



The African American Museum in Philadelphia Case for Support

As an exciting, vibrant center of cultural and artistic activity, the African American Museum in Philadelphia (“AAMP”) tells the stories of people of African descent who helped to shape American history. AAMP annually serves nearly 80,000 visitors from around the Delaware Valley region, including approximately 20,000 students. By adhering to the Museum’s core values of excellence, integrity, authenticity and innovation, AAMP is able to effectively chronicle the history of African Americans and the power of their experiences. Through dynamic, thought provoking exhibits and robust programming, the Museum has been able to facilitate dialogue, provide enrichment and encourage introspection among members of all communities.

The Museum is now at a turning point in its history. We are proactively planning for the future and our current direction is being shaped in response to the changes in our operating environment. AAMP’s vision for the future includes Board led strategic initiatives designed to ensure an excellent core product, compelling educational programs, fiscal stability, stewardship of our permanent collection and long-term sustainability.

AAMP seeks to raise \$5 million over 5 years in its *Campaign to Re-Imagine AAMP* to continue the Museum’s almost 40-year legacy as a key cultural asset in the city. The goal of the Campaign is to position AAMP among the top tier of the nation’s culturally specific museums.

Contributions to the Campaign will provide creative capital, enhance human resource capacity and fund innovative exhibits and educational programs. In turn, we will attract broader support from individuals, business entities and foundations. These strategic investments will also allow AAMP to flourish through the use of best practices.

The Campaign to Re-Imagine AAMP has three primary goals:

Goal I: Creative Capital to Enhance Exhibits and Programming

\$2 million

AAMP's exhibits and programs serve as the museum's primary means to engage and educate its audiences. The museum's core exhibit, "Audacious Freedom" is a key educational tool that allows visiting families and school groups to better understand the contributions of African Americans to American history during the country's formative years (1776-1876). The museum's calendar of exhibits and related programs uses art, history and culture to explore historic themes as well as issues of contemporary interest.

- AAMP will curate and produce excellent exhibits that are innovative and relevant to the African American experience with a focus on attracting diverse audience, amplifying the contemporary relevance of historic events, and broadening discourse regarding issues of socio-political consequence. The museum will seek new opportunities to highlight the contributions of prominent 20th century African Americans and those from the African diaspora to the legal system, economic equality, social justice and other issues of national and international significance.
- Over the last five years, AAMP's core exhibit, "Audacious Freedom," has served as the foundation for the museum's educational programming. The multi-media exhibit is rich in content but its technology is becoming obsolete. AAMP seeks to extend the life and impact of the exhibit's compelling historic narratives by updating the exhibit's technology. As importantly, AAMP hopes to increase the public's access to the wealth of information and data gathered for exhibit through digitization. Re-purposing the content of Audacious Freedom to develop software, apps, and curriculum guides allows AAMP to make the exhibit portable and expand its access and reach. By employing these and other technological vehicles, "Audacious Freedom" will continue to serve its role as AAMP's most powerful educational tool.
- Even as AAMP explores topics to engage new audiences and bring diverse communities together, the museum will maintain its focus on its core constituents, especially school-aged children. The museum will design exhibits, offer programs and collaborate with partners to ensure that the museum continues to be a recognized and reliable educational resource. AAMP seeks funding to invest in the development of creative and innovative educational and public programming that will build institutional visibility and ultimately increase

cultural esteem and knowledge of children and adolescents in the region. AAMP will also build cross-cultural understanding among youth and adults. Emphasis will be placed on educational outreach to provide enrichment to students in Philadelphia and surrounding public schools systems as well as those young people in surrounding independent, charter and parochial schools.

Goal II: Build Capacity, Technology and Marketing

\$2 million

To be a top tier culturally specific museum, AAMP requires an array of resources in the areas of development, technology, and marketing. AAMP also seeks to attract and retain the human resources required to realize its ambitious curatorial goals and to fulfill its stewardship responsibilities.

- Through the Campaign to Re-Imagine AAMP, we have raised funds to establish the Department of Institutional Advancement and hire a Director. AAMP will continue to strengthen the Department of Institutional Advancement by continuing to build the infrastructure necessary to manage its growing relationship with its members, stakeholders and donors. Sharing data across departments and other technology supported efficiencies will be prioritized.
- There is an urgent need to update AAMP's information technology infrastructure. The acquisition of much-needed hardware and software will improve the Museum's internal operations and also enhance our visitors' experience. Improved technology will remove barriers and facilitate the public's access to the museum's extensive film-based collections and content associated with "Audacious Freedom and other exhibits.
- Local and national awareness of AAMP's outstanding exhibits and programs must be heightened by a robust mix of public relations, marketing, advertising and social media. Investing in a comprehensive marketing strategy will increase the public's appreciation of the Museum, enhance its image, encourage donor confidence and, ultimately, help generate revenue.

Cuts in state and federal funding led to the elimination of positions in AAMP's Collections Department. The museum now urgently needs to grow its Collections Department staff to ensure compliance with best practices standards. AAMP also hopes to grow its curatorial staff to support its ambitious exhibition schedule.

Goal III: Establish an Endowment

\$1 million

AAMP has successfully weathered the challenges brought on by the loss of state funding and the decrease in support from the corporate and foundation community. The museum's engaged leadership and dedicated staff have stabilized the museum and positioned it for growth. As AAMP looks to its future, the museum will actively pursue opportunities that will support its long-term sustainability and remove barriers to achieving excellence.

- AAMP hopes to create and grow an endowment by generating seed funding through donations and investment strategies. The goal of the endowment will be to establish a reliable source of interest income that will serve as the foundation for the Museum's long-term sustainability.

AAMP is orchestrating its own evolution by anticipating and proactively responding to new challenges and changes to the external environment. If our traditions and values are to be preserved and our ambitions realized, AAMP must plan for a program that is robust yet financially feasible. The strong volunteer leadership of its Board of Directors is essential and the Board is 100% engaged in the Campaign to Re-Imagine AAMP. However, AAMP's ability to reach its full potential will be achieved through the support of prospective benefactors who recognize that the strength and long-term viability of the Museum are worthy of their philanthropic investments. The Campaign to Re-Imagine AAMP represents an opportunity for every friend of the museum to participate in firmly establishing its lasting legacy.

Please join us in this exciting, transformational effort. Help AAMP to continue to tell the compelling stories of the Black experience that helped shape our nation. With your support, we can fulfill our promise as one of the nation's finest interpreters of the Black experience and affirm that the future of AAMP will be as distinguished as its past.

To learn more about the campaign, contact Andre' E. Dixon, Director of Institutional Advancement at adixon@aampmuseum.org or 215-574-0380, ext. 231.

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