will your activities occur?* **Pre-Grant and Throughout:** Work with social worker. **Grant Period, Teen Programs: Sept 2021–June 2022:** Offer TNM courses after school, on weekends, during breaks; Artists and Writers Collective, advanced photo and music production groups, Fast Forward, TAC meet weekly out-of-school; Edit evaluation tools as needed. **Nov 2021:** Teen Night. **Jan–Feb 2022:** Mid-year surveys/one-on-one staff/teacher/teen meetings (extended programs). **Feb–Mar 2022:** Teen Night; Fast Forward radio show. **May 2022:** Showcase. **June 2022:** Extended program final evaluation surveys. (TNM, Teen Night surveys occur after each program). **July–Aug 2022:** Analyze surveys; Offer summer courses/participation. **Aug 2022:** Teen Night. **Grant Period, Pilot Program: Sep 2021:** Contract alum to assist and recruit students. **Oct 2021–June 2022:** Offer weekly class. **Fall/Winter 2021/22:** Open exhibition. **Jan–Feb 2022:** Mid-year surveys/one-on-one staff/teacher/teen meetings. **Spring 2022:** Close first exhibition; open second. **June 2022:** Final evaluation surveys. **July–Aug 2022:** Analyze surveys, review pilot success.

Required Resources - *What financial, personnel, other resources will you need?* The ICA seeks \$115,000 from IMLS. The ICA has sound fiscal management and a commitment to teens. (The ICA has reduced its non-personnel operating budget by \$2 million due to the pandemic, without changing its dedication to youth.) It will provide staff expertise, space, and cost share (See Budget/Justification), covered by Teen Program donors, many of whom give annually, and general operating funds. An IMLS grant will help leverage further funding.

Tracking Progress - *How will you track progress toward achieving your intended results?* To track Teen Program progress and monitor results, the ICA relies on qualitative and quantitative metrics, generated from the staff’s interactions with teens and enrollment, cross-program participation, and retention numbers. For the TAC, for example, staff observe and record students’ progress, meeting with each member twice a year for hour-long discussions of achievements and challenges, with significant input from teens themselves about personal goals. The ICA also adjusts programs as needed based on participant feedback; regular staff assessment of activities; and from data collected via surveys. Long-term programs have mid-year surveys and year-end ones, so that staff

can revise as programs are ongoing. The ICA Boards' Education Committee provides advice and oversight.

Sharing Results - *How/with whom will you share your project results?* The ICA shares results with museum, education, and youth development colleagues, participants, and funders nationally and locally. Staff engage in discussions of best practice with peers—which has been critical during the pandemic, as educators everywhere navigate new challenges and opportunities—and will share program strategies, successes, and challenges via its websites as appropriate. The exhibitions will be viewed by a range of young people from within and outside of ICA programs. Teens also will share work at www.icateens.org and www.icaboston.org/teen-hub.

3. PROJECT RESULTS

Intended Results - *What are the intended results that will address the identified need/problem/challenge?*

Intended results for ICA teens are: 1) Strengthened Identity; 2) Creative Skill Development; and 3) Community Engagement. By offering quality arts experiences, deeper engagement over time, and supporting teen social and emotional well-being, the ICA facilitates leadership development, increased motivation and engagement, habits of mind, social competencies, and other changed attitudes and behaviors (below). These intended results are for ongoing programs and the pilot. The ICA also seeks to better understand how its work aids teens experiencing pressure and trauma and to reach target numbers and have strong BPS and target neighborhood participation.

Knowledge, Skills, Behaviors, Attitudes - *How will these change for intended audience?* The knowledge/skills/behaviors/attitudes the ICA seeks to change for teens are: 1) *Strengthened Identity*: Teens are better able to analyze and communicate knowledge about contemporary art; feel personal agency; develop self-awareness, self-regulation, self-reflection; and build confidence and a positive view of the future. A recent TAC member said “vulnerability, openness, willingness, communication, and confidence are skills I have gained.” 100% felt more positive about themselves/their futures. 2) *Creative Skill Development*: Teens build transferable skills such as expressiveness and the ability to convey feelings and thoughts artistically and verbally; resiliency and drive; organization and focus; medium-specific skills; the abilities to give, receive, and interpret feedback and defend choices; problem solving and critical thinking; and how to present themselves professionally. A Fast Forward teen said: “I improved my professional skills overall. I learned how much work can be done in a group and how important teamwork is. I learned how to think about and see art in general differently. I generally feel like a more well-rounded person.” 3) *Community Engagement*: Teens gain comfort in a museum and see themselves as an active part of the ICA community; engage in collaboration and dialogue; develop empathy, bonds, and respect for others and an increased ability to communicate and collaborate with diverse spectrum of people; use the arts to connect and impact the broader community; and more. Teens regularly speak of the welcome they feel at the ICA: “The people here are very open and kind to anyone no matter what. Here I’m able to voice my own opinions on anything.” The ICA expects pilot program participants to demonstrate the same changes, with further specifics about exhibition making, connecting with staff, working with a partner organization, and more.

Measuring Success - *What data will you collect and report to measure your project’s success?* As discussed above, the ICA collects quantitative and qualitative data from teens using surveys originally designed with help from an evaluator. (See Supporting Doc 2 for sample tools and results.) Surveys for the pilot will follow a similar structure, with further questions tied to creative leadership, exhibition making, new tools for creating and sharing collective narratives, and interactions with ICA staff. Given the importance of supporting youth through turbulent times, all evaluations also will ask teens about such topics as: if/how programs empowered them (in keeping with Rocklen’s identification of agency as a core need when so much is beyond control); how the program helped them shape and achieve their goals; and/or how they felt supported beyond their creative discipline. Staff will analyze results to gauge the effectiveness of activities at achieving the intended results.

Tangible Products - *What tangible products will result from your project?* 1) Two to three TAC artist interviews; 2) Teen artwork; 3) Two teen-organized exhibitions; 4) Evaluation findings from Teen Programs.

Sustaining Benefits - *How will you sustain the benefit(s)?* As for nearly 15 years, the impact of the ICA’s work with young people in its community and nationally will generate the public attention, participation, and funding to sustain offerings and benefits, and the ICA aims to convert successful pilots into annual work.

THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART/Boston - Schedule of Completion
Year 1: September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022

| | <i>Sep</i> | <i>Oct</i> | <i>Nov</i> | <i>Dec</i> | <i>Jan</i> | <i>Feb</i> | <i>Mar</i> | <i>Apr</i> | <i>May</i> | <i>Jun</i> | <i>Jul</i> | <i>Aug</i> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <i>2021</i> | <i>2021</i> | <i>2021</i> | <i>2021</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2022</i> |
| <u>Consultation with Social Worker (ongoing)</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Teen Programs Activities (out-of-school)</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Recruitment/Outreach (ongoing) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teen New Media classes (with Advanced Photo and Music Production during the school year only) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fast Forward (weekly during school year, additional short film workshops at other times e.g. summer) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Artists & Writers Collective (weekly during school year, additional short workshops at other times e.g. summer) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teen Arts Council (weekly during school year, with some members providing summer support; The Current dates are variable, within the school year) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teen Nights (and May Teen Showcase) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Creative Leadership Pilot</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Recruit students; contract alumni assistant | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Class meets (weekly during school year, with some students possibly engaging in the summer) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fall/Winter exhibition (precise opening/closing dates TBD as pilot proceeds) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spring/Summer exhibition (precise opening/closing dates TBD as pilot proceeds) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Evaluation</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teen New Media surveys (as programs conclude) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Advanced Teen New Media, Fast Forward, Artist & Writers Collective, Teen Arts Council surveys | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teen Night/Teen Showcase surveys | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Creative leadership pilot surveys | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teen Programs 2021-22 and pilot evaluation review | | | | | | | | | | | | |