

Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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Phoenix Art Museum receives diversity grant from Ford and Walton Family foundations to foster leadership

Museum is named one of 20 recipients nationally to benefit from the foundations' diversity initiative

PHOENIX (December 11, 2017) – Phoenix Art Museum has been named one of 20 museums throughout the United States to receive funding from the Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative (DAMLI), a partnership between the Walton Family Foundation and the Ford Foundation to support efforts to diversify leadership staff in art museums. On November 28, the two foundations officially pledged a combined \$6 million over three years to support innovative strategies and programs at the various museums, with the goals of advancing diversity in the museum sector, hiring professionals from under-represented populations, and offering fellowships, mentorships, and other career development options for diverse professionals. The funds awarded to Phoenix Art Museum will expand the Museum's Teen Art Council initiative, paid internships for undergraduate and graduate students, and curatorial fellowships focused on Latino/a art.

"We're delighted that the Walton Family and Ford foundations have selected our Museum to be part of this exciting, forward-looking initiative," said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum. "The funds from the Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative will directly impact the Museum's diversified workforce. This will help us better represent, engage, and serve our community, while furthering our mission of creating a Museum for everyone."

According to a national study by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, only 16 percent of art museum leadership positions are held by persons of color, despite the fact that 38 percent of Americans identify as Asian, Black, Hispanic or multiracial. Inspired by that misalignment, the Initiative's funds will be dedicated to providing long-term benefits for the participating museums and the field as a whole by affecting curatorial and programmatic decision-making as well as managerial choices. The outcomes of the funded initiatives will be shared with the larger museum community, enabling other art institutions to learn from successful approaches.

"Thanks to this visionary initiative, Phoenix Art Museum will have the opportunity to mentor a curatorial fellow that brings an important yet undervalued perspective onto the cultural landscape of museum work," said Gilbert Vicario, the Selig Family Chief Curator. "This opportunity will not only function as an incubator for curatorial talent, but will set the stage for the future of museum leadership."

"With this funding, we will see tangible improvements in the Museum's programs related to teen and higher education audiences," said Kaela Hoskings, the Museum's Gerry Grout Education Director. "Recruiting paid interns and Teen Art Council members from all backgrounds are key elements to engage young people in the arts through professional, real-world experiences. This investment ensures our Museum remains a dynamic, diverse space well into the future."

DAMLI will fund various initiatives at 20 pioneering art museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Minneapolis Institute of Art, and the Newark Museum. DAMLI is fiscally sponsored by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for more than 50 years and is the largest art museum in the Southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum's permanent collection of more than 18,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, Western American, modern and

contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum's landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit phxart.org, or call the 24-hour recorded information line at 602.257.1222.

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