



HUE ARTS & CULTURES NORTHEAST

A GATHERING GROUND
 FILLED WITH HUE





ABOUT MUSEUM HUE

Museum Hue's mission is to support Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color in the arts and culture field through advocacy, elevated visibility, and community engagement.

HueArts & Cultures Northeast is an expansion of Museum Hue's HueArts New York City and HueArts New York State, seeking to connect and amplify cultural entities created and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all Cultural Workers of Color through an online database that encompasses the history, geographic location, and significance of these organizations. Museum Hue is currently focusing on the Northeastern region of the United States, and its long-term goal is a full-scale national platform that serves these museums and cultural centers, as well as their stakeholders (current and future).

Museum Hue engaged Yancey Consulting and Slover Linett at NORC to connect with these Hue museums and cultural centers in the Northeast to hear their stories and insights and gather their data to guide the design of Museum Hue's digital platform.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts and by the Mellon Foundation.



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National Museum of African American History and Culture

FOREWORD

MEETING WITH DR. LONNIE G. BUNCH III, SECRETARY OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

I had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Lonnie G. Bunch III, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution to discuss Museum Hue’s HueArts & Cultures research initiative during the early stages of this report in 2024. It was incredibly important to me to gather his insights, as he has contributed profoundly to the museum field long before stepping into his current role.

My first introduction to Dr. Bunch’s work came during my undergraduate studies when I read his article “Flies in the Buttermilk.” The title refers to someone who is out of place in a historically predominantly white environment, which felt especially resonant within the context of U.S. museums. Published in 2000, “Flies in the Buttermilk: Museums, Diversity, and the Will to Change” challenged the field to confront its lack of diversity in staffing. Even encountering the article nearly ten years after it was written, it remained strikingly relevant to my own early experience as I was entering the museum profession.

From that moment on, Dr. Bunch stayed on my radar. When I later learned that he would lead the efforts to open the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture, I was deeply inspired. Over the years, I have had the privilege of meeting him in passing at American Alliance of Museums conferences. Even in brief exchanges, I valued his reflections and the clarity with which he articulated the work ahead for the field.

For these reasons and many more, it is my honor to have Secretary Bunch provide a Foreword for the *HueArts & Cultures: Northeast* report.

Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham

Co-Founder & Executive Director, Museum Hue



FOREWORD: A RESERVOIR FOR MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS

Museum Hue’s research initiative documenting the contributions and challenges of leaders at cultural institutions founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color across the United States is, quite simply, essential. I believe that their research has been framed in a brilliant way and this report offers vital insights into the trailblazers who, throughout history and today, often work as both activists and museum professionals.

What excites me about Museum Hue’s research is the opportunity to address a major gap in our field: that there’s a need for more critical literature about African American museums and all other museums of color. There is a striking lack of data, scholarship, and thought leadership of the groundbreaking work these institutions have already done. When I wrote a book about building a museum, it was because there were no guides or literature that explained how to do it. In museums, the only permanent things are what you collect and the documentation you produce. Books and articles endure. Encouraging both is essential if these institutions are to continue changing the nation. And they are changing the nation. Their work remains a reservoir from which they, and the field at large, can draw strength to continue the fight.

Outside of the collections the only documentation that’s permanent are the books and articles we ourselves write. Too many arts leaders find themselves reinventing the wheel over and over again, rather than drawing from established best practices. Many museums of color are doing transformative work, yet there is not enough accessible information for arts professionals to learn from their innovations to shape their own practice accordingly. Publications centering these institutions have the potential to be transformative, helping institutionalize their histories and elevate their contributions.

The fact is, institutions of color have changed the museum profession and transformed it in a way that many don’t know. They led the way in emphasizing education, insisting that part of any museum’s role is an educational vision. They championed the collecting of art and objects and “stuff” that nobody else cared about for years. These are not minor and modest institutions, they are groundbreaking because they answered the fundamental call that, if museums can’t be community centers, then they sure should be at the center of their community.

What excites me about Museum Hue’s research is the opportunity to address a major gap in our field: that there’s a need for more critical literature about African American museums and all other museums of color.

Part of our work is helping institutions recognize just how profoundly their history has shaped this profession and to remember that by the work they do they are changing a nation. The power of museums of color lies in the lenses they provide into creativity, history, and cultural expression. And they are absolutely necessary not only to their communities but to the entire United States.

Museum Hue’s unique ability to illuminate the reservoirs of knowledge that already exist is urgently needed. Their effort to craft centralized data around the intersectionality of these institutions—data that bridges geographic, cultural, thematic, and historical lines—will provide tools that the entire field can use. This research report offers the possibility for deep learning precisely because it connects institutions of color multidimensionally.

The HueArts & Cultures research is especially vital because of the world we’re in today. Given the attacks on DEI, the attacks on the importance of culture, the importance of history. Not to mention the simplistic notion that the culture of one doesn’t affect the culture of others. Within this context, Museum Hue’s work could not be more important. I am thrilled to support this initiative and look forward to the profound impact of this research on this field as well as on the next generation of museum leaders carrying the mantle forward to advance our sector.

Dr. Lonnie G. Bunch III

Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution

Protect & Preserve
**DUKE ELLINGTON
SCHOOL OF
THE ARTS!**
#DES A2074 ☺

No Funds
No Arts
No Future

A WORLD
WITHOUT ART
IS A WORLD
WITHOUT
LOVE

**KEEP
ELLINGTON**
ARTS



Music
World
without
LOVE

A green sign with the text "Music World without LOVE" and musical notation including a treble clef, a bass clef, and several notes.

PAY
TEACHERS
ARTS

OPENING LETTER



Inspired by the immense contributions and the ongoing perseverance of leaders at the helm of African American museums and culturally specific institutions of color I have encountered throughout my career, it is my pleasure to invite you to deep dive into Museum Hue’s latest research initiative, HueArts & Cultures: Northeast. This report investigates the unique histories, experiences, pedagogies, and practices of museums and cultural centers founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color across 11 northern states and one district.

Throughout my career I have had the privilege of working at several of the institutions which are highlighted in this research. I know firsthand how crucial their impact has been on the museum field.

The HueArts & Cultures: Northeast initiative is deeply personal for me. Throughout my career I have had the privilege of working at several of the institutions which are highlighted in this research. I know firsthand how crucial their impact has been on the museum field. They have also been foundational to my own professional development and to my understanding of what it truly means to steward culture with care, integrity, and accountability to community.

From internships to leadership roles, my professional journey has been profoundly shaped by these organizations and their leadership. I interned at Weeksville Heritage Center, the multidisciplinary museum and historic Brooklyn site, and later returned again to assist with their community outreach. As a volunteer docent at the Studio Museum in Harlem, I immersed myself in the history and collections of this crucial nexus for artists of African descent, and sharpened my skills as an educator leading tours and workshops. My career growth deepened during the Innovative Cultural Advocacy (ICA) fellowship at the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute (CCCADI), where I met with visionary museum leaders from the Museum of Chinese in America and El Museo del Barrio, among others. Subsequently, as Curator of Education at the African American Museum in Philadelphia (AAMP), I focused on advancing educational programs and interpretive materials.

These institutions, founded between the 1960s and 1980s – an era shaped profoundly by the Civil Rights Movement – are essential sites that tirelessly push against exclusion to tell full, unvarnished American stories. In fact, it was the guidance and experiences from these leaders and cultural anchors that were instrumental in the founding of Museum Hue in 2015. Our early efforts were encouraged by leaders at CCCADI, while our one year anniversary celebration was hosted at the Studio Museum in Harlem. This legacy of collaboration continues, as evidenced by the launch of our first symposium,

The Legacy of Black Communities Built and Sustained, at Weeksville Heritage Center in 2024.

This study expands the canon of Hue thought leadership by offering comparative and intersectional data across Museum Hue’s combined studies, while proposing concrete strategies for greater connectivity.

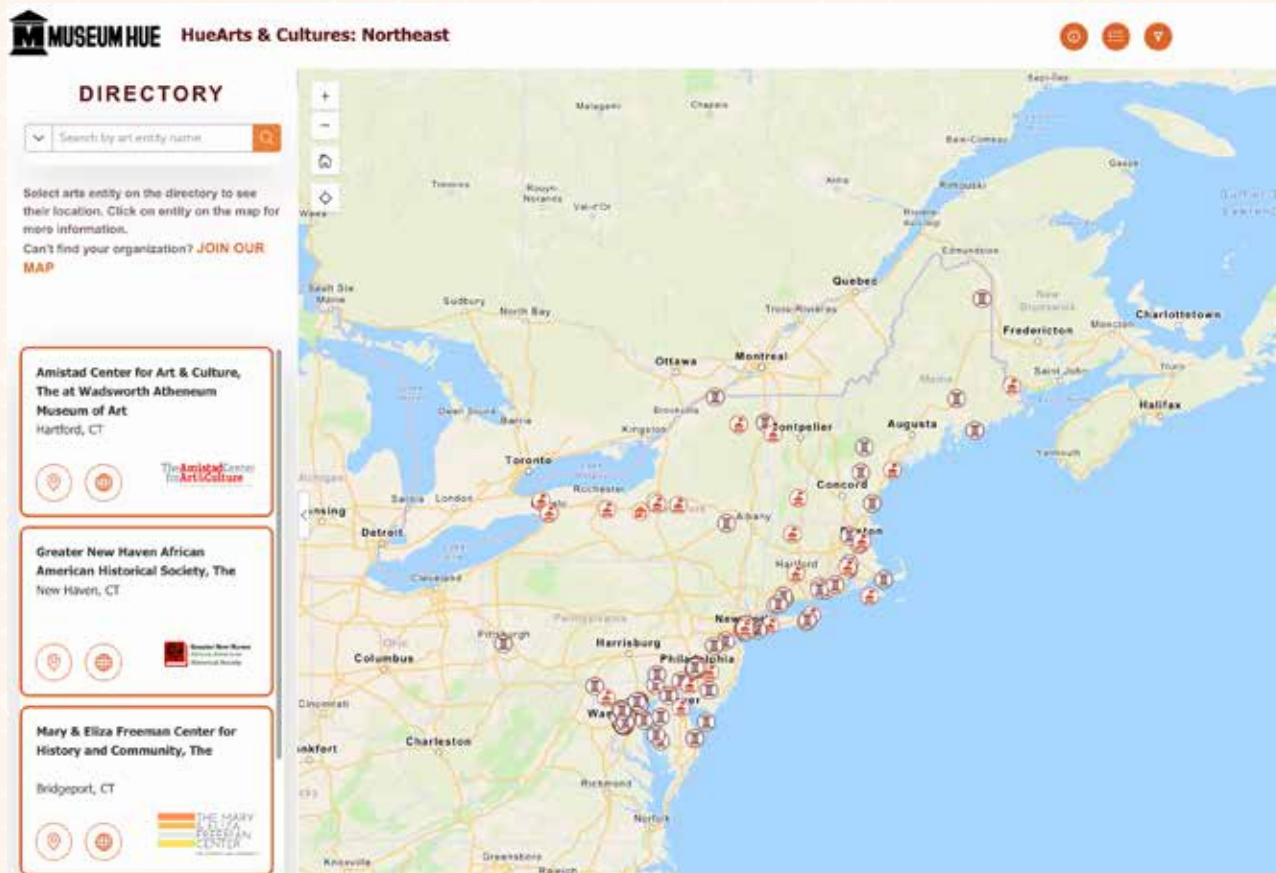
I have also been inspired by cultural institutions formed in more recent years such as The Colored Girls Museum (TCGM), which center and champion the “ordinary” Colored girl of African descent. Founded in 2015 by Vashti DuBois, who also serves as Executive Director, TCGM is housed in her home—a 140-year-old, three-story Victorian Twin House in historic Germantown, Philadelphia. She designed the museum as a sanctuary, a place for reflecting on and lifting up Black girls and women in order to honor, preserve, and present our ordinary and extraordinary stories through visual artwork and site-specific installations. On the wall, a quote from DuBois reads that the museum is “for anyone who is ready for a conscious revolution.” Visitors are guided through the joyful life and sometimes sorrowful existence of the Black girl, and it offers antidotal actions for restoration. It is a gift to the Colored girl—and to the world.

Today, leaders from TCGM (Vashti DuBois), CCCADI (Melody Capote), and my former supervisor from AAMP (Ivan Henderson) now serve on the HueArts & Cultures advisory committee.

This study expands the canon of Hue thought leadership by offering comparative and intersectional data across Museum Hue’s combined studies, while proposing concrete strategies for greater connectivity. Cumulatively, this research underscores that museums and cultural centers founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color share histories, celebrate artistic practices, strengthen cultural ties, and improve the conditions of communities—and have been essential to collective liberation.

These organizations are indelible and trusted sites, created to provide consistent and authentic platforms for cultural representation—often in direct response to racial inequities and a need to broaden public understanding through art, history, and culture. Many institutions leveraged best practices in collections care, scholarship, and operations to gain legitimacy. Others built new models in opposition to traditional, colonial museum practices. Many have long argued for recognition of their own cultural authority.

Their community-centered practices often emphasize relationship, placekeeping, and accountability over a collection-centered approach. They engage communities through innovative models while aligning their racial justice missions with their roles as advocates, historical stewards, and cultural anchors. They offer presentations of living legacies and creative lifeways. Institution-building itself has been a vital form of agency—creating opportunities to tell stories on their own terms while shaping more authentic forms of interpretation, memory work, identity development, connectivity, and trust.



An interactive Digital Map and Directory with details of more than 130 nonprofit organizations across the northeastern United States, gathered as part of the HueArts & Cultures: Northeast report.

Our long-term goal is a full-scale national platform. The phase presented here focuses on the Northeast region of the United States, building on HueArts NYC—highlighting over 400 arts entities across New York City’s five boroughs—and HueArts NYS, which features close to 150 additional arts entities across New York State outside of NYC, including a digital map, directory, and report. HueArts covers all 10 of New York’s vast and distinct regions. The HueArts & Cultures multi-state approach differs from previous projects because the territories, governance, and landscapes across the Northeast hold their own histories, creative lifeways, and opportunities. While widely differing, these institutions are united in their commitment to advocacy, representation in the field, and racial equity in society at large.

To complete the first stage of our national research, Museum Hue was awarded one of the most competitive federal opportunities in our field: an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Leadership Grant. Midway through the project, amid efforts to decimate IMLS, that funding was terminated at approximately halfway through our work. Thankfully, the termination was later overturned due to a temporary—now permanent— injunction that remains under appeal.

**We are still here.
And we are resolved
to remain steadfast
in our work.**

While restored as of this writing, the insecure status of such a major multi-year grant is highly distressing, demoralizing, and distracting to Museum Hue and other recipients of federal support. One of the core findings of HueArts & Cultures: Northeast is how profoundly funding shapes our field—who gets to survive, and who is expected to fight for every penny. The irony is not lost on us: the very research we conducted—about the challenges, vulnerabilities, and systemic underfunding of culturally specific institutions—was interrupted by the same forces we have been naming and working to change. This moment is difficult, but it strengthens our resolve. Museum Hue’s work, and the work of HueArts & Cultures, will continue as we regroup, reimagine, and redouble our commitment to one another. We are diversifying our funding, building new partnerships, and staying rooted in the belief that our stories, our research, our leadership, and our cultural legacies matter.

We are still here. And we are resolved to remain steadfast in our work.

As we continue our national research, we look forward to learning how each region’s histories, cultures, and identities shape the circumstances of these institutions. We hope you will give careful attention to the stories and data presented here—and in the accompanying digital map and directory on Museum Hue’s website—so that together we can better understand the circumstances, histories, and contributions of museums and cultural centers founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color in the Northeast region of the United States. As plans unfold for the nation’s 250th anniversary, or Semiquincentennial, remember that the contributions and confrontations of all communities across the United States of America have paved the way.

With gratitude and resolve,

Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham

Co-Founder & Executive Director, Museum Hue



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At the outset, we would like to note some key language and terminology used in this report. We use the term *Hue Cultures* to refer to the intergenerational, multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and cross-regional palette of histories, offerings, motivations, beliefs, values, customs, rituals, foresight, stories, and approaches. When we refer to the people administrating and governing these museums and cultural centers, we call them *Hue Custodians*. *Hue Communities* are the individuals, neighborhoods, and environments Hue Custodians serve. **Hue is color in all its gradations and varieties.** We aim to reference a palette with many variations across the spectrum. We do not conflate, meld, or presume that one Black story is all Black stories or that one Indigenous custom reflects all Indigenous customs. We can hold space for shared values and overlapping needs with nuanced reservations and place-specific caveats.



We also regularly name Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color whenever possible. We understand there is much diversity within these groups, and each group's historical and current experience with racial and ethnic inequality is unique. Additionally, although we are acutely aware that the terms *People of Color* (POC) and *Black, Indigenous, and People of Color* (BIPOC) can be problematic, we may sometimes use them as unifiers, for brevity, or when quoting Hue Custodians who use the terms.

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND STUDY APPROACH

Museum Hue, Yancey Consulting (YC), and Slover Linett at NORC came together for the Northeast United States portion of Museum Hue's *HueArts & Cultures* project and initiative to develop a digital platform that includes a map, directory, and report. The goal was to better understand museums and cultural centers in the region that are founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color, focusing on focusing on 11 states and one district: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New

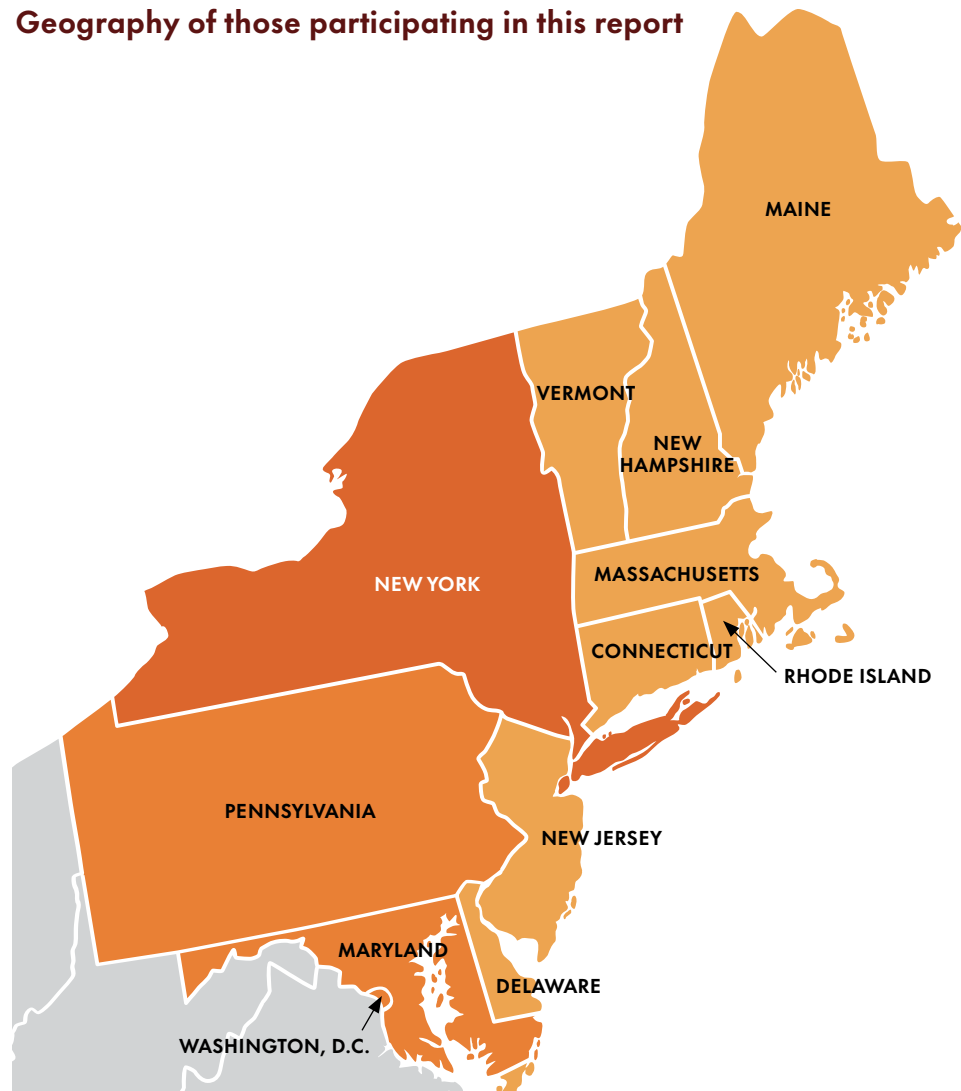
York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington, D.C. Museum Hue and our partners worked to ensure that the digital platform is not just a tool but a gateway to a future in which the site will be utilized as a resource where people can learn more about the history and impact of these organizations, increasing their visibility and supporting the connections between them. We sought to gain insights from a representative sample of leaders at Hue-centered museums and cultural centers about their work's impact overall, the importance of institution-building to preserve their creative practices and cultural lifeways for their communities, and how an online footprint could cultivate a strong network and reciprocity among these entities. (*Check out the essay "Culture Waterways."*)

To explore these questions, we took a mixed-method approach, engaging Yancey Consulting to conduct and analyze qualitative research, and Slover Linett at NORC to design and implement a quantitative survey. When conveying findings from the qualitative phase, led by Yancey Consulting, we leaned into the multiplicity of traditions found in Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all Communities of Color and decided that a conventional format was not enough. As a result, the following qualitative findings are organized through reflective essays/thought pieces from members of Yancey Consulting who conducted these interviews. These essays are supported and enhanced by graphs developed through the quantitative inquiry by Slover Linett at NORC, attached to key sections and entitled "Reflections from the Survey."

Through the combined approaches we queried a sample of Hue leaders, focusing on the Northeastern region of the United States in order to learn about these organizations; collect and distill their stories, insights, and data; investigate how the *HueArts & Cultures* digital platform can serve them; and ultimately make recommendations based on thoughts and interests shared.

The qualitative segment gathered stories, experiences, and insights from 29 in-depth conversations with the leaders of these institutions, and the quantitative segment surfaced data from 45 organizational leaders that supported those spoken and lived experiences. Fourteen organizations participated in both segments of the research. Across both efforts, 60 unique organizations—over 44 percent of the identified Hue institutions—have their experiences represented in this report. (*See the section titled "Hue Custodian Profiles."*) The following map highlights the overall geography of those who have participated in this report.

Geography of those participating in this report



While each research segment yielded distinct findings, through this report Museum Hue highlights the convergences among them—underscoring the importance of combining storytelling and data to effectively drive change in support of organizations founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The meaning of Hue, and the significance of this project’s findings, can be understood only by reading the full report—receiving the stories, hearing the direct words of Hue Custodians, reflecting on the analysis, and absorbing the data. While not every finding applies to every organization, below is a sneak peek at some key themes and points that emerged during the course of this project.

We aim to reference a palette with many variations across the spectrum. We do not conflate, meld, or presume that one Black story is all Black stories or that one Indigenous custom reflects all Indigenous customs. We can hold space for shared values and overlapping needs with nuanced reservations and place-specific caveats.

- Organizations spoke about the desire to bring their authentic cultural legacies to the fore to counter invisibility; and a majority of surveyed organizations identified their ability to share untold/undertold stories as their single greatest strength overall.
- Innovation, adaptability, and resilience characterize operational styles.
- Organizations usually produced multiple types of programming (averaging 7.6) and multiple types of collections (averaging 8). Programmatic forms and organizational practices often reflect cultural heritage and place their community needs at the center.
- There was an intrinsic connection—and not a hierarchy or firm divide—between organizations and their constituents. Additionally, staff, founders, and leaders often represent the communities being served.
- Collectivity, collaboration, and allyship are central to many of the organizations' values, and this can be reflected in various culturally specific forms of gathering.
- Many organizations own their spaces and see this as an important means of empowerment.
- Limited staffing and human resources capacity, as well as limited funding/financial stability, were significant challenges for organizations of all sizes, and particularly smaller organizations.
- Hue Custodians work hard and lead with passion, but insufficient staff capacity and funding leave them at risk of burnout.
- New and nontraditional metrics of success reflect the deep community values and missions of the organizations and often place the *quality* of the experience for visitors/audiences at the center.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

As with the Findings, to understand the current status of these organizations and the resulting recommendations and plans, it is important to review the full Recommendations section later in this report. We provide here a brief encapsulation of the guidance that emerged during the course of both the qualitative and quantitative portions of this research.

- **Acknowledge that these organizations embody a powerful and enduring resistance to cultural marginalization and historical erasure.**
- **Recognize the significant role of these organizations in the overall cultural landscape and in accurate representations of history.**

- **Increase funding and create stronger support from the arts sector, especially for smaller organizations.** Despite often having small staffs, the organizations juggle an average of 3.3 program functions, contributing beyond their financial capacity and straining sustainability.
- **Provide targeted support for the development, support, and retention of human resources.** Many organizations, especially smaller ones, operate with minimal or no full-time paid staff, relying heavily on volunteers.

DIGITAL PLATFORM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Think digital gathering ground rather than platform.** This language sets different, and preferable, expectations and priorities: namely, to gather, engage, enrich, and satisfy constituents. Technology is meant to serve, not be centered.
- **Root the design, content, and culture of the digital gathering ground in communal, indigenous, multi-ethnic, and multi-racial cultural practices.** Create a trusted social, interactive space that feels like a mosaic of gathering traditions—a bodega, a barbershop, a talking circle.
- **Make the value proposition “To Connect.”** Connecting and interconnectedness should anchor the site’s visitor use and growth strategies, whether those connections happen between visitors and cultural sites, between peer organizations, or between younger generations and seasoned culture keepers.
- **Leverage the digital platform both to deepen peer connections and to cultivate support across a broad range of sectors.**
- **Choose storytelling over reporting and feature people at Hue institutions.**
- **Advance Hue metrics.** Give language and credibility to nontraditional metrics uncovered in the interview sessions, like joy and indicators of belonging.



METHODOLOGY

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*A Methodology Overview from
Yancey Consulting*

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*A Methodology Overview from
Slover Linett at NORC*

Organization Leaders Who 22
Responded to the Survey

Museum Hue identified more than 135 entities in the Northeast that met the established criteria. (For a comprehensive list of the criteria, see Appendix D.) In addition to geographical location in the Northeastern United States, these criteria included:

- The organization's name and/or mission statement must include the term *museum* or *cultural center*, or a similar word.
- The mission must be to exhibit the art, history, and culture of Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, or another group of People of Color, and related public-facing exhibitions.
- The organization must be founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color.



In some states more Hue institutions existed, and in others, the absence was palpable. Museum Hue reached out to organizations identified through online research and referrals to participate in this project. 30 responded in the time frame of this research to participate in the qualitative interviews, and 45 completed surveys for the quantitative portion.

THROUGH THE STORIES: A METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW FROM YANCEY CONSULTING

We sought to hear origin stories, understand how these organizations operate and remain attuned to community needs, and listen to their hopes, needs, and yearnings for the future and for the digital platform. The underlying intent for our conversations was to make the invisible visible—that is, to uplift stories, needs, and causes that are often left unsaid. A three-part framework stewarded conversations in a consistent manner, organized around:

SEEDING

The origin story of inspiration and action that birthed the entity

TENDING

Practices and structures for operational stewardship and relationship-building with communities they serve

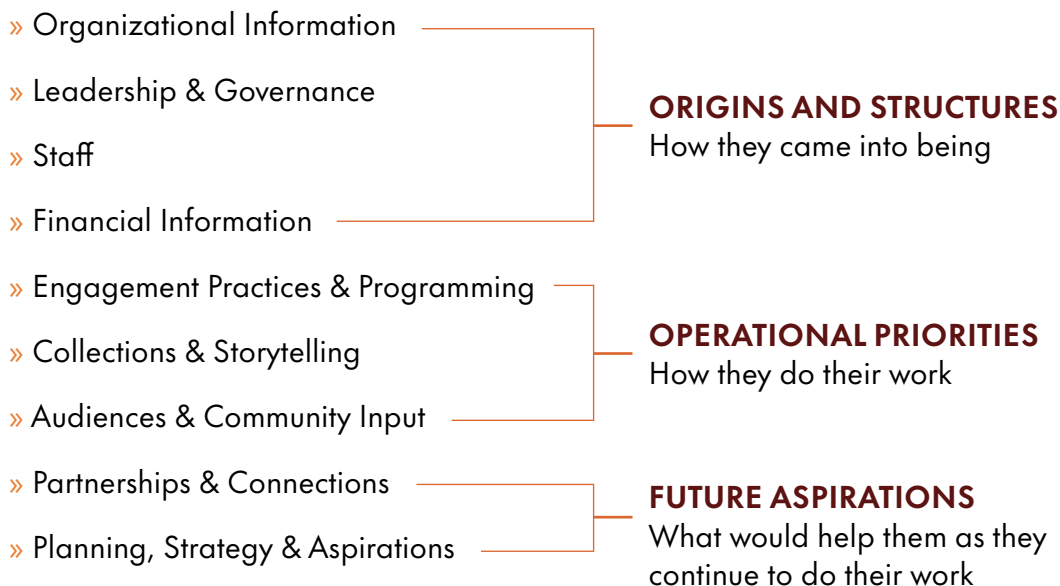
DREAMING AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

The hopes and aspirations for the future, and yearnings for the digital platform

A total of 31 leaders from 29 organizations engaged in interviews, constituting approximately a 20 percent representational sample. The sample size was robust and big enough to provide a saturation point of stories and insights, meaning that with the sample we had, we were able to see themes and patterns emerge and repeat. A consistent set of questions was posed to each conversant (for more details, see Annotated Conversation Guide, Appendix B):

- Museum Hue seeks to develop an online platform for museums and cultural centers founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color. What do you think of this idea?
- What would make it valuable to you and your organization?
- What could make it valuable to a collective of regional organizations that fit Museum Hue's mission service criteria?

The survey was organized according to the following topic areas. Each represents an area of focus that we wanted to uplift for each organization.



BY THE NUMBERS: A METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW FROM SLOVER LINETT AT NORC

When designing the survey and quantitative portion of this project, we recognized that the unique experiences of each of these organizations adds up to a collective shared experience that we wanted to understand. Through the survey, we set out to learn three core things:

- 1**
The origins, current experiences, identities, and aspirations of organizations founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color in the Northeastern U.S.
- 2**
Their organizational structures, programming, and community connectedness
- 3**
Their challenges and support needs related to staffing, funding, amplifying their stories, and maintaining their facilities and artifacts

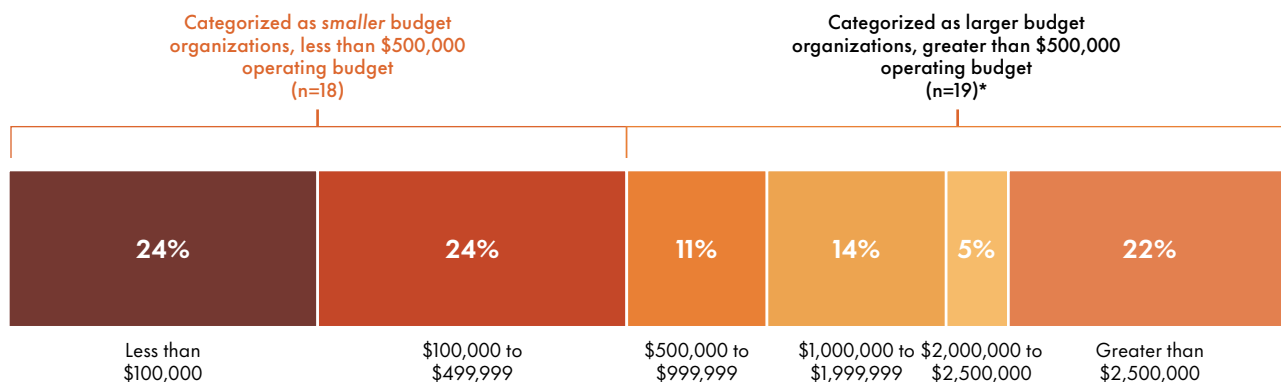
Museum Hue sent survey links to the full list of 135 founders and leaders of museums and cultural centers in the Northeast region, with the survey open between July 15, 2024, and August 26, 2024, and then again between

October 24, 2024, and November 22, 2024. Responses were received from 45 founders and leaders of the cultural organizations founded and led by People of Color, representing 33% of the identified organizations. Participation included organizations in New York (19), Washington, D.C. (5), Maryland (5), Pennsylvania (5), Massachusetts (3), Rhode Island (3), Maine (2), Connecticut (1), Delaware (1), and New Jersey (1). To increase participation from underrepresented regions, Slover Linett proactively reached out to museum leaders in New Hampshire and Vermont through phone and email. Despite these efforts, however, these two states were not represented in the survey.

Each organization was represented only once in the survey, and not every organizational representative responded to every question. The analyses for each question reflect responses received on that item. Although the sample of 45 organizations may not fully capture the full range of organizational perspectives and experiences, this report still offers meaningful insights into key trends and patterns. The graphs featured in this report represent answers to select questions that not every organization may have responded to. We use the letter “n” to indicate the total number of respondents, and notate on each graph whether the data is statistically significant.

For our analysis, we found it useful to categorize participating organizations by budget size: smaller-budget and larger-budget organizations. We chose this framework because budget size is often a key determinant of an organization’s capacity to scale operations, allocate resources, and implement strategies. This distinction enabled us to better identify patterns and divergences in the organizations’ approaches, challenges, and outcomes, offering a more nuanced understanding of how budgets impact their origins, operations, and aspirations. We are mindful that dichotomizing in this way can oversimplify complex realities; however, we saw it as a tool for clarity and not a rigid categorization. Below is how the criteria are dichotomized in the report:

Annual Operating Budget



*8 organizations did not indicate their budget size

With this in mind, we aim to be transparent about the quantitative study's limitations as outlined below:

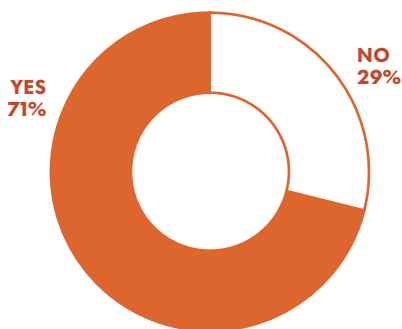
- When we considered participating organizations by budget size, this resulted in only 18 organizations in the smaller-budget category and 19 organizations in the larger-budget category (not every organization indicated the size of their annual operating budget). These small group sizes create analytical limitations.
- When we look at data, we want to find results that are important and not just random. To check this, we used statistical testing to tell us how likely it is that the difference we see happened by chance. If the test shows that it's very unlikely to be random, we say the difference is "statistically significant," meaning it's a real difference between the groups. When we have a smaller sample size, the difference between groups has to be bigger for us to be confident that it's not just due to chance. For our analysis, this means that sometimes we see meaningful differences between smaller-budget and larger-budget organizations, but because our sample size is small, they don't quite meet the threshold for statistical significance.

ORGANIZATION LEADERS WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY

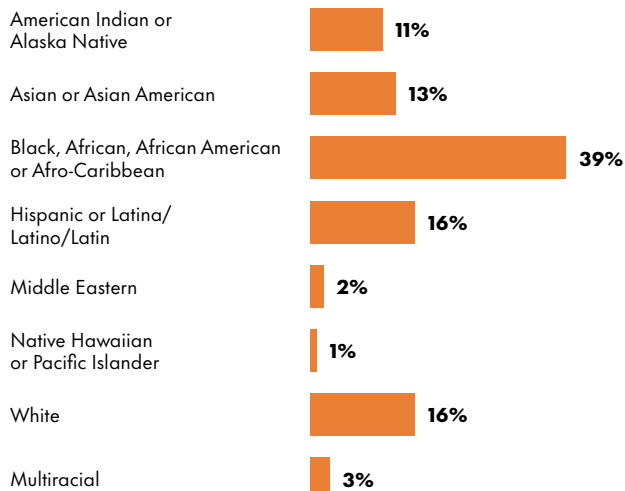
Slover Linett at NORC's results from the quantitative phase start with showing baseline information about the museum and cultural centers' geography, governance, funding sources, and COVID effects, analyzed in the following graphs. Below we highlight key background information about the range of organization leaders who contributed to our survey findings:

Most of the organizations we surveyed are governed by a board. The boards of smaller - budget organizations have fewer members, but are more diverse.

Organizations governed by boards



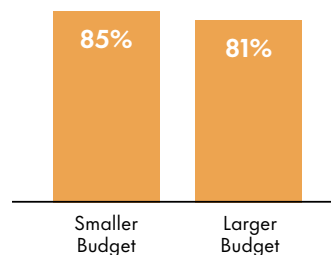
Q19: How many of the board members belong to each of the following racial and ethnic groups (n=26)



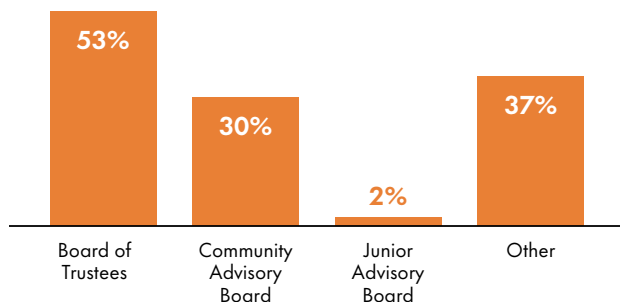
Average Board Size



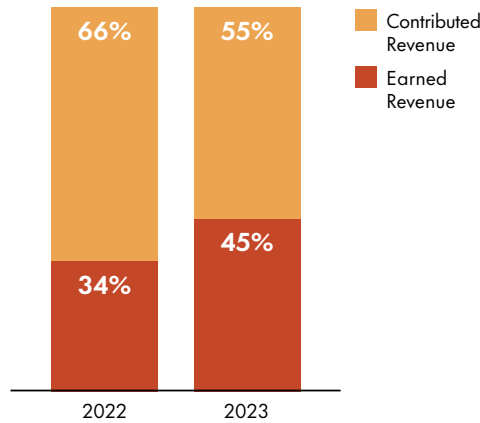
Share of board members who are People of Color per budget size



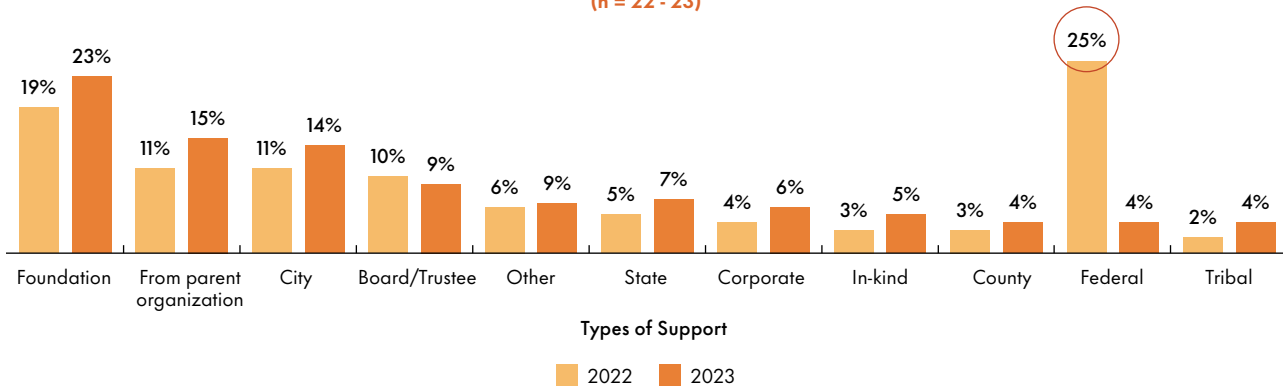
Q14: Which of the following governance structures does your organization currently have? Please select ALL that apply. (n=43)



Most organizations rely largely on contributed revenue: support from foundations, federal and local government, and individuals.

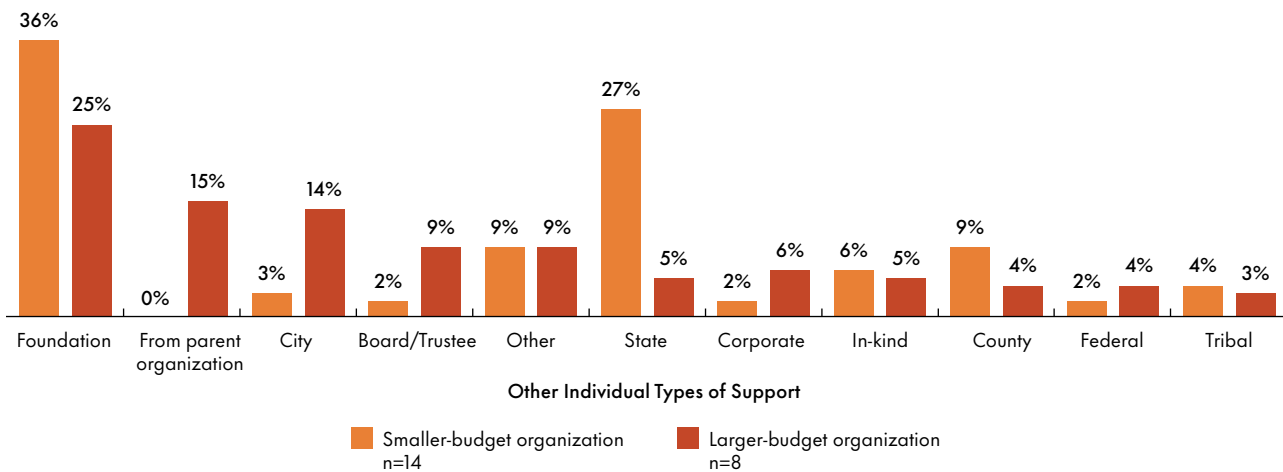


Q50 - 53: How much earned/contributed operating revenue did you have in each category in 2022/2023? (n = 22 - 23)



Organizations depend on a range of revenue sources, with their significance varying based on the institution's size.

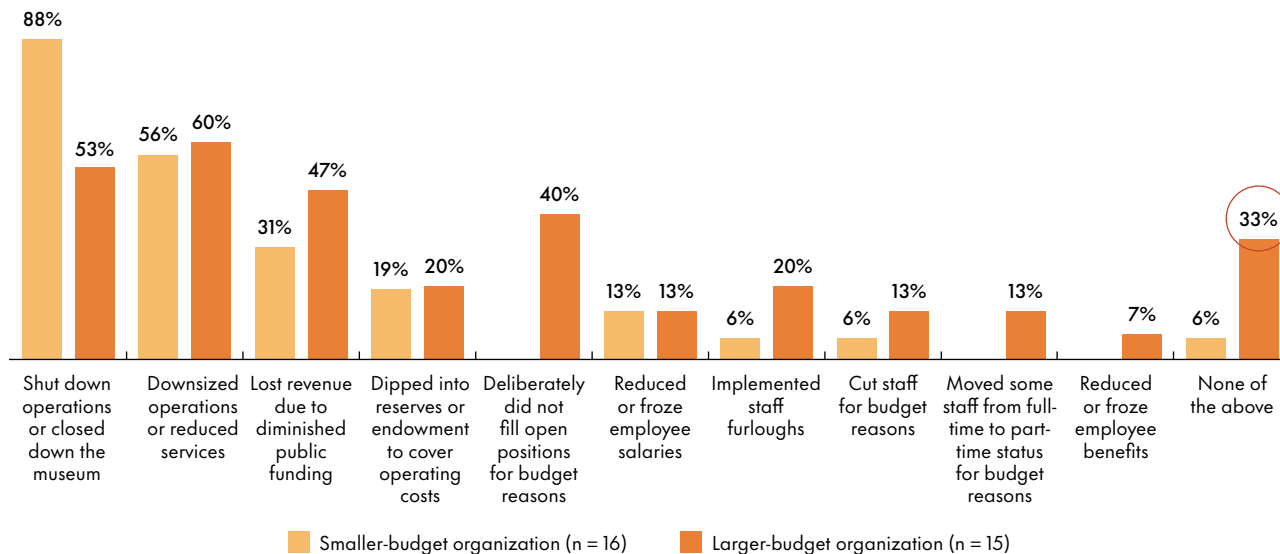
Sources of Revenue by Budget Size
Q52: How much contributed operating revenue did you have in each category in 2023? (As a proportion of the contributed revenue) (n = 22)



Facing unprecedented challenges, the majority of organizations had to shut down operations or downsize their services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Adverse COVID-Related Changes

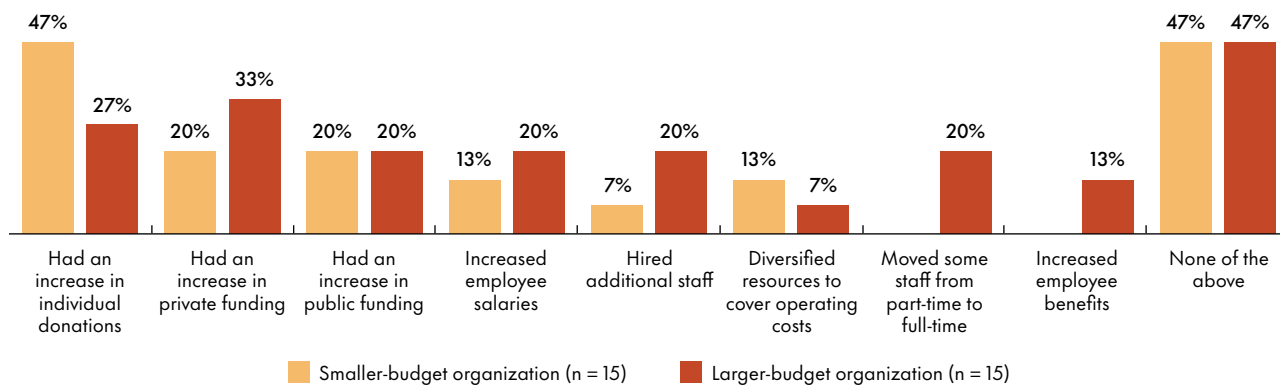
Q54: Did your organization undergo any of the following adverse changes during COVID years (2020-2022)? Please select ALL that apply. (n = 31)



During the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations reported an increase in individual and private donations.

Positive COVID-Related Changes

Q55: Did your organization undergo any of the following favorable changes during COVID years (2020-2022)? Please select ALL that apply. (n = 30)





FINDINGS

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TO THE CUSTODIANS OF CULTURE

LISA YANCEY
FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT,
YANCEY CONSULTING

When I sat down to write this piece, I asked myself,

Who am I writing to? Who did I want to find infusing their personal memories into the stories shared?

Seeing the faces of those you're talking to is always a good place to start when you're writing. It shapes the language you use and the vibrations underneath it. I write energetically, striving to be true to my inner voice and the hearts of those whom I want to hear and feel the message. Besides, metaphors have the greatest effect when the reader understands the wit in the translation—the "who" matters. Knowing the "who" is an anchoring theme throughout our conversations and the point of origin for this publication.

So, who am I writing to? Kendrick Lamar, rapper and songwriter, said it best. **I'm writing to the culture.** Specifically, I'm writing to the people who honor, preserve, and steward the art and artifacts, stories and customs, style, language, lands, rituals, and beliefs that shape diasporic, ethnic, and Indigenous cultures and traditions. You, the custodians within Museum Hue's network, are the backbone of this nation's quilt of Hue cultures. You sustain the legacy of those who came before you and pave the way for the next generation of stewards. Your genius, cautions, and aspirations are the driving force behind this project. We want you to feel validated and gratified that we listened with our whole selves--our cultural selves.

In engaging in conversation with Hue Custodians—leaders from 29 organizations—three themes rose to the top:

- (1) Culture-making is inherently tied to community-making;
- (2) Innovation is in the DNA of people with histories of liberation, self-determination, and surviving within systems of oppression; and
- (3) There's power in we.

Each of these themes plays a crucial role in the preservation and amplification of our cultural heritages.

CULTURE-MAKING IS INHERENTLY TIED TO COMMUNITY-MAKING.

As Vashti DuBois, an interviewee, remarked, “The museum exists not to preserve stuff but to preserve our community.” As author Wendell Berry describes it, “A proper community...is a commonwealth: a place, a resource, and an economy. It answers the needs, practical as well as social and spiritual, of its members—among them the need to need one another.”¹ For many interviewees, culture-making, and preserving and nurturing that culture, fortified their communities.

By most accounts, a *community* is not synonymous with a *neighborhood*. This specific insight is foundational to many of the stories shared, and in our recommendations for the digital platform. Berry also illustrates this point in his writings: “Our place of safety can only be the community, not just one community, but many of them everywhere. Upon that depends all that we still claim to value: freedom, dignity, health, mutual help and affection, undestructive pleasure, and the rest.”² There’s an opportunity for Museum Hue to activate the “many [communities] everywhere” in its digital platform. An essential function of a network is community-making.

INNOVATION IS IN THE DNA OF PEOPLE WITH HISTORIES OF LIBERATION, SELF-DETERMINATION, AND SURVIVING SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION.

Many interviewees told stories of *figuring out* how to own their buildings, secure funding, and preserve and care for their lands. There was affirmation in making ways out of no way and in the fact that our ancestors have provided centuries of innovative imagination, resourcefulness, and creative leadership. One interviewee shared, “Abundance mindset [is] the genesis for all thinking and planning. When you create in this way, magic flows.” Another affirmed, “We are not impoverished.”

Imagination is the precursor to possibility, and there’s a lot to draw from

1. Wendell Berry, *The Art of the Commonplace: Agrarian Essays*, edited by Norman Wirzba (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 2002), 63.

2. Berry, *Art of the Commonplace*, 59.

the experiences and connections across the networks of these institutions. Most of the organizations we spoke with either own their own space or are in the process of acquiring ownership of their space. Many interviewees shared that equity in ownership makes it harder to be erased, expelled, and pushed out from neighborhoods that are central or/and historically mostly occupied by their communities. This priority is reflected in the quantitative findings by how much of the actual work takes place in owned spaces. Securing these assets tapped into collective genius, self-determination, and communal reliance. A treasure trove can be found in harnessing the everyday innovations passed down, tested, and sharpened by institutions founded and led by Indigenous peoples, as well as Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color in the United States. The platform can be an effective gathering ground for sharing and documenting these innovations as connected to Hue Communities.

THERE'S POWER IN WE.

Many have heard the saying that there's power in numbers. And that's certainly true, depending on the circumstances. However, another insight is less about numbers and more about common causes, shared values, and allied motivations. Great numbers can be built from a few with common causes, struggles, motivations, and beliefs. We put it all on the table for our people—for our community. Themes of building trust, interdependence, and leveraging shared vulnerabilities surfaced in our conversations. Transforming oppressed states and making what seems impossible possible takes a village. Power dwells in the stitching of this village. In her book *All About Love*, bell hooks quotes Parker Palmer's refrain: "Only as we are in communion with ourselves can we find community with others."³ It is this kind of communion that builds power. It is the power of belonging and knowing that there is a place for you; you'll find community within that place.

My takeaways from these insights are:

- 1. We are abundant;**
- 2. There's nothing we can't figure out; and**
- 3. We are more powerful together than apart.**

The central word is we. Imagine if all the people and institutions in this *HueArts & Cultures* project were in fellowship. What does a community look like linked by culture-keeping and community-making bonds? What can leaders learn from each other? What insights could their shared memories bring to the fore? The transformative possibility of this digital platform is in expanding the bounds and power of community beyond geographic proximity across the interwebs and doing so in a way that's authentic to the

3 bell hooks, *All About Love: New Visions* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 127.

culture, character, and values of Hue Community Custodians. That's the true potential of this project.

Conversations with organizational leaders began with asking the origin stories of their institutions because it's important to document and remember from whence and how we came and how we traveled. Invisibility and erasure happen when remembering and recollection are not reinforced. Lessons get lost and forgotten.

Memories bind the past to the present and provide context to the future. They also illuminate ways to embrace new technologies with old traditions. In essence, we're remembering how we gather and how we can be together in a digital context—when the mandate isn't about elevating the mission and programs of one but the power and community of the many. We can take the lessons learned from our custodians of culture (the ones we engaged and the ones before them) for connecting, belonging, sharing, remembering, documenting our stories, celebrating, and uplifting each other in community. These ideas—this communal stitching—bring bell hooks to mind again. She posits, “We are born and have our being in a place of memory. We chart our lives by everything we remember, from the mundane moment to the majestic. We know ourselves through the art and act of remembering.”⁴

4 bell hooks, *Belonging: A Culture of Place* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 5.

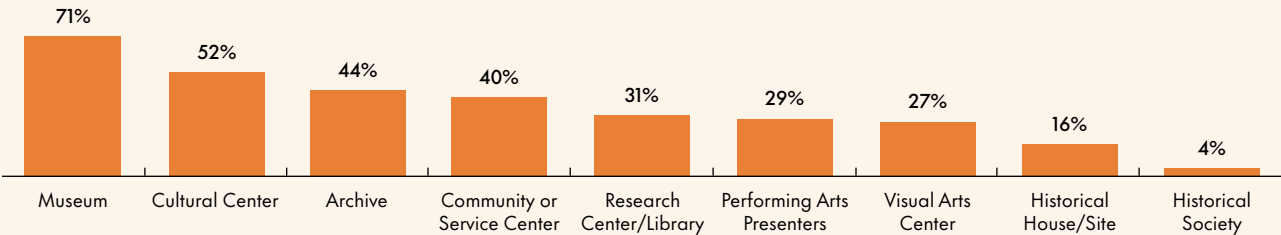
REFLECTIONS FROM THE SURVEY: TO THE CUSTODIANS OF CULTURE

SLOVER LINETT

NORC

Collections-based or exhibitions-focused cultural organizations led by People of Color in the Northeast region wear many hats and are most likely to serve as a museum, a cultural center, an archive, or a community/service center.

Organizational Functions
Q9: Which of the following best describes your organization currently?
Please select ALL that apply.
(n = 45)

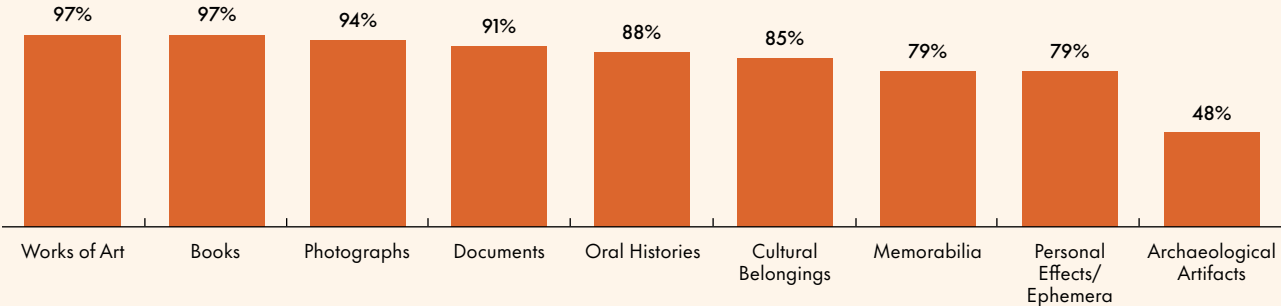


Average Number of Functions



Organizations and Their Collections by Type

Q29: Which of the following does your organization collect?
Please select ALL that apply.
(n = 33)



Average number of types of collections



CULTURAL WATERWAYS: THEMES FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH HUE CUSTODIANS

JOLITA CROSLAND

SENIOR STRATEGIST AND FACILITATOR,
YANCEY CONSULTING

PREAMBLE

When conversations kicked off with the Hue Cultures museums and cultural centers in the Northeastern region of the United States, we were intentional about creating a space of exchange that uplifts the invisible—the experiences and stories of Hue Custodians that are often not shared or are undertold. We wanted to understand the metanarratives embedded in how those organizations started and how they operate. So, we asked folks to share their origin stories of inspiration and action, their practices for operational stewardship (i.e., the science and the art of running an organization), and the hopes and aspirations for the future of the entities, the field, and the digital platform that Museum Hue is building. We colloquially called the three arcs of inquiry *seeding*, *tending*, and *dreaming*.

We started our very first discussion with Francisco G. Gómez and Nicole Wines, co-founders of Raíces Cultural Center in New Jersey, which is dedicated to preserving Caribbean culture through art, history, and ecology. It was a clear and crisp February morning. During this conversation, we got a dose of Hue genius and a preview of the continued brilliance to come. Francisco shared how the organization's physical location on the banks of the Raritan River, the original home of Naraticong Lenape people, has been organically intertwined with the organization's programming as an artifact of ancestry. Francisco reminded us of a river's physical and spiritual importance in *seeding*, *tending*, and *dreaming*.

This got me thinking about the seen and unseen stories and legacies that a river holds.

This got me thinking about Hue Cultures organizations as rivers themselves.

Rivers are natural streams flowing into other bodies of water, such as an ocean. They are critical to vibrant and healthy biodiversity and human life. Rivers have provided physical sustenance (food and hydration) and powered audacious innovations across time. The imagery and the symbolism of rivers, be it the silky yet powerful flow of a fresh stream or the babbling of a brook, have also been deeply ingrained across different cultural mythologies as a pathway for purification, cleansing (re)birth, gateway to other worlds, connection, and healing.

Akin to rivers, museums and cultural centers founded and led by Hue Custodians in the United States have been and continue to be radical sources of physical and spiritual nourishment, collective placekeeping, and innovation.⁵ Each organization is a river in itself. It is a cultural river that brings sustenance to its people. It has a beginning: Each flows authentically down its path, interwoven with the surrounding communities and existing systems; and, just like a river, the organizations we spoke with yearn to culminate in a collective ocean of camaraderie, connection, and collaboration with other Hue Cultures organizations.

The following article codifies key themes that surfaced in conversations with 31 leaders who currently work or have worked across 29 museums and cultural centers founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color—Hue Custodians—in the Northeastern region of the United States.

Flow with me.

RIVER SOURCE THE FOUNDING OF ORGANIZATIONS IS ROOTED IN LOVE, CARE, AND A DEEP YEARNING TO PRESERVE.

Every river has a source. There are many ways for a river to begin: a tiny underground spring, a melting glacier, a trickle from a lake, or a marshy land fed by a thousand mountain streams. No matter how big or small the river eventually becomes, how and where the river starts is important, as the ecosystem at the start affects the whole river downstream. So, what was the impetus for the creation of these museums and cultural centers in the Northeastern region of the United States? Who and what motivated the creation of those organizations?

⁵ We use *placekeeping* here to stay consistent with the language used by our conversationalists. We acknowledge that *placekeeping* is a term that carries different implications for different folks. We use it in a sense of stewardship with community and in community.

The 29 organizations we connected with represented various cultural traditions and spanned years of existence. The oldest organization whose leadership we spoke with was established in 1925, and the youngest is set to open next year. Cultural representation was as follows: Asian/Asian American (4 entities), Asian American Pacific Islander (2), Black/African American (14), Indigenous (4), and Latinx/Latino/e/x/Caribbean (5). Each founding circumstance was unique and in response to local, regional, and, often, national circumstances, but some undeniable themes of genesis bubbled up:

For Us. By Us.

Organizations sprung up because there was a deep yearning to unapologetically name, claim, and celebrate rich cultural legacies and Hue Communities.

Place Matters.

Most organizations were established in neighborhoods central to or/and historically occupied mainly by their communities and have become an anchor for belonging and visibility. Hue Custodians also understand that equity in ownership makes it harder to be erased, expelled, and pushed out.

Never Alone.

Many organizations were the fulfillment of a generational dream that required a coming together of collective we to create.

Justice Lives at the Source.

Civil rights and the fight for justice have been consistent inspirations and examples of organizing structures and practices.

Let's discuss each.

FOR US. BY US.

The unequivocal love and care for one's community, the desire to attend to its needs because no one else was doing so, and the yearning to celebrate Hue cultural brilliance, past, present, and future, were at the source. The founding Hue Custodians sought to make the invisible visible and create within the community for the community, also known as For Us. By Us.⁶ All organizations spoke about the **desire to bring their rich cultural legacies to the fore for their own people and the rest of the world in ways that empower, validate, heal, and instill joy and pride.** Founders were taking action to counter the invisibility of true histories and authentic cultural expressions within both their own communities and the

⁶ FUBU was a Black-owned street clothing brand started in the 1990s. The acronym FUBU indicated that the clothes were made by Black creatives, for Black consumers. As FUBU's website shares, "In 1992, four friends from Hollis, Queens, came together with one vision—to defy the odds and create a line of sportswear made by the people who wore it—for us, by us." (https://fubu.com/pages/about?srsId=AfmBOopwCF4s7nJ7HJ2x7HaH3y0YupOuhY-OS9IV_yLxbA8nLx46UonRA)

dominant and domineering white culture. The quantitative work done by Slover Linett at NORC shone a light on this passion. Of all the work they do, a supermajority of surveyed organizations identified their ability to share untold/undertold stories as their single greatest strength overall.

In the words of Hue Custodians:

“A generation grew up realizing that we are our own sovereign nation. It really changed the way we considered ourselves.”

Justin Cree of Akwesasne Cultural Center, describing the decision to open a library in 1971 and the education that ensued because of it. Now, the center has a library, gallery, and museum.

“There were few, if any—when we began AAAC in the ‘70s/’80s—places in New York City, if not the nation, where Asian American artists had an opportunity to exhibit, perform, and practice. It was not done; we were invisible; and it was up to us to establish the presence and cultural significance of Asian Americans—People of Color in the United States of America—and devote ourselves to the work, a long-term commitment.”

Robert Lee, on the genesis of the Asian American Arts Centre, an organization incubated in New York City’s Chinatown in 1974

“Printmaking is an important medium in Puerto Rico to get messages out, so we started as a printmaking space for other organizations in our immigrant community, and then we started training folks, too. After that, we wanted to curate a space for people to show their work, so we created a gallery. We present artists across all levels, and we think a lot about democratizing spaces.”

A For Us. By Us. sentiment expressed by Nasheli Juliana Ortiz-González of The Taller Puertorriqueño, an organization started in 1974 to serve a growing number of Puerto Rican immigrants who were moving to North Philly as a result of urban development policies in their homeland, where folks from rural areas were ushered into cities but given little to no support in finding sustainable livelihoods.⁷

Black museums exist because they were excluded. Asantewa Boakyewa of the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum (ACM), which is located to the east of the Anacostia River in a historically Black community of Washington, D.C.⁸ Founded in 1967, ACM was the first federally funded

⁷ Since our conversation, Nasheli Juliana Ortiz-González has transitioned from The Taller Puertorriqueño.

⁸ Since our conversation, Asantewa Boakyewa has transitioned from ACM to a different position within the Smithsonian Institution.

museum focusing on Black culture. The vision of John Kinard, a local community activist, minister, and founding director, was to create a place that didn't just have artifacts for artifacts' sake but centered on African American stories, problem-solving, and collaboration with the surrounding communities.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE SURVEY: FOR US. BY US.

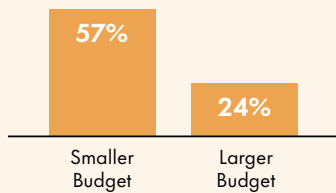
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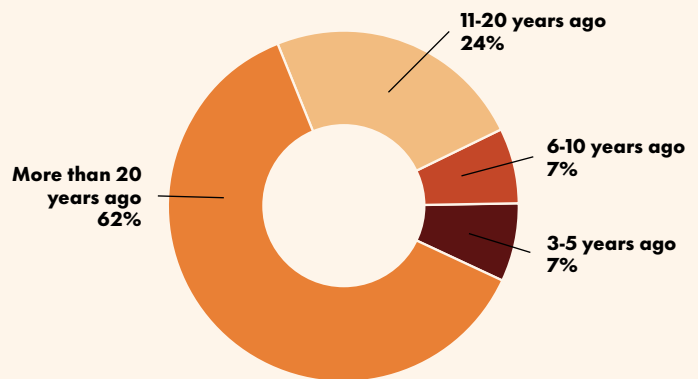
Most founders of the organizations we surveyed were Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, or a Person of Color.

In the survey, over half of the 45 organizations were founded over 20 years ago.

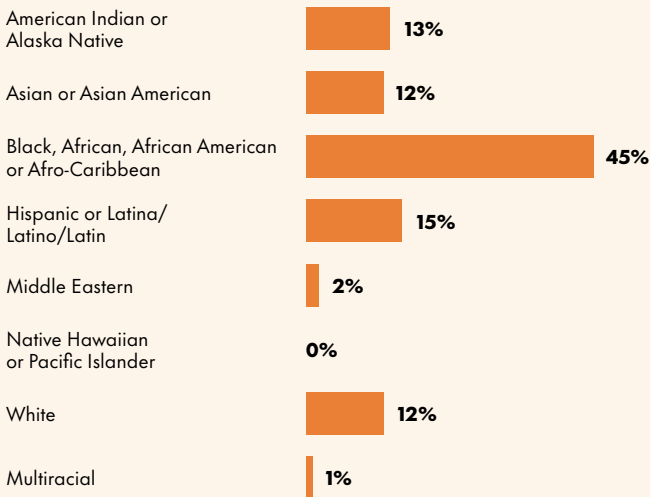
Share of founders who are Black/African American per budget size



When the Organization Was Founded
Q6: What year does your organization hold as its founding year? (n = 45)



Founders' Racial and Ethnic Composition
Q13: Mean % - How many of your founders belong to the following racial and ethnic groups? (n = 42)



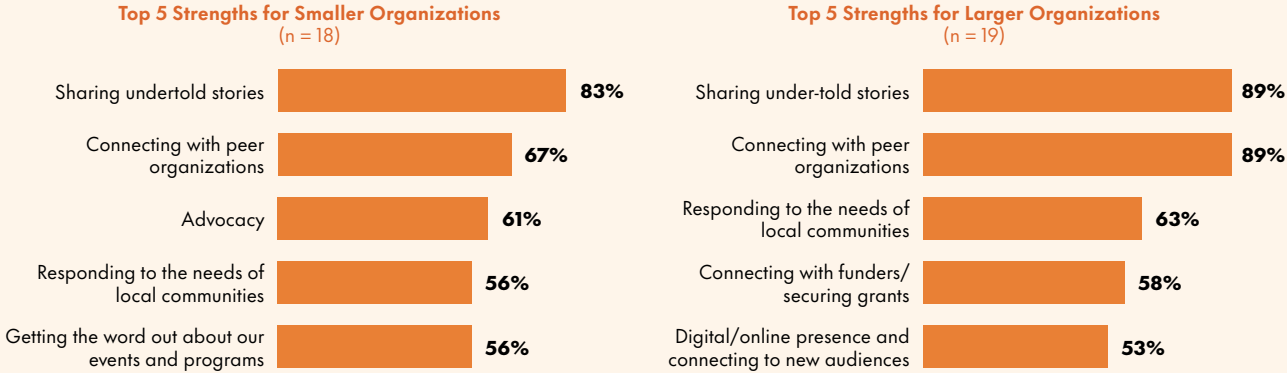
Only 44% of smaller-budget organizations were founded more than 20 years ago

When we examined the organizations’ missions through a coding analysis, eight directions stood out:



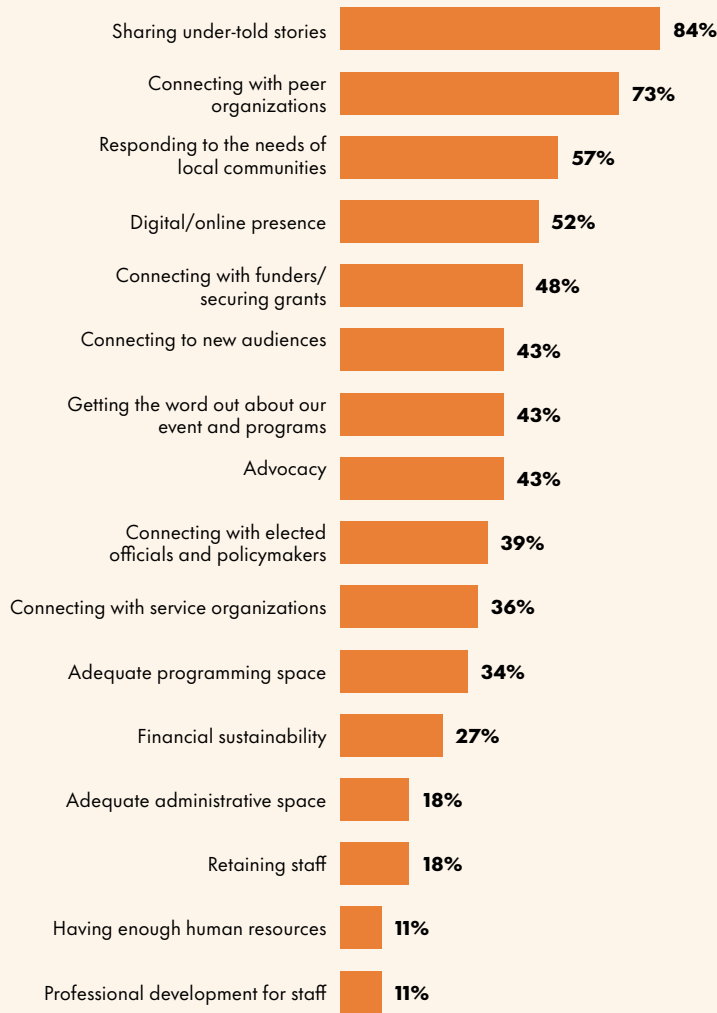
Both smaller- and larger-budget organizations identify their ability to share untold or untold stories as their greatest strength overall.

Q10: Which of the areas listed below do you feel are already strengths of your organization? Please select ALL that apply.



Organizations identify six key strengths on average, with sharing untold/undertold stories, connecting with peer organizations, and responding to the needs of local communities topping the list. Areas like professional development, managing human resources, retaining staff, and ensuring financial sustainability rank at the bottom of the strengths list. This suggests that while organizations excel in their mission-driven work, they face challenges in building internal capacity and long-term organizational sustainability.

Strengths
 Q10: Which of the areas listed below do you feel are already strengths of your organization? Please select ALL that apply.
 (n = 44)



PLACE MATTERS.

Related to visibility, physical placemaking came up a lot in our conversations. It refers to the creation or preservation of a home for Hue Communities historically residing in those geographies, many of which have experienced gentrification. Leaders with whom we spoke expressed that equity in ownership makes it harder to be erased, expelled, and pushed out from neighborhoods that are central or/and historically mostly occupied by their communities. Ownership allows for more visibility, wealth creation and distribution, and the freedom to do what the communities want. **There’s liberation in ownership.** Many of the organizations we spoke with own their buildings through full equity or in partnership with another public or private institution. Those who do not own have made an intentional, strategic decision not to have a permanent physical space and/or to organize programming in places where communities of service naturally gather (a museum without walls) or have created partnerships that allow younger generations (and organizations) to take the baton.

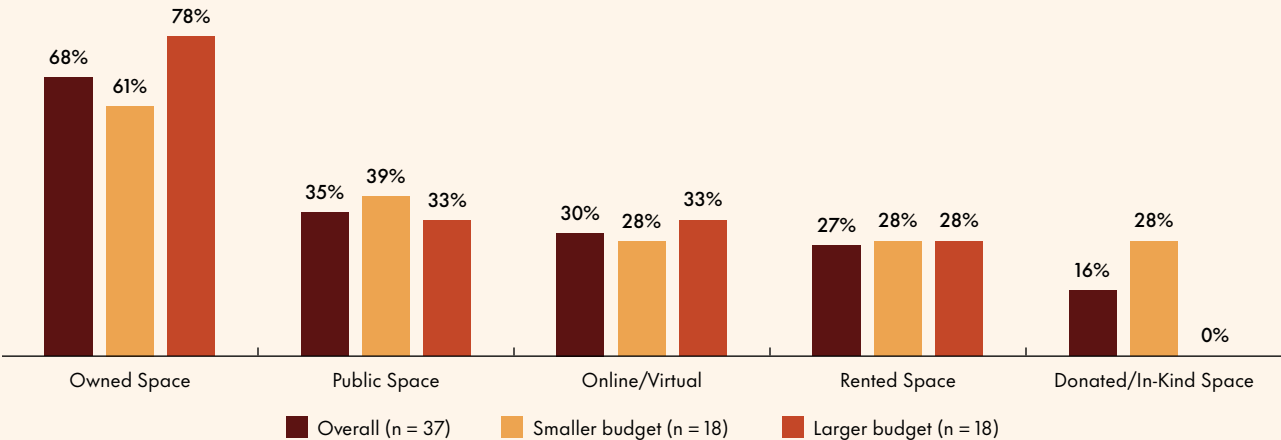
REFLECTIONS FROM THE SURVEY: FOR US. BY US.

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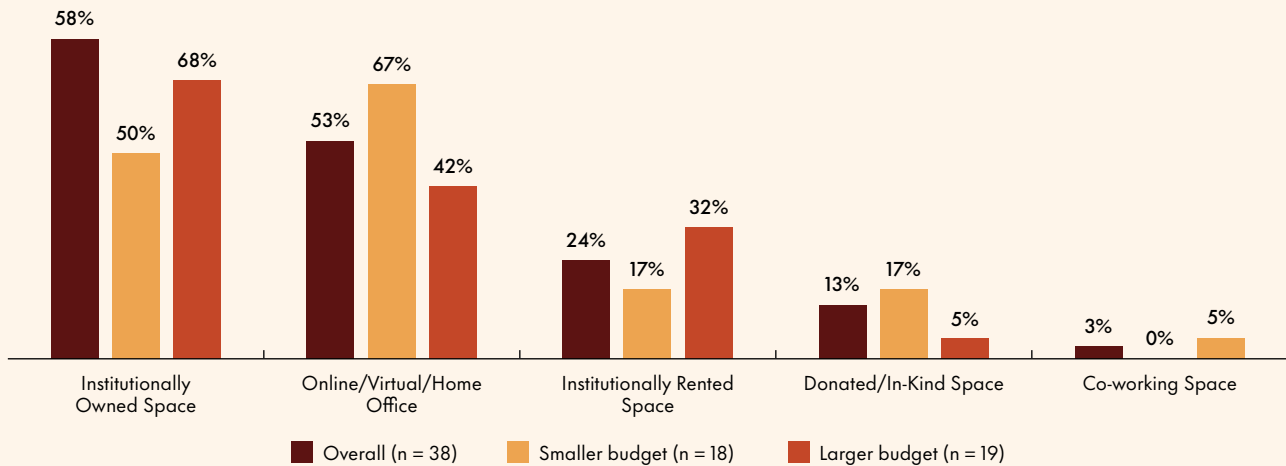
Those surveyed indicated that most programming takes place in owned spaces.

Q24: Where does the majority of your programming take place?
(n = 37)



For the majority of surveyed organizations, their staff works in owned spaces.

Q24: Where does the majority of your administrative/office/operational staff work?
Please select ALL that apply



NEVER ALONE.

Often in nature, other bodies of water join with the main river. Those influxes are called tributaries. They amplify the main river, often catalyzing a wider riverbed, a stronger current, and a more diverse ecosystem. This river system mirrors the founding forces behind the organizations we spoke with.

When sharing about the genesis of their organizations, all Hue Custodians spoke about an activated ecosystem of folks necessary to bring their organizations to fruition. **The creation was a collective we. It was never just the one founder. Tributaries—community members, friends, family, fraternity sisters, elected policymakers, and, in some cases, white allies and co-conspirators—helped.** Here are some prominent never-alone founding patterns from our conversations.⁹

The elders of different tribes and communities coming together to realize generational dreams to provide jobs, steward healing, and educate their communities and the outside world.

This theme most vividly manifested in the founding of Akwesasne Cultural Center, NY; Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center, NY; Wabanaki Youth and Cultural Center, ME; and Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, CT.

⁹ For the purpose of identifying patterns, we offer reflections where particular founding circumstances were most present in the sharings when YC spoke with organizational leaders.

Artists and creatives coming together to fill their needs and serve their communities.

This theme most vividly manifested in the founding of Taller Puertorriqueño, PA; Indigo Arts Alliance, ME; The Colored Girls Museum, PA; Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural & Educational Center, NY; Asian Arts Initiative, PA; and Rhode Island Latino Arts, RI.

Saving artifacts, be they objects or buildings, from destruction.

This theme most vividly showed up in the founding of the Museum of Chinese in America, NY; Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Washington, D.C.; and Southampton African American Museum, NY.

Having the opportunity to work with, incubate within, or join with other organizations.

This theme most vividly showed up in the founding of the Asian American Arts Centre, NY; Pao Arts Center, MA; Schomburg Center for Research and Black Culture, NY; Jane and Littleton Mitchell Center for African American Heritage, DE; Urban Civil Rights Museum in Harlem, NY; Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, Washington, D.C.; Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, Washington, D.C.; and The Amistad Center for Art & Culture, CT.

Having access to and leaning into elected politicians to help push the agenda.

This theme most vividly manifested in the founding of the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum, MD; Lewis Latimer House Museum, NY; and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, D.C.

Finding co-conspirators and allies to encourage and share the vision.

This theme most vividly manifested in the founding of Cape Verdean Museum, RI; Harriet Tubman Museum and Educational Center, MD; Raíces Cultural Center, NJ; Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C.; and The Noguchi Museum, NY.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE SURVEY: NEVER ALONE

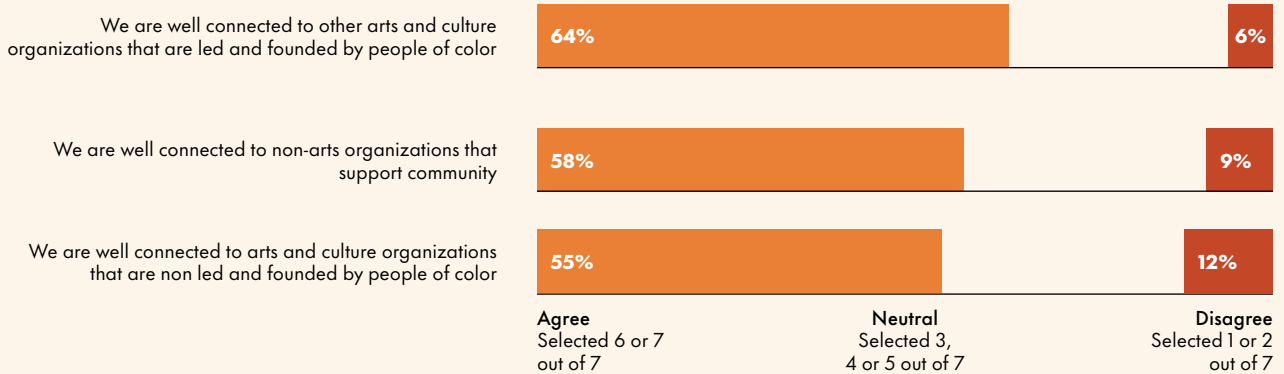
SLOVER LINETT

NORC

Organizations continue to activate in the collective WE. Survey respondents reported being well connected with the peer organizations.

Connections with Peer Organizations

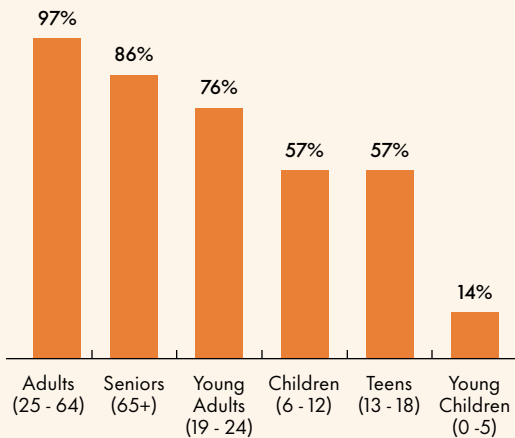
Q32: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your organization? (n = 33)



Organizations serve diverse audience groups, with three different racial and ethnic groups on average.

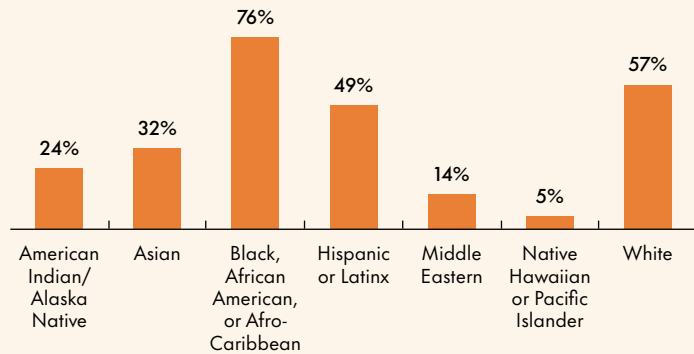
Age Groups Served

Q39: Which of the following age groups does your organization primarily serve/reach? Please select ALL that apply., (n = 37)



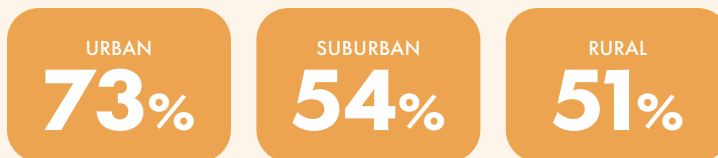
Race and Ethnicities Served*

Q40: Which of the following racial and ethnic groups does your organization primarily serve/reach? Please select ALL that apply. (n = 37)



*8% of organizations don't track this information

Geography Served



JUSTICE LIVES AT THE SOURCE.

Many of the founding patterns above weave together. No origin story is singular in its genesis. But underpinning each circumstance is a deep yearning for justice. Every organization is fundamentally engaged in liberation work. Dismantling oppressive systems is not an add-on. Many leaders, in sharing their organization's genesis story, uplifted the lessons from Black liberation movements. Some spoke about the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, which helped them realize that it was okay to be angry about oppressive conditions. Others specifically noted that inspiration came from the Black Panthers, the Black Lives Matter movement, and/or the civil activations that followed the assaults and murders of Black citizens.¹⁰ To this day, organizations continue to be mindful of and **committed to modeling anti-oppressive practices for all people**. They amplify the humanity of Hue Communities, from genius to the ordinary.

Here's what leaders shared with us:

The Schomburg is accessible and unique because all you need is a library card and an appointment. It's free. The library represents not only Black American life but Black life across the Diaspora. We have collections on Ghana, colonial and postcolonial Africa.... There are multiple ways we are reflecting the global Black experience.

Joy Bivins, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, NY

Our responsibility is to Asians in America and the Asian diaspora, but we know that our experiences are concentric and related to other communities of color. We are modeling what it looks like to the city... Accounting of dignity is what we want to model.

Anne Ishii, Asian Arts Initiative, PA¹¹

We believe that community connection work is anti-racism work.... We have seen a transformation in terms of community healing. We invite non-Indigenous people to see our rituals of caring for the land that are innate to us. Others are starting to see that.

Hue Custodian

¹⁰ The assault of Rodney King and the murder of George Floyd by the police were mentioned specifically across conversations.

¹¹ Since YC's conversation, Anne Ishii has transitioned from Asian Arts Initiative.

The Flushing [a neighborhood in Queens, NYC] community has been evolving. There's a big Asian immigrant community, and we have an amazing Black heritage site. We are using that as a point of engagement rather than separation.

Ran Yan, Lewis Latimer House Museum, NY

Through arts and culture, we bring more people into the dialogue about race and identity in this country.

Cynthia Woo, Pao Arts Center, MA

The Urban Civil Rights Museum in Harlem will be NY's first civil rights museum in NYC and the first to focus on civil rights and social justice in the North. It will tell the longer story of the Black freedom struggle beginning with the Trans-Atlantic slave trade through Emancipation and Reconstruction. And it will broaden the civil rights story to include the experiences of the Great Migration and the Harlem Renaissance, both of which helped significantly to energize the ongoing struggle for freedom. Most importantly, the museum will be a call to action—to continue to work together towards the fight for equity and social justice.

Jennifer Scott, Urban Civil Rights Museum in Harlem, NY



Raíces Cultural Center

RIVER FLOW

FOLLOWING THE HEARTBEAT OF COMMUNITIES IS FOUNDATIONAL TO HOW THE ORGANIZATIONS OPERATE.

Organizational stewardship of Hue museums and cultural centers is about an active and ongoing conversation with one's culture and its people. It is about defying structures never meant to serve these organizations and unapologetically bringing to the fore the systems and practices conceived and incubated within the communities' cultural traditions across ages. There was thematic resonance across what leaders shared:

Constantly (Re)Imagining the Ways

These organizations have been bringing and continue to bring Hue innovations to the museum field at large.

Being a Good Neighbor and a Good Ancestor

These organizations do not need to be reminded to build and deepen community relationships. It is a way of being, and most often, it is done in ways indigenous to their culture.

Leading with Courage and Resilience

Hue Custodians bear a burden on their bodies while leading Hue museums and cultural centers in a system that was never meant to serve them. Yet leaders (staff and executive leadership show up day in and day out for their communities, often providing wraparound services to address the whole person.

Let's unpack.

CONSTANTLY (RE)IMAGINING THE WAYS

Hue Custodians have been and continue to be pioneers in how museums are defined and redefined and how they operate, engage with folks, and measure success. Public art, community-driven curation, community over collection-centered approaches, museums without walls, story-based museums, and museums as centers for the community are all innovations brought to the field as authentic extensions of Hue cultures.

Building and deepening relationships with Hue Communities is part of each organization's DNA. Not engaging with the people, whom each entity was created to serve, has never been an option. Far from being on a pedestal, all organizations are in conversation with their communities of service to understand and stay abreast of their needs. Often, there's no separation between the institution and its people. Many organizations build and deepen relationships with communities in ways that are authentic to the Hue culture(s) they amplify. Dreaming sessions, drumming, talking, call-

and-response circles, and celebrations on the streets all serve as examples of spaces to be in conversation and stay on top of the current heartbeat of their communities.

As shared by Hue Custodians:

We do not have community engagement. We are the community. I am the community, and the community is me. To reach and build trust with other ordinary girls of color, I have to show my ordinary girl.

Vashti DuBois, The Colored Girls Museum, PA

We offer spaces for community events, fundraisers, and celebrations, and strive to remain flexible and responsive to the needs of independent cultural producers. By accommodating varying requests from the community, even on short notice, we aim to support opportunities that align with the economies of scale they depend on.

Libertad Guerra, Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural & Educational Center, NY

Another wonderful affirmation of Hue innovation is how organizations define and measure success. For most organizations, **true success is not in the transaction of how many people came or how many eyeballs the virtual event reached but in the human experience and transformation that happened as a result.** When evaluating success and impact, Hue organizations look to see if:

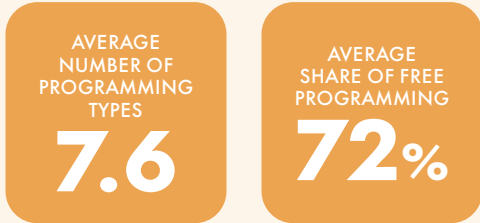
- Healing happened.
- The participant's status quo was challenged.
- There was joy.
- Folks smiled afterward.
- The space provided a place of respite.
- People came back with their loved ones or referred the organization via word of mouth.
- People felt they belonged.
- People were inspired.
- Further curiosity was ignited.

Wow. #HueMetrics

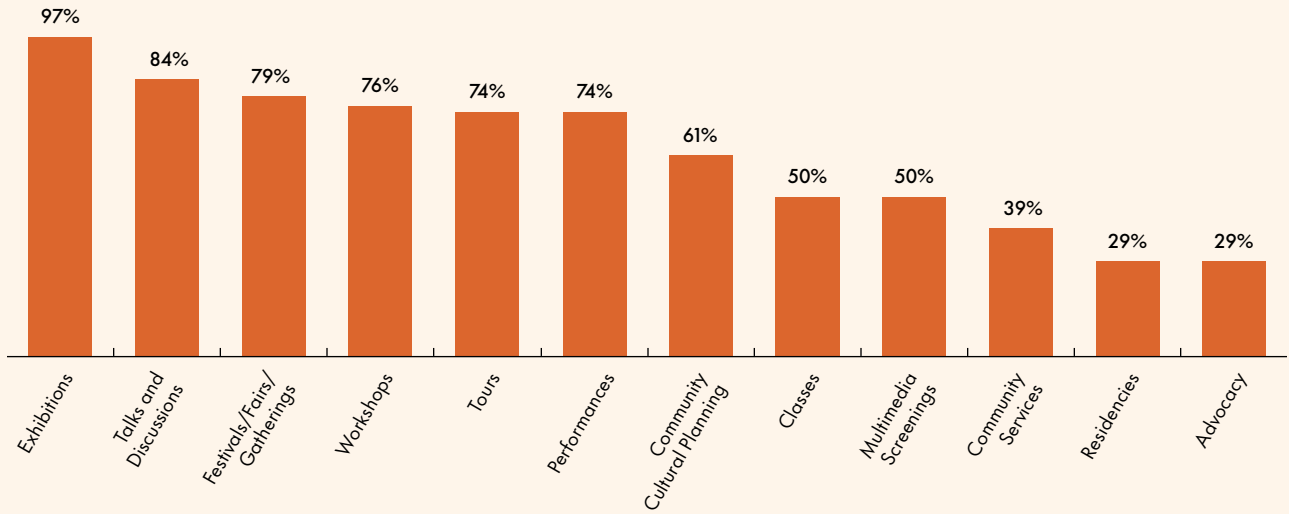
REFLECTIONS FROM THE SURVEY: CONSTANTLY (RE)IMAGINING THE WAYS

SLOVER LINETT
NORC

Just as organizations serve a multitude of functions, they also provide a wide range of programs.

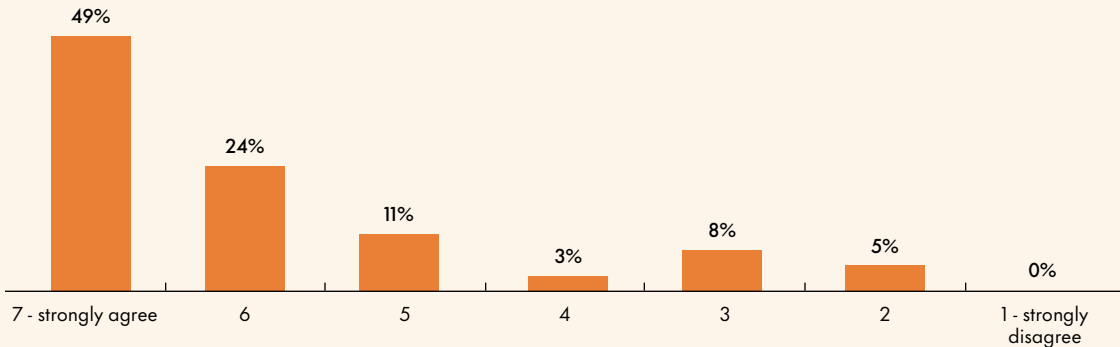


Q23: What types of programming or interactions does your entity/organization engage in?
Please select ALL that apply.
(n = 27)

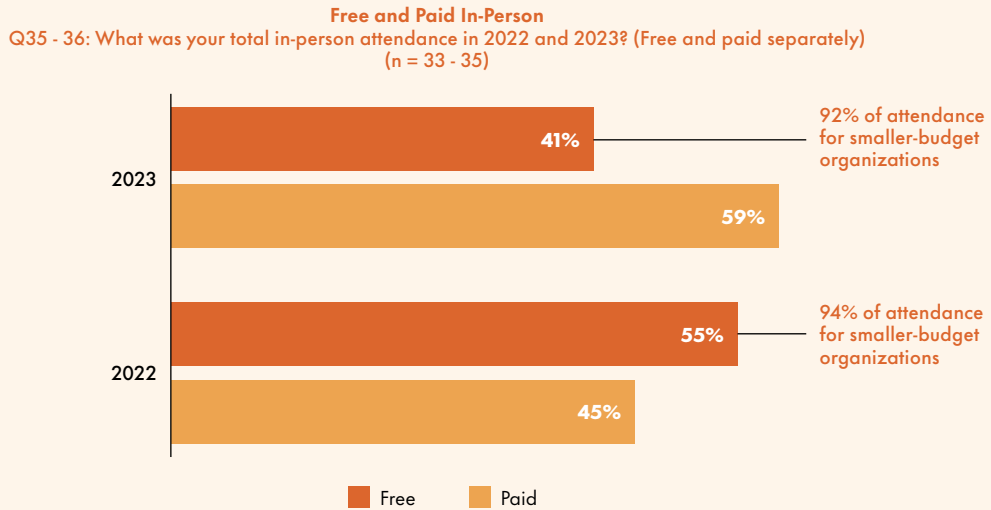


A majority of organizations believe that their employees reflect the communities they serve.

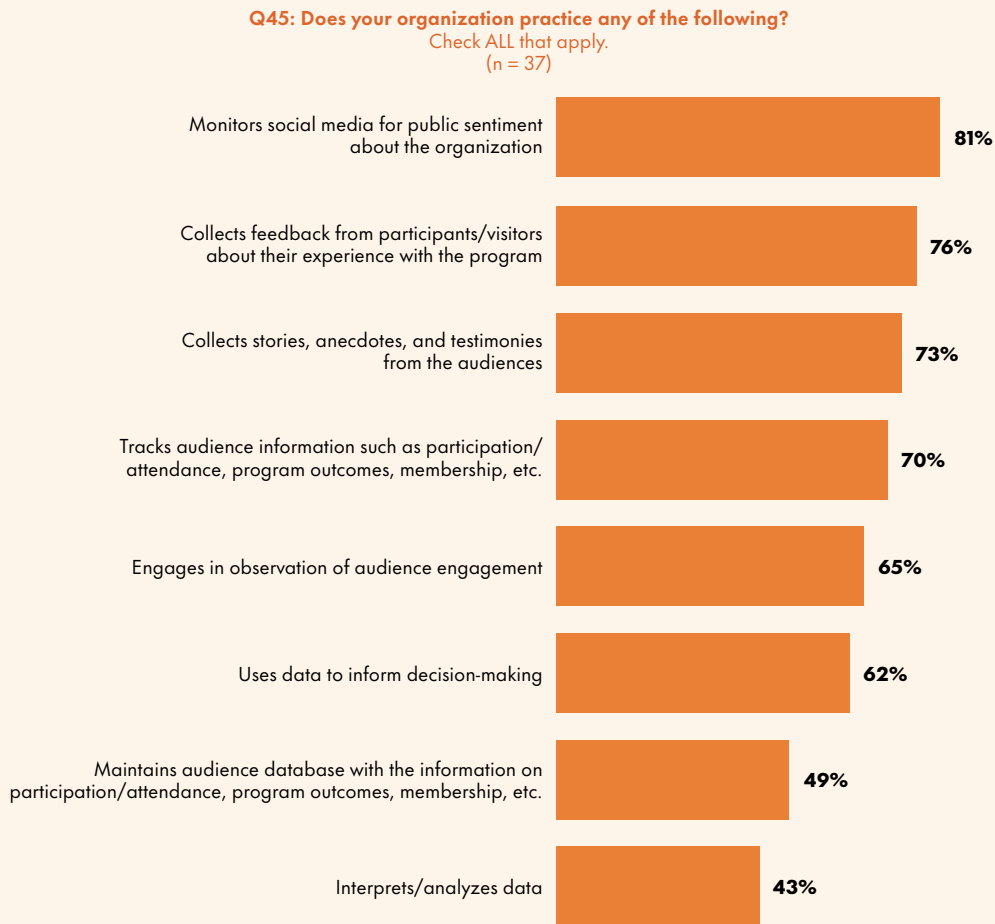
"Our employees represent the communities we serve."
Q22: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your organization?
(n = 27)



The vast majority of events at smaller-budget organizations were free of charge, reflecting the organizations' community-centered missions and roles.



Organizations on average use five different ways to collect community feedback.



BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR AND A GOOD ANCESTOR

Many leaders echoed that community reciprocity is a must for organizational sustainability. It can show up in different ways as well. While most organizations are clear about their commitment to the communities they were created to serve, leaders spoke about being good neighbors and good ancestors regardless of the specific composition of the surrounding human ecology. Many organizations intentionally lean into the hyperlocal by hiring local folks and partnering with local organizations to bridge culture and education, culture and health, and culture and economic prosperity. Many also reflected on being guided by their ancestry and unifying principles such as the Sankofa or the Seven Generations. Not only are the organizations deeply aware that they stand upon the shoulders of those before them, but they also activate resources for young people to learn, appreciate, and lead in the future. Ran Yan of Lewis Latimer House Museum powerfully encapsulated this sentiment, calling their communities their biggest resource growth engine (both financial and nonmonetary) for their organization.

LEADING WITH COURAGE AND RESILIENCE

The evergreen love that pours out of the hearts of Hue Custodians was evident in every conversation. **Executive leaders and their staff lead with courage and resilience in a system that was not created to serve HueArts & Cultures.** There are many mountains in the U.S. cultural terrain that have to be overcome. This burden is taxing and exhausting every day. It is a widely known fact, confirmed in our conversations, that constant bootstrapping and self-funding work needs to happen to keep most Hue organizations afloat (let alone thriving financially). There's an expectation from the general public, funders, policymakers, and also, sometimes, the Hue Communities served, that Hue Custodians should just figure it out. Even in the day-to-day, it means working without the required capacity or fair compensation (or sometimes any compensation, for that matter).¹² This invisible labor is expected, and it comes at a cost to the bodies of the leaders doing the work.

Another area where invisible work is expected is leadership ability. We heard that first-time organizational leaders, who often must build the plane as they fly it, would benefit greatly from mentorship and professional development for executive roles, particularly because there are so few accessible examples of successful leadership that reflect Hue cultural institutions. And many executive leaders, not only those new to the role, expressed a desire to have a community of peers from similarly culturally

¹² Museum Hue recent reports focus on Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color arts and culture organizations and their well-being in New York State (2023) and New York City (2022).

specific organizations with whom they could share experiences, learn from one another, and be in communion. Additionally, building the plane as they fly leaves little or no opportunity for long-term planning or for ensuring that the work will thrive once the leader departs from the organization.

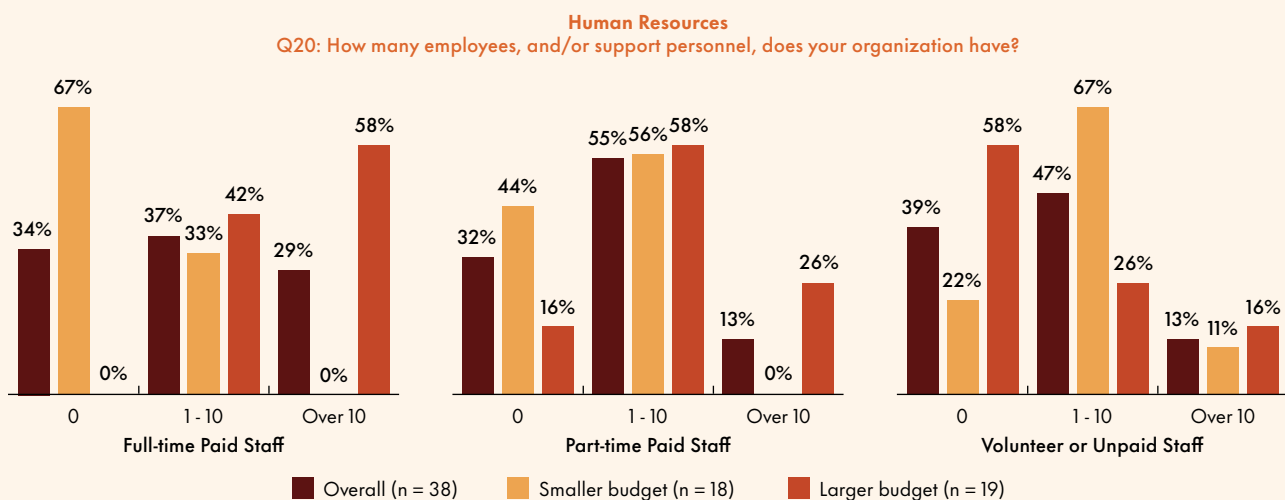
Despite barriers, Hue Custodians lead with courage and resilience and, as many have noted, the heart. “It is heart work,” said Nicole Wines of the Raíces Cultural Center. The work is rooted in the ancestral legacies and in the hope for a thriving future for generations to come. It is the love and the courage to manifest that love in one’s community that flows in the rivers of Hue cultural institutions.

“You can be water and soft river your way to freedom too,” says author Nayyirah Waheed in her book of poems *Salt*. How beautiful to think of river and its flow as a verb, and what grueling work it is for Hue Custodians to defy structures that were never meant to serve them. Staff members and executive leadership alike are trailblazers, leading in ways authentic to their culture and the organization’s values. It requires courage to keep their cultural river flowing synergistically with the needs of the communities served.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE SURVEY: LEADING WITH COURAGE AND RESILIENCE

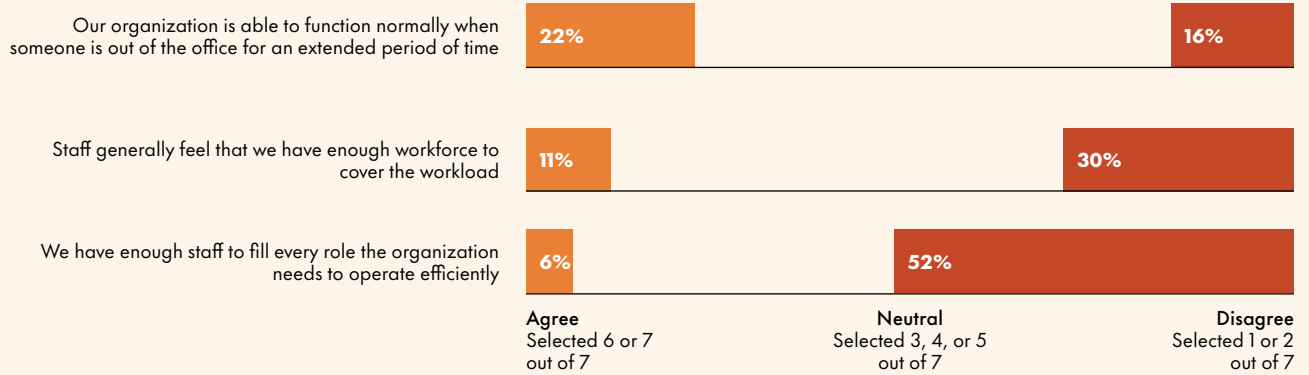
SLOVER LINETT
NORC

Approximately one-third of all organizations operate without any full-time paid staff, and these are predominantly small-budget organizations.



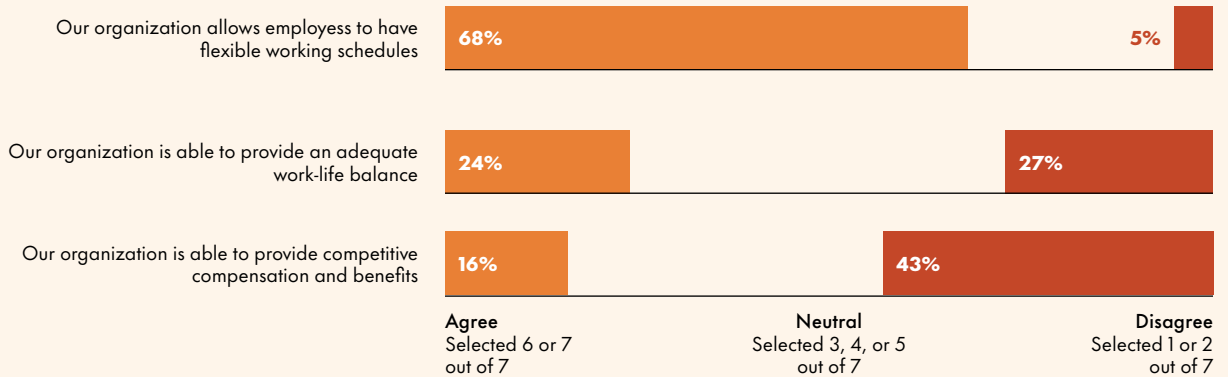
A lack of full-time paid workforce is also evident in the insufficient staffing levels, especially among smaller-budget organizations.

Q22 & Q23: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your organization!
(n = 27 - 33)



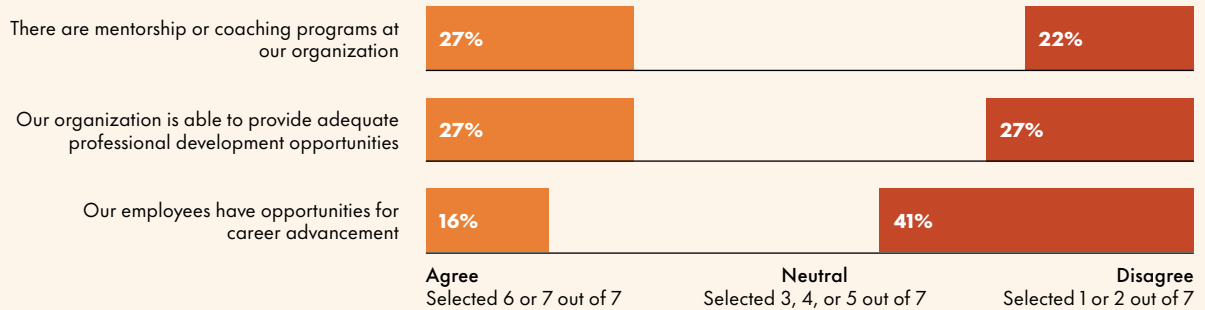
Although organizations largely report flexibility in accommodating staff schedules, many struggle with adequate work-life balance, and very few are able to provide competitive compensation and benefits.

Q22: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your organization!
(n = 27)



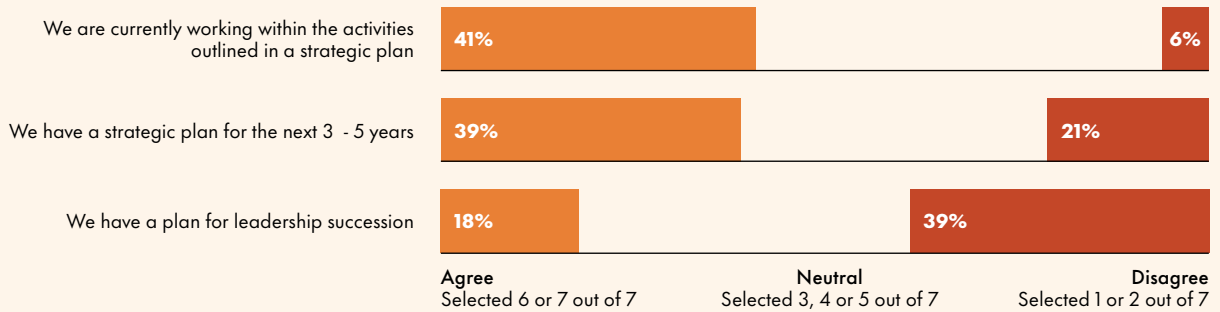
Many organizations are not able to offer sufficient growth and development opportunities to their staff.

Q22: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your organization!
(n = 37)



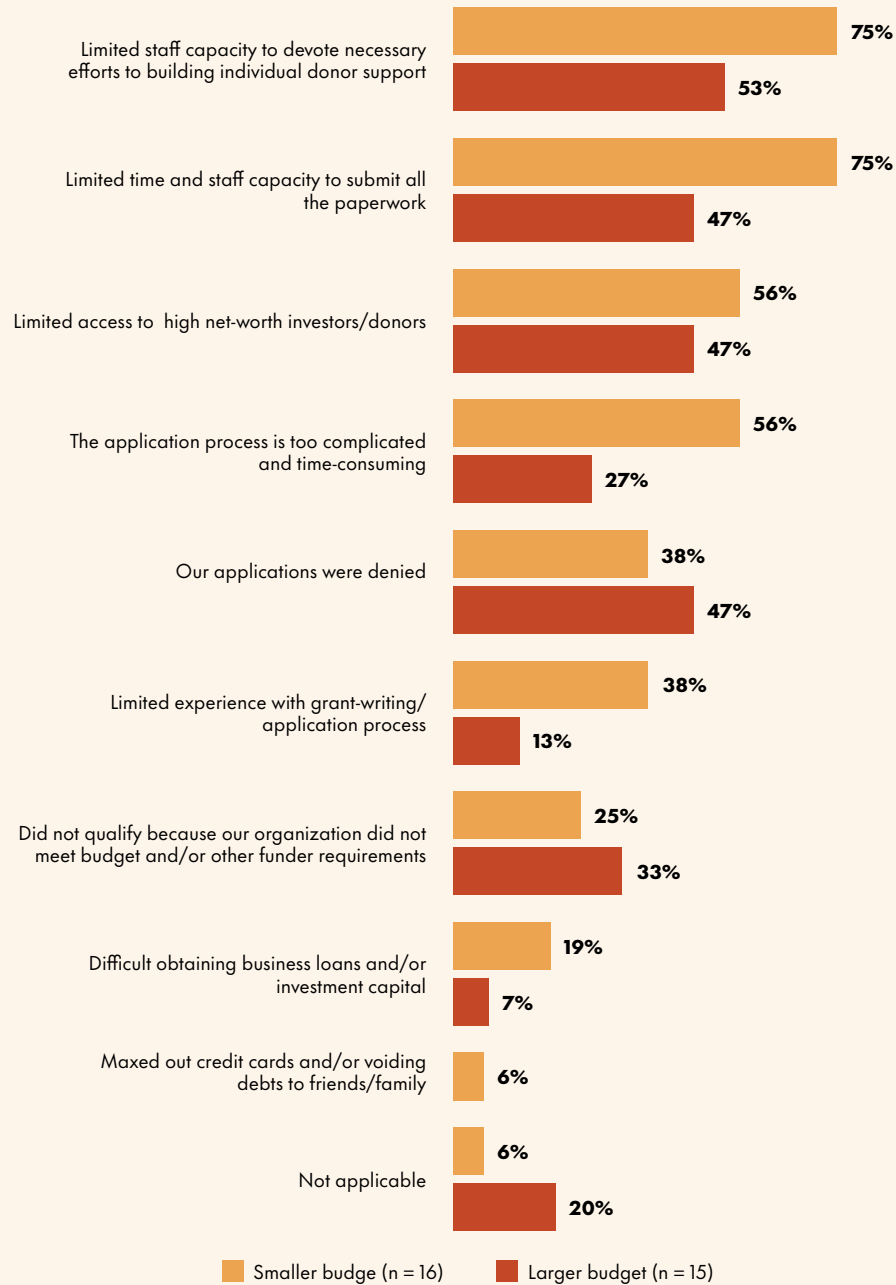
Fewer than half of all organizations have developed a strategic plan outlining their goals and priorities for the next three to five years, and less than one-fifth have a plan or framework for leadership succession.

Q33: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your organization!
(n = 33)



The primary barriers to accessing funding include limited staff capacity and time, which are particularly challenging for smaller-budget organizations.

Q56: Have any of the following ever prevented you from accessing funding/capital investment?
Please select ALL that apply.
(n = 31)



RIVER MOUTH THE FUTURE WHERE I AM WE, AND WE ARE MANY.

Generally, none of us question why rivers exist and what benefits they provide. We just know they are core to survival. If anything, we want more of them. Their fresh, living water sustains us and so much of our lifeways. But how about the survival of the heart, the soul, and the body? Hue museums and cultural centers that are led in ways that are indigenous to their representative cultures are the nourishment for their communities. They provide the sustenance and wayfinding that communities need in order to thrive.

When asked about aspirations and dreams for the future, many Hue Custodians spoke about an existence that is not questioned. They envisioned a future where there's no question of why such organizations need to exist; and certainly, where it is not presumed that one is enough. And in that plurality of Hue brilliance, all folks in the future are flocking to engage with those organizations because Hue entities, too, are the cultural and academic norm. Hue Custodians spoke about a tomorrow in which Hue innovations and methodologies are acknowledged and valued by the broader museum community and by society, and where this is evidenced by resourcing, leadership acknowledgment, and attendance.

This visioning toward a more fully resourced future—and the realities of current levels of resourcing—was strongly echoed in the quantitative results.

A river often culminates in a river mouth, sometimes called a delta. It is a fertile land where the river meets a big body of water—an ocean, lake, or wetland that receives the flow of many rivers. In our conversations, the yearning for coming together, unity, connection, and collaboration among Hue museums and cultural centers in the United States rose to the surface.

Across the 29 organizations that we connected with and many more that joined the discourse during the Digital Discovery Lab®, most did not know each other, and many leaders shared that they often experience isolation in their work. There's a deep desire to change that—to create an active space of connection, sharing, learning from each other, celebration, and collective power. The words of Jordia Benjamin of Indigo Arts Alliance encapsulated this collective desire with grace:

I'd like to have connections—to have a way for us to tap into each other. So when we're talking about the work, we're talking about our collective work and collective legacy; that's coming from multiple voices across the nation. We can speak together in one accord to align and drive home that we're here, that we exist, and

that our contributions are valid. We are moving the future forward. Being aware of what other like-minded organizations are doing can allow us to lean on and lean into each other and the work we're doing.

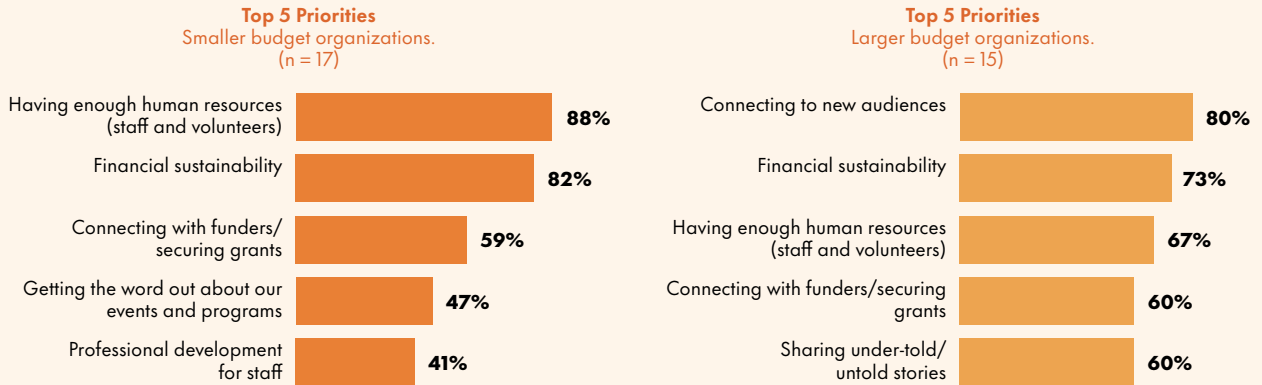
REFLECTIONS FROM THE SURVEY: THE FUTURE

SLOVER LINETT

NORC

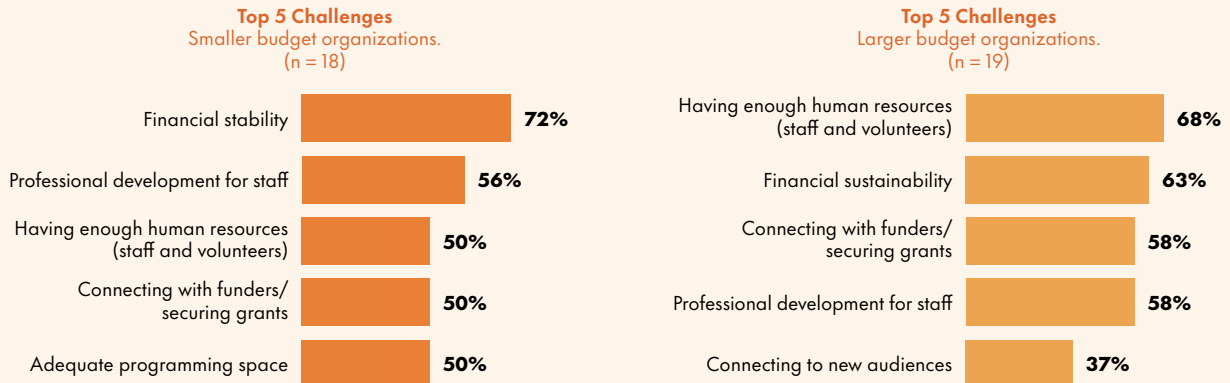
Organizations' future priorities align closely with their top challenges, and some of them are shared by both smaller- and larger-budget organizations, such as financial sustainability, accessing funders/grants, and ensuring adequate staffing.

Q34: Considering the same areas, which of the following are the top priorities for your organization in the next year?
Please select ALL that apply.

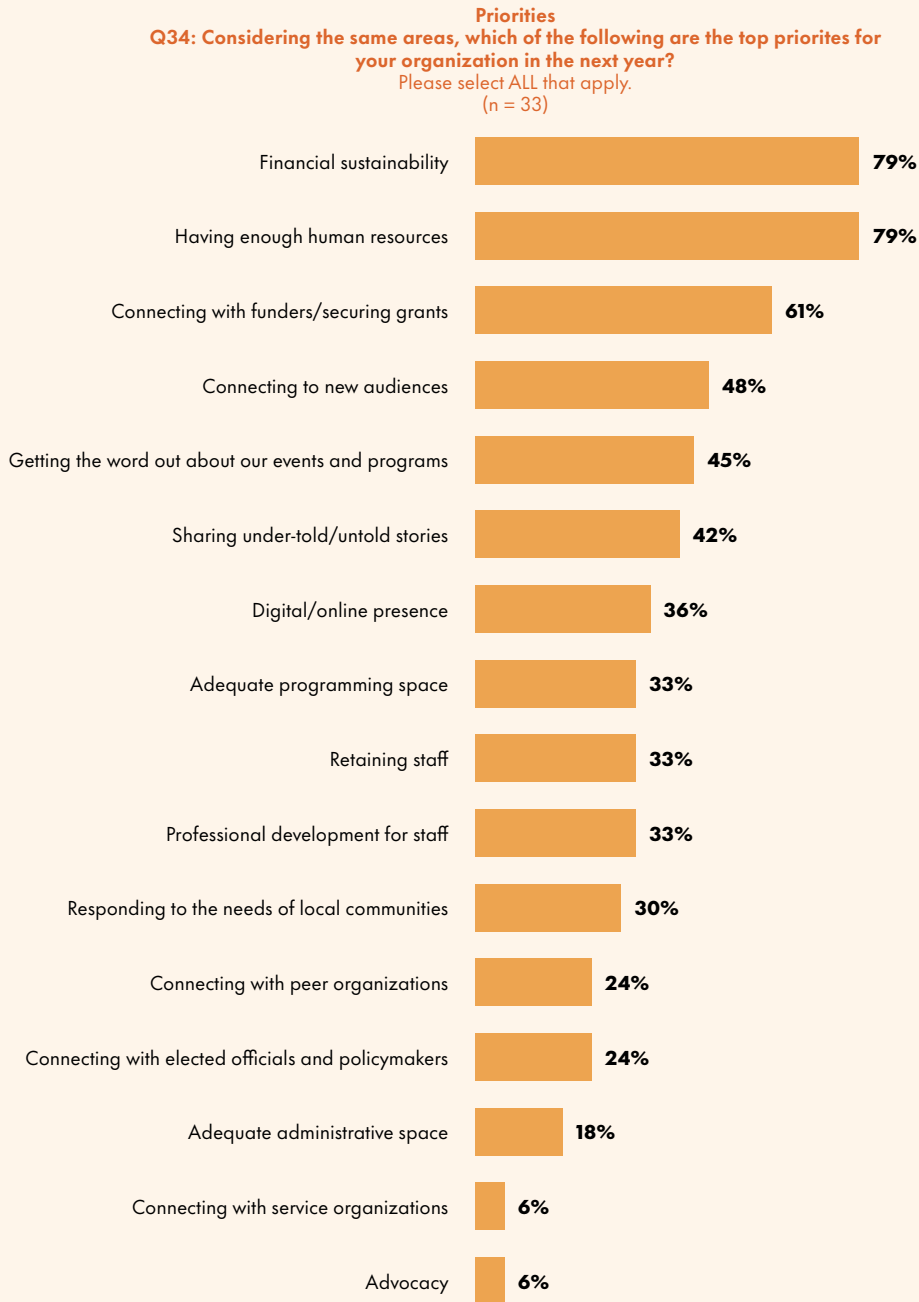


Financial sustainability remains the most pressing concern, particularly for small organizations.

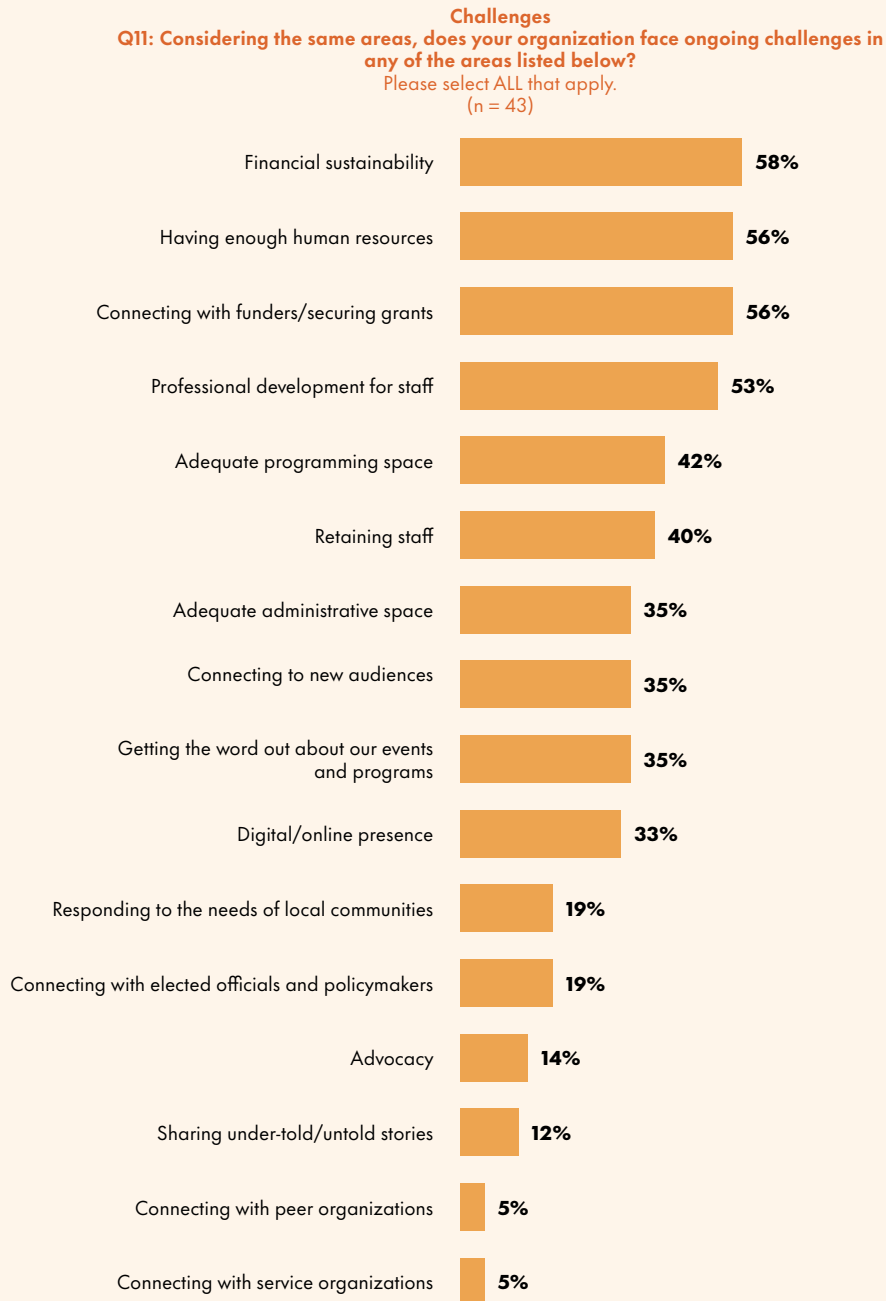
Q11: Considering the same areas, does your organizations face ongoing challenges in any of the areas listed below?
Please select ALL that apply.



Organizations report an average of six priorities, with financial sustainability and human resources topping the list.

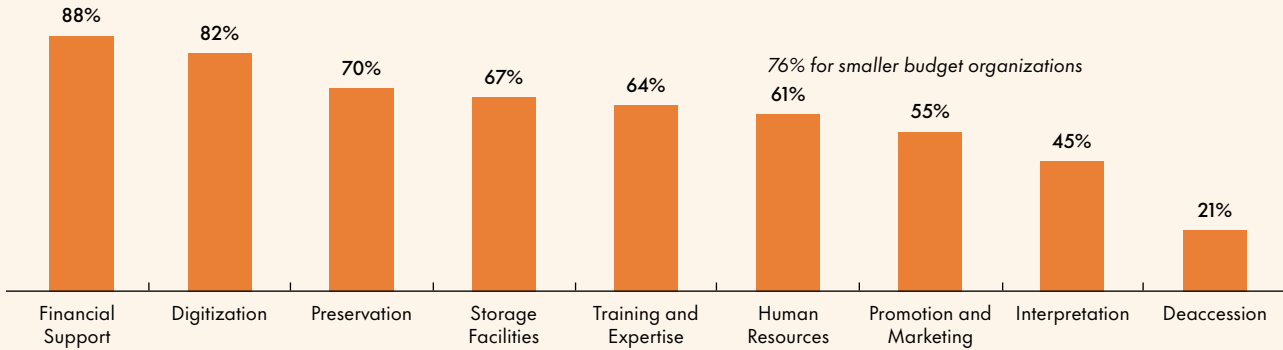


An average of five critical areas of challenge were highlighted by each organization. Funding stability, including financial sustainability and connecting with funders, emerges as an area of ongoing challenges. Human resources and professional development are other major areas of concern.



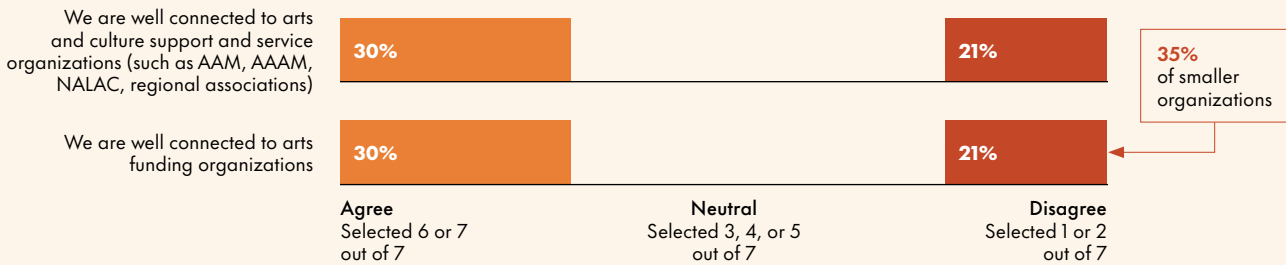
Organizations require a wide range of additional supports and resources to maintain their collections.

Q31: What kind of support related to your collection(s) does your organization need?
Please select ALL that apply
(n = 33)



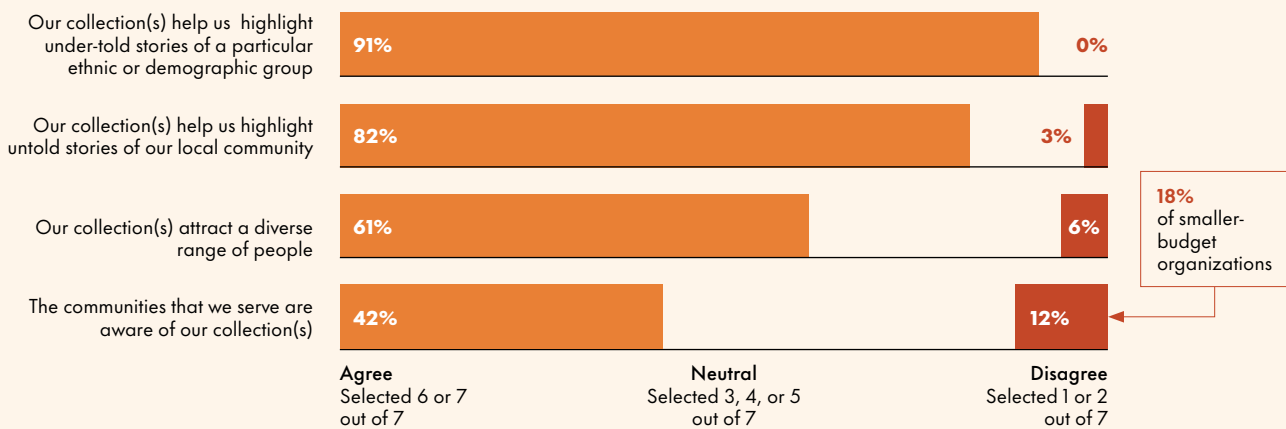
Connections to arts and culture support, service, and funding organizations—crucial to gaining access to these resources—are reported as being much weaker than peer connections.

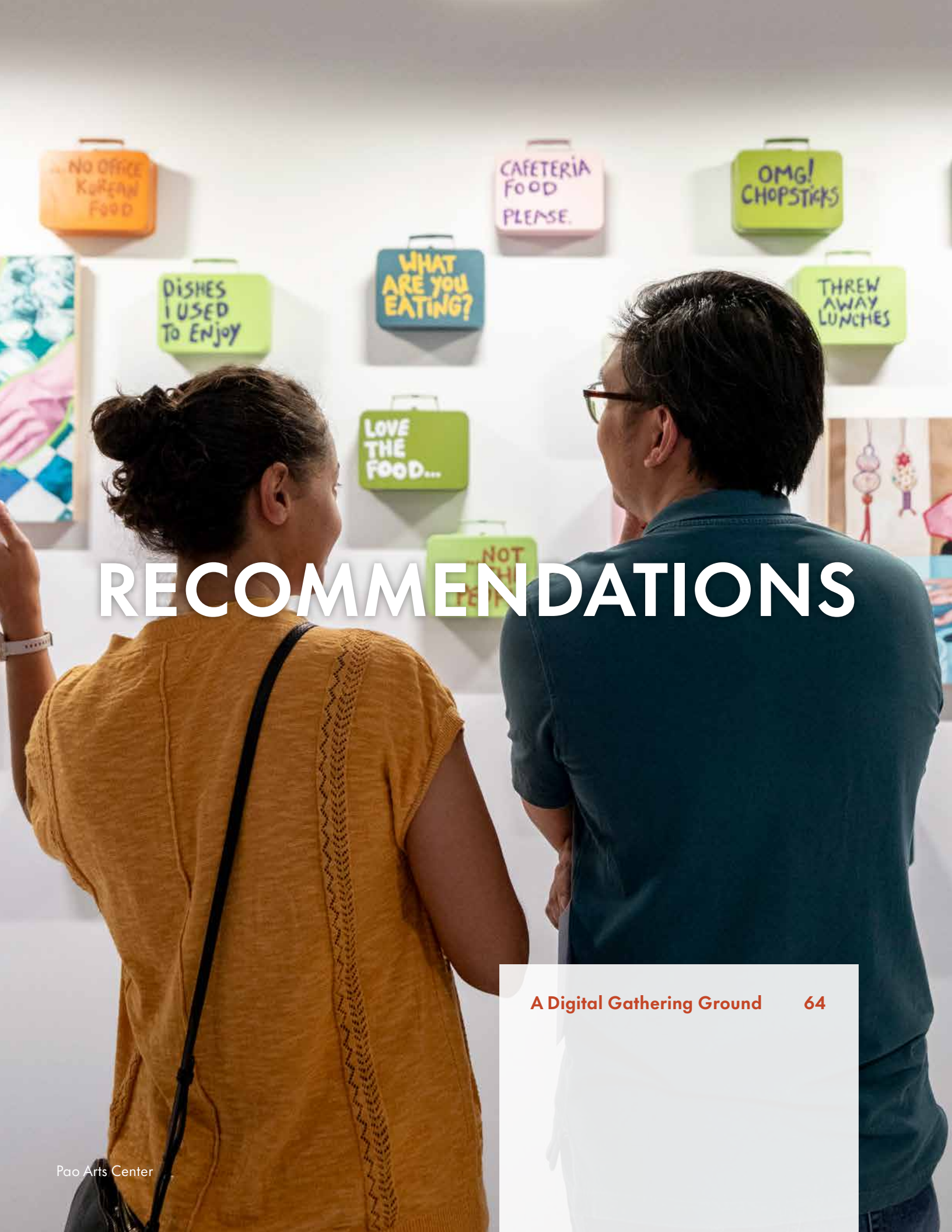
Connections with Support Organizations
Q32: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your organization?
(n = 33)



While collections play an important role in helping organizations highlight untold stories, and a majority attract diverse audiences, many organizations are uncertain whether their communities are fully aware of them.

Collections and Communities
Q30: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your collections?
(n = 33)





NO OFFICE
KOREAN
FOOD

CAFETERIA
FOOD
PLEASE.

OMG!
CHOPSTICKS

DISHES
I USED
TO ENJOY

WHAT
ARE YOU
EATING?

THREW
AWAY
LUNCHES

LOVE
THE
FOOD...

NOT
TAKING
THEM

RECOMMENDATIONS

A Digital Gathering Ground 64

The institutions and communities who engaged in this study have histories of resilience, innovation, community-building, culture-bearing, self-determination, caretaking, advocacy, organizing, leading, and thriving despite odds. This section makes recommendations for steps and approaches moving forward, based on findings from both phases of the project. It includes recommendations to the field based on the contributions and current status of these organizations, as well as key approaches for the planned digital gathering ground.



Acknowledge that these organizations embody a powerful and enduring resistance to cultural marginalization and historical erasure.

These leaders and institutions ideate, form, and sustain critical spaces where Communities of Color can share their identities and histories on their own terms. Whether operating with large staffs or small volunteer-driven teams, they reflect the resilience and creativity that have long characterized communities of Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color in the face of attempted historical erasure. They hold a unique role in preserving cultural histories and enriching communities. It is crucial that funders, the larger arts sector, peers, and the general public more fully understand and appreciate this function.

Recognize the significant role of these organizations in the overall cultural landscape.

Particularly in a social climate where policies continue to stifle the growth and visibility of organizations led by People of Color, these organizations play a critical role in preserving and evolving cultural narratives, offering inclusive and accurate representations of history while celebrating the power, beauty, and resilience of People of Color.

Increase funding and create stronger support from the arts sector, especially for smaller organizations.

Increased financial backing, better connections with funding bodies, and resources to engage in deliberate strategic planning are critical to ensuring these institutions can continue their essential work and expand their impact. It is vital to recognize that these organizations are often underfunded and doing more with less. Many report a heavy reliance on contributed revenue, much of which comes from foundations (23%), parent organizations (15%), and city funds (14%). Yet federal support has dramatically declined, falling from 25% in 2022 to just 4% in 2023, further exacerbating the challenges faced by these institutions. The longevity and programmatic diversity of these

BLACK CURATORS MATTER



Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

organizations—operating in an average of 3.3 functional areas—further highlight their dynamism. Smaller organizations (those with fewer staff) juggle an average of 3.7 functions, contributing to the community in ways that extend beyond their financial capacity.

Provide targeted support for the development, support, and retention of human resources.

More staffing, better work conditions, and opportunity for professional development are critical factors in sustaining these organizations' work. Many organizations, especially smaller ones, operate with minimal or no full-time paid staff, relying heavily on volunteers. This highlights a pressing need for recruitment, training, and funding to attract, retain, and develop skilled individuals. Without investment in competitive compensation, career growth opportunities, and professional development, organizations risk burnout and reduced effectiveness. Strengthening human resources through targeted support will ensure these institutions can continue their vital work, expand their impact, and meet the evolving needs of their communities. Only by prioritizing people can these organizations thrive and sustain their missions long-term.

DIGITAL PLATFORM RECOMMENDATIONS

Bringing to the fore the cultures, beliefs, values, aspirations, and motivations of these organizations and communities will strengthen this platform's potential. In the course of the conversations held by Yancey Consulting, enhanced by survey findings from Slover Linett, the following guidance emerged for how to build a digital platform that best supports the people, work, vision, and communities of organizations founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color.

Think digital gathering ground versus platform.

The primary purposes of this platform are to gather, engage, enrich, and satisfy all constituent communities. Language sets the tone of expectations. Lead with gathering—a shared ground for Hue Custodians' needs, insights, generosity, vulnerability, aspirations, and collaborations. Technology is meant to serve, not be centered.

Root the design, content, and culture of the digital gathering ground in communal, indigenous, multi-ethnic, and multi-racial cultural practices.

As Hue Custodians shared, this site should feel like a mosaic of el barrio, a bodega, a barbershop, talking circles, oral traditions, and a celebration of Hue Cultures. The public-facing portion should be dynamic and visual—showing communities, people, and these institutions as good, engaged neighbors. The content should do more than replicate what is on each member's website. The member-facing side of the site is abuzz. It is a social, interactive space that custodians regularly visit because of its useful connections and content. It is a trusted space of giving and receiving.

Make the value proposition “To Connect.”

Whether you're connecting people, themes, tourists, and residents to Hue Community sites or past dreams and actions to present outcomes, connectivity is the central nervous system of this gathering ground. It is what differentiates a digital gathering ground from just another website with a database. Connect Hue Custodians to one another, facilitating peer connections, resource-sharing, and mutual support. Connect visitors to sites, journalists to new narratives, and younger generations to seasoned culture keepers. List itineraries that map trips to multiple sites in proximity to each other. Connecting and interconnectedness should anchor the site's visitor use and growth strategies.

Leverage the digital platform both to deepen peer connections and to connect with broader-sector supports.

In the quantitative survey, 64% of organizations reported feeling connected to peer organizations, but connections with other arts and culture organizations and supports (including service and funding organizations) were much weaker. Smaller organizations in particular struggle to secure adequate staff and financial resources. Taken together, these data points reinforce the importance of balancing a peer-focused gathering ground with a public-facing side that increases visibility and attracts support and recognition that could elevate the organizations' work and enable them to thrive in the years to come.

Choose storytelling over reporting and feature people at Hue institutions.

Write everything as if you're telling a story and your favorite author were in the audience: captivate and intrigue. Provide heaps of details that paint pictures and produce sounds. Op-eds are popular for a reason. For storytelling-styled inspiration, think of magazines and online publications such as *Essence*, *Hyperallergic*, *ICT News*, and *theGrio*. People love hearing about people, which is why social media scrolling is immensely popular and why *People* is the number one magazine in the United States at the time of this publication. When telling the stories of the institutions, be people-centric: Uplift joys, celebrations, and milestones. Connect leadership themes across institutions and regions.

Advance Hue metrics.

Give language and credibility to metrics like smiles, joy, and indicators of belonging—the metrics uncovered in these conversations. Hue Custodians already know and use these signals; this platform can further normalize and validate them. Ivan Henderson, executive director at Delaware Historical Society, uplifted an anecdote about the Library of Congress and *Jet* magazine. The conversation was about how we can set the standard and not wait for some other authority's stamp of approval. Henderson shared, "We knew *Jet* magazine and Johnson Publishing were legit. We knew that because it was in my mother's house. We don't have to wait until the Library of Congress comes around and says that it is. It's occasionally knowing that we know. We feel it in our bones." Henderson's sentiments apply to new qualitative metrics showing Hue Communities as the vanguard. Let's transform how Hue-centric Custodians, museums, and cultural centers activate the next level of interweaving and interconnectedness.

A DIGITAL GATHERING GROUND

LISA YANCEY

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, YANCEY CONSULTING

THE DREAM, THE WHY, AND THE HOW

A GENERATION GREW UP REALIZING THAT WE ARE OUR OWN SOVEREIGN NATION. IT REALLY CHANGED THE WAY WE CONSIDERED OURSELVES.

Justin Cree, director, Akwesasne Cultural Center

When Hue Custodians were asked what would be the most valuable output of a new digital platform, connectivity was the overwhelming response.

Connectivity is the key that unlocks the portal to possibility. Justin Cree's comment echoes how the HueArts & Cultures ecosystem could transform what is endowed to future custodians two or three generations from now if there were greater relational connectivity, story-sharing, trust-building, and authentic gatherings in the world and online.

DREAM WITH ME A BIT.

What if Museum Hue's digital platform mirrored the intentional ways Hue Custodians tend and care for their communities?

As recommended above, what if we let go of the word *platform*, which centers on technology, and reimagined this as a digital gathering ground, which centers community and people in close connections?

What if we designed and collectively sustained a digital gathering ground that elevated the institutional and personal stories of Hue Custodians and

aligned them as a community? It is not simply a community defined by racial identity but connected in deep relationships—actively convening around shared interests, needs, and aspirations.

What if, when you landed on the digital gathering ground website, the images, energy, feelings, reels, and colors were unmistakably Hue? Visitors see joy, vibrancy, brilliance, innovation, and unapologetic residency. They may even hear laughter or a story. Visitors can access a map that shows the locations geographically occupied by Hue member museums and cultural centers; it may even show overlaps with other Hue spaces based on interests—continuing the theme of interconnecting and weaving. One could search and use filters to discover what’s happening any day of any month in any space. Linked descriptions about each site could be a prelude to their websites. Editorials would highlight interesting commonalities among Hue Custodians across the Hue museums and cultural centers ecosystem.

What if we designed with two key user groups in mind: Hue Custodians and the general public? A public-facing website could greet users who want to know about, visit, and support Hue institutions. On the backend of this gathering portal, Hue Custodians would have a safe space to connect, chat, ask questions, and share information and requests with one another. This nonpublic space could function as a social cooperative. In this instance, a cooperative is more appropriate than a network because members of cooperatives have a vested interest in maintaining the space; they have an equitable stake in its utility. By comparison, networks can be transactional—participants coming mostly for relational leverage to advance a goal. There’s a place for networking, but the possibilities that can emerge from this type of gathering ground could have generational impacts, transforming how and with whom Hue Custodians organize and find common cause.

REIMAGINED POSSIBILITIES

In creating a digital gathering ground, we envision a central place people want and need to visit for information, socialization, and community. We chose the metaphor of a gathering ground because it echoes the communal and sometimes sacred space where people have open dialogue, debate critical issues, resolve disputes, find cohesion across differences, make profound declarations, and celebrate major life events. It represents the function and feel of what Museum Hue’s new digital platform could evoke.

Another laudable aspect of gathering grounds is that they unite people under a shared understanding and set of values. In the same way that people who commune on gathering grounds have independent homes, the Hue museums and cultural centers each have independent websites

and digital footprints that host their specific offerings and stories. This digital gathering ground must do more than replicate the content on these websites. Its value lies in what it can provoke, shift, and activate through a vibrant, collaborative community.

Without question, Museum Hue's digital gathering ground should mirror Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color multicultural and multi-ethnic communities. What does that mean, exactly? Hue Custodians share a few insights below.

It needs to feel like a neighborhood—not so much a home, per se, but a place where people are comfortable. In my case, this was the bodega. Everybody is welcome.

Marta Martinez, founder and executive director, Rhode Island Latino Arts, RI

As much as we'd like to say that there is an online community, it's very hard to actually create that. But it's not impossible, right? We see communities being created around fandoms [and] areas of interest all the time that can span geography and interests. If I had to describe what feeling I would love to be able to see on this platform, it is community.

Lisa Sasaki, former director, Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, Washington, D.C.

A digital platform, which joins the work we are doing in museums and cultural sites, is like creating a party or graphic system. Seeing what that looks like visually is very powerful in and of itself. But also just thinking of our cultural sites as a national neighborhood that you're actually able to engage with [seeing] not just who we are [but also] how we're behaving in the world.

Vashti DuBois, executive director and founder, The Colored Girls Museum, PA

We seek to build relationships rather than transactions.

Ivan Henderson, former director of the Jane and Littleton Mitchell Center for African American Heritage; executive director, Delaware Historical Society, DE

Challenging the status quo.

Asantewa Boakyewa, deputy director, Smithsonian Institute's Anacostia Community Museum, Washington D.C.¹³

Spaces for vulnerability that allow for empathetic listening. It is not about transactions. It is about creating spaces to come together and discuss.

Amy Hau, director, The Noguchi Museum, NY

Bringing together people to share their stories, be in place together, and share communal joy. Embracing our full humanity and potential, embracing each other's differences and our potential.

Ran Yan, executive director, Lewis Latimer House Museum, NY

It's clear what Museum Hue's digital platform needs to *do* and *feel like*.

DO

Connect.

Nurture relationships.

Amplify authentic stories.

Elevate overlaps across institutions bound by shared interests, community needs, and organizational aspirations.

Celebrate Hue Cultures.

FEEL LIKE

A gathering ground.

A community.

El barrio.

A bodega.

Belonging.

Jointly held.

¹³ Since our conversation, Asantewa Boakyewa has transitioned from ACM to a different position within the Smithsonian Institution.

STRUCTURE: HOW DOES THIS SITE MANIFEST?

This vision is within our reach. With the insights and priorities gathered from Hue Custodians, we solidify the following recommendations for the form, function, and structure of the digital gathering ground.

FORM

DESCRIPTION	QUALITIES
<p>A hybrid website and platform that leans more toward platform culture</p> <p>Websites primarily provide information and are often unilaterally engaging. Platforms, on the other hand, are designed for interaction and engagement.</p>	<p>Looks like an extension of Hue Communities</p> <p>Engaging hi-res visuals</p> <p>Rich content with imagery, shorts, stories, and sound. Feels more like storytelling and oral traditions than reporting.</p> <p>Communal, cultural, earthy, and proud</p> <p>An emphasis on media and short-form content rather than long-form content.</p>

FUNCTION

DESCRIPTION	QUALITIES
<p>A trusted portal for Hue museums and cultural centers. It will post the latest information, stories, events, announcements, and collaborations. It's dynamic, not static. Information should be up to date, easily sourced, provide clear prompts, and coherent design.</p> <p>The general public can visit the site and source museums and culture centers, read interesting stories, consider recommended itineraries, peruse an aggregate calendar of events/activities, and link to each member's website. If they love the site, they can support this Hue gathering ground.</p> <p>Hue Custodians could meet and greet, gather and share, learn about events, send out special invitations to the community, suggest meetups, pose questions, organize cohort groups (such as one for "new leaders," an area several Hue Custodians cited as particularly important), post needs, offer advice, share resources, and do anything else of value that's needed.</p>	<p>The stories pique visitors' interests and curiosities.</p> <p>The images provoke further exploration.</p> <p>The space encourages socializing, sharing, and mutual support.</p> <p>Connections and collaborations are easy to explore.</p>

STRUCTURE

DESCRIPTION	QUALITIES
<p>External: The website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profiles of members Editorials Events and happenings Announcements Visual mapping Travel itineraries <p>Internal: The platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An exclusive Hue Custodians space for active engagement 	<p>Front end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easily searchable More than a database <p>Back end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized around popular requests/needs of Hue custodians Provides a resource bank Offers places to post questions, search prior questions, and read responses Allows members to post and search for contact information

Hue Custodians named specific qualities they would like to see in a digital gathering ground built on the recommended two-part structure.

PUBLIC-FACING QUALITIES (FRONT END) AN ATLAS/STORY MAP

In an atlas, you can see how it all connects. It's not just a database.¹⁴

Anne Ishii, executive director, Asian Arts Initiative, PA¹⁵

What about story maps? Having a story map for each museum and cultural center with videos and other links.

Sarah Clunis, executive director, The Amistad Center for Art & Culture, CT

¹⁴ Anne referenced "The Shifting Sands of Utopias: A Cultural Atlas," which is located on Asian Arts Initiative's website (<https://asianartsinitiative.org/programs/a-utopian-stage>). It investigates the broader historical context and how a fluid artistic, philosophical, and political exchange emerged across geographies, histories, and forms on an unprecedented scale. The atlas examines those from the perspective of the concept of the Global South. This broader storytelling and story-mapping was referenced as the type of storytelling that could come from Museum Hue's platform.

¹⁵ Since YC's conversation, Anne Ishii has transitioned from the Asian Arts Initiative.

Museums have great potential for developing and inspiring creative strategies. I feel that “narrative”—our ability to “change the narrative” is still our single most powerful and untapped resource.

Jennifer Scott, founding executive director and chief curator, Urban Civil Rights Museum in Harlem, NY

A PLACE TO HONOR THE WORK THAT OTHERS HAVE DONE

People...have put their tears and sweat into the work.
Honor that work.

Hue Custodian interviewed

Uplift without appropriation.

Lisa Sasaki, former director, Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, Washington, D.C.

CUSTODIANS' COMMUNITY QUALITIES (BACK END)

INSPIRATIONAL SUPPORT

Help people think about their possibilities. Be that dream space for them.

Amy Hau, director, The Noguchi Museum, NY

We can all be in the room because of our digital capacities.
That excites me. Our sites can be in conversation.

Vashti DuBois, executive director and founder, The Colored Girls Museum, PA

BUILDING A HUE COMMUNITY ACROSS ORGANIZATIONS AND CENTERS

I'd like to have connections—to have a way for us to tap into each other.

Jorgia Benjamin, executive director, Indigo Arts Alliance, ME

We need a space for new leaders to come in.

Dr. Johnnetta Cole, former director, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C.

CULTIVATING A SHARED LEARNING SPACE FOR LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER AND TOGETHER

What if we didn't have to learn on our own? Several custodians talked about needing help in the beginning without having a community to go to.

QUALITIES CHARACTERIZING THE ENTIRE DIGITAL GATHERING GROUND (FRONT AND BACK ENDS) MORE INTERCONNECTEDNESS, BEING INTERWOVEN

Current digital systems often replicate current organizational systems. Would the platform help us think differently about museums in a more integrated and interwoven way?

Lisa Sasaki, former director, Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, Washington, D.C.

SEARCHABLE DIRECTORY/GETTING THE WORD OUT

When speaking about connecting siloed organizations, a searchable directory is so important.

Anne Ishii, executive director, Asian Arts Initiative, PA

I want the museum to be known in the world.

Linda Harris, executive director, The Harriet Tubman Museum and Education Center, MD

CAPTURING METRICS HUE COMMUNITIES CARE ABOUT

I'd be curious to see who is underindexed, overindexed, underinvested, etc.

Anne Ishii, executive director, Asian Arts Initiative, PA

Joy as a metric. Some folks feel that celebration and joy are inappropriate because of museums' historical exclusion. But what if we could change that?

Asantewa Boakyewa, former deputy director, Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, Washington, D.C.

We consider smiles a success metric.

Rob Hayward, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, CT

Visitors and members of the Hue community could utilize the platform as a gathering, harvesting, and seeding ground—a digital space to seed, tend, manifest, and dream. This digital space could be a space of possibilities that bridges ideas beyond geographic proximity and racial lines.

HENRY LAUZZ
AMERICANS
IN CHINA
with the People's Republic

THE INTIMATE CITY:
Walking New York
by Michael Kimmelman
\$30
MAKE A DONATION TO MOCA

THE INTIMATE CITY
MICHAEL KIMMELMAN

Pearl River, as we

CONCLUSIONS

This research grounds, connects, and distinguishes museum leaders of color and renders their institutions as trusted and cherished heritage sites in and by their communities. Museums and cultural centers in the Northeast founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color are vital to both cultural preservation and economic development. Their collections, exhibitions, public programs, and community services amplify underrepresented voices, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of art, history, and culture. Collaborations with schools and community organizations further their educational reach, while their leadership in inclusive curatorial practices encourages other institutions to diversify their programming and staffing. Their contributions help expand the narratives presented in museums nationwide, ensuring a richer, more representative cultural sector. Continued and increased support for these institutions is crucial for a thriving and equitable museum ecosystem.

HueArts & Cultures National will complement other platforms like Smarthistory and Art21, trusted online resources for the study of art history and showing artists' practices. Before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, many BIPOC museums didn't receive "promotion" from credible sites and publications. Because of this, many have lagged behind and don't have as much visibility. Learning from that crisis, we see the need for greater equity and accessibility of museum content within the digital space. This is why part of this work includes an online platform that highlights these museums and cultural centers through multimedia: video footage, photographs, articles, and more. The goal is for the museum sector as well as the greater public to recognize the importance of these cultural institutions. The online platform can also increase these organizations' economic contributions by attracting more local visitors and tourists, which would also support local businesses. Tourism driven by these institutions boosts spending at local restaurants, hotels, and shops. Additionally, they provide jobs for educators, artists, and cultural workers while serving as platforms for emerging creators, strengthening the creative economy.



HUE CUSTODIAN PROFILES

AKWESASNE CULTURAL CENTER

AKWESASNE, NY

BIRTHED: 1971

akwesasneculturalcenter.org

 [AkwesasneCulturalCenter1](https://www.facebook.com/AkwesasneCulturalCenter1)



The Akwesasne Cultural Center is a library, museum, and gallery dedicated to the celebration and amplification of Akwesasne's rich and enduring culture.

The Center started as a library offering educational space for Akwesasne youth. The Akwesasne Library holds a wealth of cultural information and is an active resource to all curious people to this day.

The Museum's collection includes various cultural materials, including photographs, art, baskets, wampum belts, cornhusk dolls, and much more, related to the Mohawk community of Akwesasne. One of the museum's priorities continues to be the traditional arts program, which includes classes for our Akwesasne Mohawk community to help keep traditional and art skills alive. Examples of traditional arts programming classes include baskets, fancy baskets, cornhusk dolls, feather fans, raised beadwork techniques, moccasins, beaded crowns, beaded yokes, beaded skirts, and cradleboards.



"THE AKWESASNE CULTURAL CENTER HAS ALWAYS BEEN A REALLY GREAT RESOURCE FOR THE COMMUNITY. I DON'T THINK WE EVER CHARGED THE COMMUNITY FOR USING THE CENTER FOR A MEETING SPACE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE PAST COUPLE YEARS, WE'VE HOSTED ONKWEHON:WE MIDWIVES COLLECTIVE, A GROUP WHO HELP WITH POSTPARTUM CARE. THEY USUALLY GIVE US A HEADS-UP THAT THEY WANT TO USE OUR SPACE, AND WE SAY YES. TWO SUMMERS AGO, THEY STARTED DROPPING OFF VEGETABLES EVERY TUESDAY, FREE FOR THE COMMUNITY. AND THEN LAST WINTER, THEY STARTED DROPPING OFF ROOT VEGETABLES ONCE A WEEK. THE COMMUNITY CAN USE WHATEVER AVAILABLE SPACE, BECAUSE IT'S THEIRS."

—JUSTIN CREE, Director, Dive Deeper

ASIAN AMERICAN ARTS CENTRE

NEW YORK, NY

BIRTHED: 1974

artspiral.org

   asianamericanartscentre



The Asian American Arts Centre was founded in 1974 as the Asian American Dance Theatre in New York City to address the distinctive concerns of Asian Americans in the United States.

Our mission is to promote the preservation and creative vitality of Asian American cultural growth through the arts, and its historical and aesthetic linkage to other communities. The Arts Centre accomplishes this by presenting and interpreting the ongoing synthesis of contemporary American and Asian art forms, utilizing performance, exhibition, and public education.

During four decades of activity and through to today, a picture of Asian American art continues to emerge from the Art Centre's work; the roles of family, community, identity, tradition, folk sources, spirituality, the marketplace, politics of art, and innovative personalities have all been essential in shaping the past and current cultural presence of Asians in the US in the 21st century.

As a community organization, we walk a fine line between national and international concerns, born in the crucible of local strivings and seeking the next step towards a new world of cross-cultural understanding. International factors beyond its means, yet embedded in an ethnic community's soul, may determine whether a new equanimity is established between its past and the contradictory forces pulling at its center—this is at the heart of our Asian American endeavor.

"OUR COMMUNITIES, WHEN WE BEGAN AAAC IN THE '70S/'80S...WERE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE PRESENCE OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN CHINATOWN, SO IT MADE SENSE TO GROUND IT WITH ASIAN FOLK ARTS, SUCH AS FOLK CRAFT DEMONSTRATIONS AND TRADITIONAL DANCE PERFORMANCES. IT MADE MORE SENSE TO COMMUNITY PEOPLE AND VISITORS AS IT GAVE THEM MORE HISTORICAL CONTEXT. IT HELPED ASSOCIATE CURRENT ART WITH THEIR IDENTITY."

—ROBERT (BOB) LEE, Co-founder

ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE

PHILADELPHIA, PA

BIRTHED: 1993

asianartsinitiative.org

 [AsianArtsPhilly](https://www.instagram.com/AsianArtsPhilly)



Connecting cultural expression and social change, the Asian Arts Initiative uses art as a vehicle to explore the diverse experiences of all communities, including Asian Americans. Located in Philadelphia's Chinatown North, the Asian Arts Initiative is a multidisciplinary arts center offering exhibitions, performances, artist residencies, youth workshops, and a community gathering space.

Community is the center of our practice at Asian Arts Initiative.

With programs that are informed by our attendees, neighborhood projects that are imagined with our neighbors, and artist residencies that provide opportunities for artists and audiences to make work together, our community is a vital collaborator in all of our work.



Our education programs and professional teaching artists also provide arts education opportunities, community engagement workshops, and residencies for local nonprofit organizations, schools, community centers, summer camps, and special events.

"WE WERE ADAMANT ABOUT THE FACT THAT WE WILL NOT BE "ARTWASHING" ANY PROGRAM. IT IS EASY TO BECOME A TOKEN ASIAN ORGANIZATION, AND WE ARE VERY MINDFUL OF THAT. WE ARE HAPPY TO BE CALLED IN AS TOKENS AND THEN TELL THEM THAT WE REFUSE ARTWASHING."

~ANNE ISHII, Executive Director¹⁶

16. Since YC's conversation, Anne Ishii has transitioned from the Asian Arts Initiative.

BANNEKER-DOUGLASS-TUBMAN MUSEUM

NEW YORK, NY

BIRTHED: 1984

bdmuseum.maryland.gov

 [bannekerdouglassmuseum](https://www.instagram.com/bannekerdouglassmuseum)

 [BannekerDouglass](https://www.facebook.com/BannekerDouglass)

 [linkedin.com/company/banneker-douglass-tubman-museum](https://www.linkedin.com/company/banneker-douglass-tubman-museum)



As the State of Maryland’s official museum of African American heritage, the Banneker-Douglass Museum serves to document, to interpret, and to promote African American history and culture (particularly in Maryland) through exhibitions, programs, and projects in order to improve the understanding and appreciation of America’s rich cultural diversity for all.

The Banneker-Douglass Museum, named for Benjamin Banneker and Frederick Douglass, was dedicated on February 24, 1984. The original museum was housed within the former Mount Moriah African Methodist Episcopal Church

in the heart of historic Annapolis— constructed in 1874 by a congregation of free African Americans whose roots go back to 1799. The Victorian-Gothic structure was included in the Annapolis Historic District in 1971 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.

Thanks to a community-led effort to transform the former Mt. Moriah AME Church building into a museum, the BDM opened on February 24, 1984. In light of this legacy, the BDM focuses on a community-based approach to building collections and exhibitions and in providing tours, public programs, and other services.

ANNAPOLIS [WHERE THE MUSEUM IS LOCATED] IS ONE OF THOSE PLACES WHERE YOU FEEL EVERYTHING THAT’S HAPPENED THERE. AND A LOT OF STUFF HAS HAPPENED THERE AS A PORT OF ENTRY AND A CENTER OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE. TODAY, DOWNTOWN ANNAPOLIS IS NOT A VERY BLACK PLACE. IT IS INTERESTING TO HAVE THIS VERY BLACK MUSEUM IN THIS VERY WHITE SPACE. AND BECAUSE WE ARE NOT EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND ARE SURROUNDED BY A WHITE, AFFLUENT COMMUNITY, WE STARTED THE MUSEUM-ON-THE-MOVE CAMPAIGN TO REACH A BROADER DEMOGRAPHIC. WE, AS INDIVIDUALS, GO INTO DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES AND TALK WITH FOLKS.

—SABRIYAH HASSAN, Programs Director

17. Since YC’s conversation, the museum has officially changed its name from the Banneker-Douglass Museum to Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum. The name change honors the legacy of Harriet Tubman, alongside Benjamin Banneker and Frederick Douglass.

CAPE VERDEAN MUSEUM

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI

BIRTHED: 2000/2005

capeverdeanmuseum.org

 [capeverdeanmuseumdotorg](https://www.instagram.com/capeverdeanmuseumdotorg)

 [capeverdeanmuseum](https://www.facebook.com/capeverdeanmuseum)



The Cape Verdean Museum is dedicated to celebrating the history and culture of Cape Verde and Cape Verdean-Americans. The institution, the first of its kind in the country, was founded in 2000 by community members representing Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. Our location on Waterman Avenue in East Providence officially opened in 2005. The museum is staffed entirely by volunteers.

We have implemented our mission by creating a display with books, artifacts, pictures, stories, and more from Cape Verdeans all over the world. The museum provides an education that gives

our community and others the capacity to fully appreciate Cape Verdeans' many contributions historically, economically, and socially.

Our goal is to preserve and to celebrate. We are here for the community today and for future generations. Families, school groups, and scholars have found us to be a one-of-a-kind resource for the special history of Cape Verdeans. We are able to tell that story because of the thoughtful gifts we have received. Maps, books, pictures, and artifacts have been donated from throughout the United States and Cape Verde.

SINCE THE BEGINNING, THE MUSEUM HAS RELIED ON THE COMMUNITY (CAPE VERDEAN DIASPORA). WE HAD TO FIND A WAY TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT. YOU DO NOT QUALIFY FOR GRANTS IF YOU DO NOT HAVE YOUR OWN BUILDING. WE RAISED \$400K TO BUY OUR OWN SPACE SO WE COULD TELL OUR STORY FROM OUR OWN SPACE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO LET PEOPLE KNOW THAT CAPE VERDEANS HAVE BEEN PART OF THE COUNTRY FOR A LONG TIME AND TALK ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTIONS.

—YVONNE SMART, Education Coordinator and Curator (and Founding Co-Conspirator)

CHARLES SUMNER SCHOOL MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

WASHINGTON, DC

BIRTHED: 1986

 SumnerMuseum

 Charles-Sumner-School-Museum-Archives-100063571413177

This historic site was one of the first public schools in the nation for African American children and currently houses records and artifacts related to DC Public School history and serves as a cultural venue, hosting programs, events, and exhibitions.”

“Built in 1872, the Charles Sumner School was one of the earliest public school buildings in the city for African-American students, serving as an elementary school, a secondary school, and a preparatory school.

The museum honors the 150-year history, legacy, and pride of DC’s public education system by highlighting important movements within the

city’s education history. In doing so, the Charles Sumner School continues to shine a light on notable and lesser-known shining stars, including teachers, staff, students, and alumni. Guests of the sesquicentennial celebration enjoyed museum tours, live music, special presentations, and remarks in honor of the Charles Sumner School for its role in preserving the rich history of DC’s public schools.

Since its renovation in 1986, the school has served as the official museum and archives for the DC Public Schools system and contains a rich collection detailing the history of public education in Washington, DC, beginning in 1804.

I SEE OUR SITE AS A CONDUIT TO TALK ABOUT DIVERSITY AND EQUITY. HOW DOES THE PAST INFORM THE PRESENT? HOW CAN WE CONTRIBUTE TO TODAY’S PUBLIC EDUCATION DISCOURSE WITH THE COLLECTIONS AND STORIES THAT WE HOLD?

—KIMBERLY SPRINGLE, Executive Director

HARRIET TUBMAN MUSEUM AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER

CAMBRIDGE, MD

BIRTHED: 1996

harriettubmanmuseumcenter.org

 [harriet_tubman_museum](https://www.instagram.com/harriet_tubman_museum)

 [harriettubmanmuseumandeducationcenter](https://www.facebook.com/harriettubmanmuseumandeducationcenter)



The organization's mission is to develop programs and services for children and families, preserve Harriet Tubman's history, and offer the public an interpretive history of her achievements. Additionally, the organization advocates for children, youth, and families while promoting historical preservation.

At the Harriet Tubman Museum and Education Center, we invite you to "Find the Harriet in You."

It is our goal to preserve and celebrate the historical legacy of Harriet Tubman and other influential African Americans from Maryland's

Eastern Shore. We invite you to visit our museum and experience the rich history and inspiring stories that shaped our nation. Through exhibits, films, educational programs, and engaging events, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the profound impact these individuals had on the fight for freedom and equality. We also offer historical tours.

Come explore the journeys of courage and resilience that continue to inspire us today.

TUBMAN IS IN MY DNA. WHILE OUR MUSEUM EXHIBITS ARE NOT ON PAR WITH MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR MUSEUMS, MY PASSION, AND ABILITY TO TELL HER STORY AND THE STORY OF OUR ANCESTORS IS INCOMPARABLE! WITH OTHER MUSICIANS PLAYING AFRICAN-INSPIRED INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS THE DRUM, BANJO AND WASHBOARD, WE NARRATE THE STORY TO OUR MUSEUM VISITORS THROUGH MUSIC BY USING THE "CODE OR SIGNAL SONGS" TO CONVEY THE STORIES OF THEIR STRUGGLE, FAITH, FREEDOM, INGENUITY AND COURAGE. SHARING THEM IN A WAY PASSED DOWN THROUGH ORAL HISTORY OFTEN DISPUTED BY HISTORIANS. WE ALWAYS ENCOURAGE OUR VISITORS, AND HISTORIANS TO DIG DEEPER FOR THE IMPACT OF STRUGGLE ON THE HUMAN PSYCHE.

—LINDA HARRIS, Director of Events and Programming

INDIGO ARTS ALLIANCE

PORTLAND, ME

BIRTHED: 2018

indigoartsalliance.me

  [indigoartsalliance](https://www.facebook.com/indigoartsalliance)



Cultivating the Artistic Development of people of Black and Brown descent.

Our Mission is to build global connections by bringing together Black and Brown artists from diverse backgrounds to engage in their creative process, while building lasting relationships rooted in co-mentorship. An integral aspect of the Indigo vision is providing Maine-based artists of African descent access to a broader range of practicing artists of color worldwide.

At the heart of Indigo Arts Alliance's mission are our Artist in Residency programs, which provide Black and Brown artists an environment for the production of artwork in all media across various disciplines.

Our Residency aims to connect Black and Brown artists from across the globe to local artists of African descent. We activate our mission by creating opportunities for critical feedback, relationship building and increased awareness of creative opportunities and resources.

AT INDIGO ARTS ALLIANCE, WE UNDERSTAND THAT COMMUNITY HAS TO BE INTEGRATED INTO OUR DAILY WORK. WE HAVE SEVEN CORE VALUES THAT WE USE AS CHECKPOINTS OF HOW WE SHOW UP IN THE COMMUNITY WHICH ARE IN DIRECT ALIGNMENT WITH OUR MISSION. ONE OF THOSE VALUES IS FREEDOM; TO SHOW UP AS OUR UNAPOLOGETIC SELVES AND TO BE UNBOUND TO THE FINANCIAL PRACTICES OF OTHERS; FREE IN CREATING OUR VISION OF WHAT A MORE JUST WORLD FOR US TO THRIVE IN CAN LOOK LIKE. OUR VALUES GIVE OUR BLACK AND BROWN CREATIVES AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE INNOVATIVE PATHWAYS THAT ARE NOT YET HERE, WHICH IS FREEING. WE NEED TO BE UNBEHOLD OF SYSTEMS THAT DESTROY AND LIMIT FREEDOM OF THINKING. WE ARE HERE TO ENRICH THE LIVES OF OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY, BOTH LOCAL AND GLOBAL.

—ATtribution

JANE AND LITTLETON MITCHELL CENTER FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE

WILMINGTON, DE

BIRTHED: 2016

dehistory.org/visit/jane-and-littleton-mitchell-center-for-african-american-heritage/

 [delawarehistoricalsociety](https://www.instagram.com/delawarehistoricalsociety)

 [dehistory](https://www.facebook.com/dehistory)

 [youtube.com/channel/UCbET_sq-t7_WxZ7Vaaxd70g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbET_sq-t7_WxZ7Vaaxd70g)

 [thisisdehistory](https://twitter.com/thisisdehistory)



The Jane and Littleton Mitchell Center for African American Heritage offers an expansive exploration of the African American experience from 1639 to the present through artifacts, oral history interviews, music, and art.

These diverse perspectives of African Americans' struggle for freedom and dignity strengthens our state-wide community, as we preserve, share, and promote the history, heritage, and culture of Delaware. The Mitchell Center is located within the Delaware History Museum building and includes the permanent exhibition Journey to Freedom.

Our Mission: Our goal at the Jane and Littleton Mitchell Center for African American Heritage is to collect, preserve, research, and present for public enrichment the history and heritage of Delaware's African Americans.



Our Core Values: The core values of the Mitchell Center are to uplift and empower, truth-telling in history, empathy and mindfulness, and to foster a culture of continual learning."

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MITCHELL CENTER WAS IN RESPONSE TO PRONOUNCED COMMUNITY NEEDS.... IT GIVES FOLKS A PLACE TO FOCUS, ASK QUESTIONS AND MAKE DEMANDS OF THE DELAWARE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. THERE WERE DECADES OF ENERGY AND LONG-TERM COMMUNITY ACTIVISM INVESTED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PLACE LIKE THIS. FORMALLY TRAINED HISTORIANS, LAY HISTORIANS, AND EMERGING HISTORIANS... WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT WE GET THE STORY RIGHT AND THAT THE ONRAMP TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS ALWAYS UNCLUTTERED. WE ARE A MUSEUM, HISTORIC HOUSE, AND RESEARCH LIBRARY; THE MITCHELL CENTER HELPS MAKE US A GENERATIVE SPACE FOR BLACK SCHOLARSHIP AND INQUIRY.

—IVAN HENDERSON, Executive Director

LEWIS LATIMER HOUSE MUSEUM

QUEENS, NY

BIRTHED: 1988

lewislatimerhouse.org

     [lewislatimerhouse](#)

 [linkedin.com/company/lewislatimerhouse](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lewislatimerhouse)



The Lewis Latimer House Museum is a Landmarked home, Queen Anne-style, wood-frame suburban residence constructed between 1887 and 1889 by the Sexton family. Lewis Howard Latimer lived in the house from 1903 until his death in 1928. The house remained in the Latimer family until 1963. Threatened with demolition, the house was moved from Holly Avenue to its present location in 1988.

Today, the Museum is a fully functional public, cultural institution that provides primary research materials dedicated to Latimer's legacy and that of other innovators of color.

The Lewis Latimer House is owned by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, operated by the Lewis H. Latimer Fund, Inc., and is a member of the Historic House Trust.

The Lewis H. Latimer Fund, Inc. was established to preserve and promote the legacy of Lewis Howard Latimer, and other innovators of color who

made extraordinary contributions to technology and American life. The Museum offers STEAM educational programs, exhibitions and public programs in poetry, arts, technology, and social justice. Latimer's life story is used as a point of departure from which to examine issues of race, class, immigration, and contemporary events.



WE HAVE AN EAR OUT FOR WHAT PEOPLE LOCALLY WANT TO SEE AND HEAR. IT INFLUENCES OUR DECISIONS. EVERYTHING WE DO IS ROOTED IN LEWIS LATIMER'S LEGACY, AND BECAUSE HE HAD A UNIQUE CONNECTION WITH ARTS AND SCIENCE, WE FOCUS ON STEAM AND INFUSE HISTORY. THAT IS OUR UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION. LEWIS LATIMER WAS A PASSIONATE WRITER. SO, WE OFFER FREE MEMOIR WRITING CLASSES TO ARTISTS IN QUEENS. SO MANY STORIES LIKE LEWIS LATIMER'S ARE NOT BEING TOLD, SO WE WANT TO OFFER RESOURCES TO OUR COMMUNITIES OF COLOR IN QUEENS.

—RAN YAN, Executive Director

MASHANTUCKET PEQUOT TRIBAL NATION

LEDYARD, CT

BIRTHED: 1998

pequotmuseum.org

   [pequotmuseum](#)



MASHANTUCKET
PEQUOT
MUSEUM
RESEARCH CENTER

The Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center will strengthen Pequot Culture to honor and serve our Tribal family and friends.

Tribally owned and operated since it opened on Aug. 11, 1998, the Museum brings to life the story of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. It serves as a major resource on the histories and cultures of Native Americans in the northeast and on the region's rich natural history.

The Museum is a 308,000-square-foot complex, consisting of permanent exhibits, the Mashantucket Gallery (a gallery for temporary exhibits), classrooms, a 320-seat auditorium, a restaurant, a museum shop, and administrative offices. The Research Center houses collections, archives, and archaeology, and conservation laboratories where ongoing work from the field is evaluated and studied.

Multi-sensory dioramas and exhibits introduce visitors to the history of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe and the natural and cultural history of the eastern woodlands. Films and videos, interactive programs, archival materials, ethnographic and



archaeological collections, commissioned art, and traditional crafts by Native artisans are featured in the exhibits. The building is designed to interact with its surrounding environment while maintaining the ecological integrity of the area.

It embraces the tree line and is nestled into the landscape; two of the five levels of the facility are below ground. The 185-foot stone-and-glass tower provides visitors with sweeping views of the swamp and region. The large, circular, glass-and-steel Gathering Space serves as an arrival and event area.

WE ARE NOT AN ARTIFACT-RICH MUSEUM. WE ARE A STORY-BASED MUSEUM. WE HAVE A TON OF LIFECASTS, AND THEY LOOK REALISTIC. WE PUT PEOPLE IN THE ENVIRONMENT TO TELL THE STORY. WE HAVE A REALISTIC RECREATION OF A 16TH-CENTURY VILLAGE. IMMERSION! WE TELL THE STORIES. IT IS LIKE WATCHING A MOVIE AND BEING IN IT AT THE SAME TIME.

—ROB HAYWARD, Director of Museum Marketing

MUSEUM OF CHINESE IN AMERICA

NEW YORK, NY

BIRTHED: 1994

mocanyc.org

   [mocanyc](#)



The Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) is dedicated to preserving, illuminating, and celebrating the rich history and contributions of Chinese in America. By fostering understanding and greater recognition of our experiences, we endeavor to inspire and connect all Americans.

Since its founding in 1980, MOCA has celebrated the living history of the Chinese experience in America by preserving and presenting the 200-year history, heritage, culture, and diverse experiences of American communities of Chinese descent. Founded as a community-based organization, MOCA has over a period of four

decades maintained our community centrality while gaining a national following of visitors and members. Our museum strives to be responsive to the moment; tell nuanced and unexpected stories; spotlight politically conscious issues; and provide a platform for open dialogue and dynamic programs. MOCA contributes to a fuller and more nuanced and layered American narrative in highlighting the stories of this immigrant community.

We envision our visitors re-entering the world as moral advocates, active historians, and community stewards.

WE'VE TRIED TO CREATE AN AFFIRMING SPACE FOR CHINESE AMERICANS, A PLACE WHERE THEY CAN SHARE THEIR STORIES AND SEE THEMSELVES REPRESENTED ON THE WALLS AND THROUGH THE PROGRAMMING. WE WANT THE FOLKS WHO WALK THROUGH OUR DOORS TO UNDERSTAND AND REALLY FEEL CONNECTED TO THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF CHINESE AMERICANS. THE MUSEUM IS A HOME FOR THESE STORIES, A PLACE TO TELL A NATIONAL STORY THAT HAS LONG BEEN WITHOUT A HOME.

—LAUREN NECHAMKIN, Director of Education

NOGUCHI MUSEUM

LONG ISLAND CITY, NY

BIRTHED: 1985

noguchi.org

  [NoguchiMuseum](#)

 [thenoguchimuseum](#)



Founded in 1985 by category-defying artist Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988), The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum (now known as The Noguchi Museum), was the first museum in the United States to be established, designed, and installed by a living artist to show their own work. Located in Long Island City, Queens, the Museum itself is widely viewed as among the artist's greatest achievements.

Holding the world's largest collection of his works, it features open air and indoor galleries in a repurposed 1920s industrial building, and a serene outdoor sculpture garden. Consistent with Noguchi's interest in art being experiential, works are often displayed without barriers or interpretation to encourage visitors to form personal and introspective connections.

Accompanying the permanent installations placed by Noguchi, the Museum presents temporary exhibitions exploring themes in Noguchi's work, his milieu and collaborators, and his enduring influence today among contemporary practitioners across disciplines. It exhibits a comprehensive selection of Noguchi's material culture, from sculpture, models, and drawings, to his personal possessions, and manages the artist's archives and catalogue raisonné. Through its rich collection, exhibitions, and programming, the Museum facilitates scholarship and learning for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

ONÖHSAGWĒ:DE' CULTURAL CENTER

SALAMANCA, NY

BIRTHED: 1977

senecamuseum.org

 SenecaMuseum



The Seneca-Iroquois National Museum is dedicated to the honorable presentation of the prehistory, history, and contemporary culture of the Iroquois, with special emphasis on the Seneca. SINM proudly presents our aboriginal culture as a continuum from past to present, reflecting the evolving phenomenon of the Seneca-Iroquois culture.

The Seneca-Iroquois National Museum proudly houses an extensive collection of Hodinöhsö:ni' historical and traditionally designed decorative and everyday-use items and archaeological artifacts. SINM, along with the Seneca Nation Archives Department, are the safe keepers of historical documents, including articles, special publications, historical and family photographs, and various multi-media productions regarding the Onödowa'ga:' and Hodinöhsö:ni'."

PAO ARTS CENTER

BOSTON, MA

BIRTHED: 2017

paoartscenter.org

   [paoartscenter](#)



Pao Arts Center sits on a historically significant piece of land, Parcel 24, where hundreds of Chinatown residents were displaced in the 1960s in order to build a highway on-ramp. In 2016, Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC) developed Parcel 24 into 66 Hudson Street, which includes affordable housing as well as space intended for community and public use. In collaboration with Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC), the idea for an arts and cultural hub was born.

In partnership with BHCC, BCNC opened Pao Arts Center in 2017 to be Chinatown's first arts center and Boston's newly dedicated Asian American and Asian immigrant cultural space.

Our mission is to celebrate and strengthen the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community of Chinatown and Greater Boston through access to culturally relevant art, education, and creative programs. Pao Arts Center functions in



LEE DANIEL TRAN

service of BCNC's and BHCC's goals to support the social well-being, economic success, and education of their constituents.

Our vision is that in the face of the gentrification of Chinatown and inequitable access to resources that enable cultural agency, Pao Arts Center promotes cultural equity in Greater Boston for the AAPI community."

WE ARE PART OF A LARGER SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY THAT PROVIDES SERVICES FAMILIES SUCH AS CHILD CARE, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND COUNSELING TO ENSURE PEOPLE HAVE WRAP-AROUND SUPPORT TO THRIVE. WE WANT TO MAKE SURE CHINATOWN IS A HOME WHERE FOLKS FEEL THEY BELONG, EVEN IF THEY MOVED OUT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD OR COULD NEVER AFFORD IT IN THE FIRST PLACE. ARTS AND CULTURE ARE BEING USED TO FOSTER COMMUNITY AND BELONGING.

—CYNTHIA WOO, Director

RAICES CULTURAL CENTER

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ

BIRTHED: 2008

raicesculturalcenter.org

  [raicesculturalcenter](#)

 [Fraicescc](#)



Raíces Cultural Center, a NJ Nonprofit Corporation, is dedicated to preserving cultural roots through the arts, history, and ecology.

Raíces works to preserve Caribbean and other cultures as reflected in music, art, dance, history, and the natural arts. Raíces Cultural Center's principal goal is the investigation, compilation, documentation, preservation, and dissemination of traditional Caribbean culture through art, history, and ecology.

Vision: Raíces means roots. Raíces Cultural Center has put down its roots in the hub city of New Brunswick, creating a home for the cultural arts and sustainable ecology in Central NJ.

Raíces seeks to foster a vibrant community of artists and create a center for exploration, collaboration, and cultural fusion within the performing, visual and media arts as well as their connection with nature and planet earth. We believe that the arts and nature form an intrinsic bond between Mother Earth and humans, and that this collaboration expands the creative process innate in the human experience. We encourage all participants to join this endeavor



RAICES DIGITAL ARCHIVE

in the hopes of fomenting a new consciousness that will re-heal Mother Earth and thereby preserve the global cultural experience.

Raíces Cultural Center provides hands-on opportunities to individuals that wish to learn about sustainable ecology and its connection to culture from an artistic perspective: art, music, dance, spoken word, and folkloric traditions. Raíces does mean "ROOTS," hence the unifying forces of humans and earth working in conjunction for a new future."

RAICES MEANS ROOTS. IT IS NOT ONLY MUSIC, DANCE, AND SINGING. IT'S MULTIDISCIPLINARY. IT IS FOOD. IT'S POLITICS. IT'S THE ECONOMY. IT HAS ALL THE DIFFERENT FACETS THAT MANIFEST THEMSELVES THROUGH THE ANCESTORS.

—FRANCISCO G. GOMEZ, Director and Co-Founder

RHODE ISLAND LATINO ARTS

CENTRAL FALLS, RI

BIRTHED: 1988

rilatinoarts.org

  [rilatinoarts](#)

 [LatinoArts](#)

 [linkedin.com/company/rhode-island-latino-arts](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rhode-island-latino-arts)



Rhode Island Latino Arts promotes, encourages and preserves the art, history, heritage, and cultures of Latinos/es/x in Rhode Island.

Rhode Island Latino Arts was founded in 1988 as the Hispanic Heritage Committee and today is Rhode Island's leading nonprofit organization exclusively dedicated to the promotion, advancement, development, and cultivation of Latino/e/x arts.

We celebrate and promote Latino/e/x art & artists through our Rhode Island Latino Artists Network events, and each year we coordinate the sharing of information and activities to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Through strategic partnering with local community organizations, including schools, libraries, museums, and senior centers in the most



disadvantaged neighborhoods of our urban centers – we ensure our mission's fulfillment: To raise awareness and preserve Latino/e/x arts, heritage, and cultures in Rhode Island; and to build community pride.

THERE WAS MISTRUST AND DISTRUST, AND (LATINO) PEOPLE WERE FIRST NOT COMING TO US. I DECIDED TO KEEP MY MUSEUM IN THE COMMUNITY. I WENT TO THEM. PEOPLE ARE BUSY WORKING AND LIVING THEIR LIVES. IT WAS EASIER TO REACH PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE. IN MY CASE, IT WAS A LOT OF BODEGAS, FREE CLINICS, AND COMMUNITY CARE CENTERS. IN BODEGAS, FOLKS TALK SPANISH, PLAY DOMINOS; THEY ARE THE EPICENTER.

—MARTA V. MARTÍNEZ, Executive Director and Founder

SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART

WASHINGTON, DC

BIRTHED: 1984

africa.si.edu

 [smithsonian_africanart](https://www.instagram.com/smithsonian_africanart)

 [si.africanart](https://www.facebook.com/si.africanart)

 [SmithsonianAfricanAr](https://www.youtube.com/SmithsonianAfricanAr)

 [si_africanart](https://twitter.com/si_africanart)



The Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art is the only national museum in the United States dedicated to the collection, exhibition, conservation, and study of the arts of Africa. The museum's collection of nearly 12,000 African art objects represents nearly every area of the continent of Africa and contains a variety of media and art forms—textiles, photography, sculpture, pottery, painting, jewelry and video art—dating from ancient to contemporary times. The museum also has the largest publicly held collection of contemporary African art in the United States, and is home to the Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives for the study of the arts, cultures, and history of Africa.

HISTORICALLY AND TODAY, MANY PEOPLE OF COLOR LACK THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES NEEDED TO PRACTICE WHAT IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY WE CALL "BLACK EXCELLENCE." THE SAME IS TRUE OF MUSEUMS THAT ARE CENTERED IN TELLING THE STORIES OF VARIOUS COMMUNITIES OF COLOR. MARGINALIZED PEOPLE CONTINUE TO BE EXPECTED TO MAKE DO DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEY OFTEN LACK THE RESOURCES WITH WHICH TO DO SO. IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT EXCELLENCE BEGINS WITH A CONCEPT AND A COMMITMENT, AND IT REQUIRES RESOURCES.

—DR. JOHNNETTA BETSCH COLE, Director (2009-2017)

SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

WASHINGTON, DC

BIRTHED: 2003

nmaahc.si.edu

    [nmaahc](#)

The National Museum of African American History and Culture is the only national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, history, and culture. It was established by an Act of Congress in 2003, following decades of efforts to promote and highlight the contributions of African Americans. To date, the Museum has collected more than 40,000 artifacts and nearly 300,000 individuals have become members. The Museum opened to the public on September 24, 2016, as the 19th museum of the Smithsonian Institution.

There are four pillars upon which the NMAAHC stands:

- It provides an opportunity for those who are interested in African American culture to explore and revel in this history through interactive exhibitions.
- It helps all Americans see how their stories, their histories, and their cultures are shaped and informed by global influences.
- It explores what it means to be an American and share how American values like resiliency, optimism, and spirituality are reflected in African American history and culture.
- It serves as a place of collaboration that reaches beyond Washington, D.C. to engage new audiences and to work with the myriad of museums and educational institutions that have explored and preserved this important history well before this museum was created.



NATIONAL MUSEUM
of AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY & CULTURE

SMITHSONIAN ANACOSTIA COMMUNITY MUSEUM

WASHINGTON, DC

BIRTHED: 1967



The Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum (ACM) aspires to illuminate and share the untold, and often overlooked stories of people furthest from opportunity in the Greater Washington D.C. region. Our mission is to tell stories of everyday people making impactful changes, who use their collective power to tackle complex issues and advance a more equitable future for all. While local in nature, these stories are relevant to people and communities across our nation.

Visitors to the museum can expect to leave more informed and inspired to effect change in their own communities. At ACM, we seek to learn, examine, and interrogate the social, economic, and environmental issues confronting the D.C. region; to share all aspects of a vibrant local history; and to celebrate local creativity. We do this with and alongside others and through immersive and thought-provoking experiences, inclusive of multiple perspectives. We inspire people to see that change is possible in the face of adverse circumstances, by telling the



stories of those who have lived and achieved it. By connecting the past to the present, our work seeks to engage more of us to act and influence the world around us.

At ACM, we celebrate stories of resilience, joy, and strength. Our hope is to affirm, uplift, and inspire those who visit us to translate their ideas into action. We invite you to join us in our collective work to build a more equitable future for all.

COMMUNITY, FOR US, MEANS RELATIONSHIP BUILDING, NOT WITH THE SOLE INTENT TO COLLECT THINGS OR TO ACQUIRE THINGS AND TO ACQUIRE PEOPLE AS OBJECTS IN HISTORIES, BUT TO BE IN DIALOGUE WITH FOLKS AROUND WHAT MATTERS TO THEM. IN THE MUSEUM CONTEXT, WE SEE THE MUSEUM AS A REVOLVING DOOR-- A TWO WAY STREET BETWEEN THE MUSEUM AND THE COMMUNITIES. THERE'S NO US AND THEM; IF YOU WILL, IT'S WE. WE ARE ONE.

—ASANTEWA BOAKYEWA, Deputy Director

SMITHSONIAN ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN CENTER

WASHINGTON, DC

BIRTHED: 1997

apa.si.edu

   smithsonianapa



The Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center (APAC) strives to ensure the representation and inclusion of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) in the Smithsonian's collections, research, exhibitions, and programs. Through education initiatives, publications, and public programs, APAC provides new avenues to document, celebrate, and share the rich and diverse history, art, and culture of AANHPIs.

From our establishment in 1997 as an initiative critical to the mission of the Smithsonian until today, the vision for the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center has been to enrich the American Story with the voices of Asian Pacific Americans.

Asian Pacific America is the story of a vibrant, diverse, and resilient set of communities that have been part of the American experience for more than two hundred years. It is the story of two continents and a constellation of islands joined by the migration, exchange, and competition of people and ideas. Yet, across museums and

galleries in the nation's capital and around the country, we find only fragments of America's rich Asian Pacific heritage.

There are more than 23 million people of Asian or Pacific Islander descent in the United States. In less than 50 years, nearly one of every ten people in America will trace his or her heritage to Asia and the Pacific—a region that covers more than one third of the earth—including the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent and the Pacific. This region is also home to nearly half of the world's population, natural life, nations, economies, major faiths and languages. America is—and has been—a Pacific Rim nation. Our understanding of America and America's standing in the world is richer, more compelling, and more powerful when it includes the Asian Pacific American story. The Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center serves as a dynamic national resource for discovering why the Asian Pacific American experience matters every day, everywhere, and all of the time.

WHENEVER A PROJECT IS LAUNCHED, CURATORS SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TALKING TO THOSE COMMUNITIES ABOUT THEIR CONCERNS AND DESIRES. SO, COMMUNITY MEMBERS DIRECT THE PROJECT. THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE "OLD" MUSEUM MODEL, WHERE CURATORS WERE THE EXPERTS. THE BACK-AND-FORTH DIALOG BETWEEN COMMUNITIES AND STAFF HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FEATURE OF CULTURALLY SPECIFIC MUSEUMS.

—LISA SASAKI, Deputy Under Secretary for Special Projects, Smithsonian Institution

SOUTHAMPTON AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

SOUTHAMPTON, NY

BIRTHED: 2004

saamuseum.org

 saam_museum

 100079742293388



In 2004, a local resident, Gloria Cannon, had the founding idea to preserve “The Barbershop”—an iconic local gathering place for Blacks in the late 40’s. She wanted to ensure that owner/builder/barber Emanuel Seymore’s legacy be recognized, as well as that of “Fives”—a restaurant and juke joint built and owned by Arthur Robinson—the other iconic establishment where locals who were part of the Great Migration secured their safe haven. After a dusty day of labor—picking potatoes, scrubbing toilets and floors, ironing, and other domestic work—they would dress up and step high to “Fives”. And on a typical Saturday or Sunday evening, the lineup at the infamous hotspot included the soulful sounds of soloist Sylvia Francis “Snooks” Smith, the suit sweating, rhythmic, hip curling, back jerking vocals of Little Curtis (Curtis Highsmith Sr.) and the Big Men, as well as many other local performers. A good time was had by all.

Ms. Cannon’s daughter Bonnie approached another local resident, Brenda Simmons, to help with carrying out her mom’s plan to keep the legacy of the barbershop/beauty parlor and juke joint alive. Brenda gladly agreed to help out, as she was born and raised in Southampton, and is the niece of Evelyn Baxter, the beautician who shared the building with Mr. Seymore.

Southampton African American Museum’s mission is to promote an understanding and appreciation of African American culture by creating programs that will preserve the past, encourage learning and enhance the life of the community.

THE BARBER SHOP [HAS ALWAYS BEEN] A GATHERING PLACE. WHEN I WAS AN ASSISTANT TO THE MAYOR, I FOUND OUT THAT THE BUILDING WAS GOING TO BE TORN DOWN, AND I COULD NOT LET THAT HAPPEN. AS AN ACTIVIST, I WANTED TO LEAVE A LEGACY—TO HONOR OUR PEOPLE. I WAS DOING THIS AS A LABOR OF LOVE. BASICALLY, THAT (MONEY) WAS NOT MY GOAL; MY GOAL WAS A LEGACY FOR MY COMMUNITY.

—BRENDA SIMMONS, Co-Founder and Executive Director

TALLER PUERTORRIQUEÑO

PHILADELPHIA, PA




BIRTHED: 1974

tallerpr.org

  tallerpr

 tallerpr.org

 TallerprOrg

 tpr_visual_arts

 taller-puertorriqueno-inc

“Founded in 1974, Taller, also known as “El Corazón Cultural del Barrio” has worked to preserve, develop, and promote Puerto Rican arts and culture. Over the past five decades Taller has grown into a destination that catalyzes community development through its arts and cultural resources and builds bridges between the local community, the region, and the Puerto Rican and Latino Diaspora.

Our Mission

Taller Puertorriqueño, a community-based cultural organization whose primary purpose is to preserve, develop, and promote Puerto Rican arts and culture, grounded in the conviction that embracing one’s cultural heritage is empowering. Taller is also committed to the representation and support of other Latino cultural expressions and our common roots.

Our Vision

Taller Puertorriqueño is guided by the vision of a Latino community that is engaged, culturally aware, and economically vibrant in a society that values its cultural diversity. Taller is a destination that catalyzes community development through its arts and cultural resources and builds bridges between the local community, the region, and the Puerto Rican and Latino Diaspora.

WE TRY TO BE AN INCUBATOR FROM EVERY PERSPECTIVE. WE PRESENT ARTISTS AT ALL LEVELS OF THE PROCESS. AND WE HAVE A LOT OF CONVERSATIONS ABOUT DEMOCRATIZING SPACES--HOW IT WILL BE IN CONVERSATION WITH THE COMMUNITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

~NASHELI JULIANA ORTIZ GONZÁLEZ, Former Executive Director and CEO

THE AMISTAD CENTER FOR ART & CULTURE AT WADSWORTH ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART

TheAmistadCenter
forArt&Culture
AT THE WADSWORTH ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART

HARTFORD, CT

BIRTHED: 1987

amistadcenter.org

   [amistadcenter](#)

 [amistadart87](#)

 [linkedin.com/company/the-amistad-center-for-art-&-culture/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-amistad-center-for-art-&-culture/)

We create a focus on art that brings positive change from local community members and activists.”

“In 1987, a handful of visionaries, including Trustees and staff of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, joined forces with independent foundations, corporations, and the State of Connecticut and formed The Amistad Foundation to purchase, protect, and provide public access to the Randolph Linsly Simpson Collection, which was then housed in the collector’s farmhouse in Northford, Connecticut.

This extraordinary collection, which now consists of 7,000 works of art, artifacts and archives, documents more than 300 years of the artistic, literary, military, enslaved, and free life of Blacks in America—truly a treasure and a rich resource of immense educational value and testimony to America’s diverse and dynamic culture.

In addition to collection care and development, The Amistad Foundation was intended to take on the broader tasks of preserving and interpreting African American culture and history and correcting the misrepresentation and underrepresentation of this important aspect of our country’s evolution.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE BIGGER INSTITUTION. I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE WILL BE TENSIONS AND THAT IS OK. THE MUSEUM LOOKS AT US AND LISTENS TO US TO GUIDE THEM IN TELLING STORIES WITH MINDFULNESS AND AUTHENTICITY. TO ME, BEING PART OF THE BIG MUSEUM IS ABOUT THE COMMUNITY NEEDED TO TELL AND UNDERSTAND AFRICAN AMERICAN STORIES.

—SARAH CLUNIS, Executive Director

THE CLEMENTE SOTO VÉLEZ CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL CENTER

NEW YORK, NY

BIRTHED: 1993

theclementecenter.org

 [theclemente](https://www.instagram.com/theclemente)

 [theclementecenter](https://www.facebook.com/theclementecenter)

 [csvcenter](https://www.youtube.com/csvcenter)



The Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural & Educational Center Inc. is a Puerto Rican/Latinx multi-arts cultural institution that has demonstrated a broad-minded cultural vision and inclusive philosophy rooted in NYC's Lower East Side/Loisaida. While focused on the cultivation, presentation, and preservation of Puerto Rican and Latinx culture, we are equally committed to a multi-ethnic / international latitude, determined to operate in a polyphonic manner that provides affordable working space and venues to artists, small arts organizations, emergent and independent community producers that reflect the cultural diversity of the LES and our City.

Puerto Rican poet and activist Clemente Soto Vélez passed in 1993, but his legacy lives on in The Clemente Center, which was founded that same year by artists and activists

inspired by Clemente's conviction in the transformational power of art, and his coalitional and experimental approach to community-building across and beyond New York and its marginalized communities.

For 30 years The Clemente has been the creative playground of an organic array of critical voices and identities -both local and global- who align with our namesakes' values about art, activism, advocacy, and service.

Today, we are positioned as a space of encounter, connection, and co-creation that intersects and transcends cultures and geographies while staying true to our Puerto Rican and other immigrant legacies.

WE REPRESENT NON-GENTRIFYING FORCES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. WE HAVE ABOUT 80 ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY. THIS IS THE BUILDING THAT DOES NOT SLEEP. MANY TIMES, EVENTS HAPPEN IN STUDIOS, AND ARTISTS SOMETIMES SHARE THEIR STUDIOS WITH OTHER ARTISTS WHO COME IN FOR A PROJECT. WE CALL THEM "UNOFFICIAL RESIDENCIES." THERE'S A RIPPLE-OUT IMPACT THAT IS HARD TO MEASURE.

—LIBERTAD O. GUERRA, Executive Director, Chief Curator

THE COLORED GIRLS MUSEUM

PHILADELPHIA, PA

BIRTHED: 2015

thecoloredgirlsmuseum.com

 [thecoloredgirlsmuseum](https://www.instagram.com/thecoloredgirlsmuseum)

 [TCGMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/TCGMuseum)

THE COLORED
GIRLS MUSEUM

Founded in 2015, the Colored Girls Museum is housed in a 140-year-old three-story Victorian Twin home in the historic Germantown area of Philadelphia. We are the first cultural institution to center and champion the “ordinary” colored girl of African descent, citizens whose ingenuity and labor generate untold wealth yet whose stories are often hidden from view. The Colored Girls Museum has an irreplaceable quality that is both symbolic and grounded in reality.

During its years of serving the Philadelphia community and beyond, TCGM has become an anchor institution, turning the concept of radical placekeeping on its head by redefining what a museum can do. It has also been a source of inspiration and support for numerous Black and Black femme-led projects and initiatives.

TCGM distinguishes itself by exclusively collecting, preserving, honoring, and decoding artifacts pertaining to the experience and herstory of Colored Girls. This museum is equal parts research facility, exhibition space, gathering place, and think tank.

I TRAFFIC IN RADICAL PLACEKEEPING. WE ARE KEEPING PLACE IN NEIGHBORHOODS THAT PEOPLE HAVE ABANDONED. WE KEEP PLACE IN OUR FAMILIES. WE ARE PLACEKEEPERS AT WORK. ...THE MUSEUM EXISTS NOT TO PRESERVE STUFF BUT TO PRESERVE OUR COMMUNITY. HOW DOES OUR CULTURAL INSTITUTION SUPPORT THE RAPIDLY GENTRIFYING COMMUNITY?

—VASHTI DUBOIS, Executive Director and Founder

SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE

NEW YORK, NY

BIRTHED: 1925

nypl.org/locations/schomburg

   [schomburgcenter](#)



Founded in 1925 and named a National Historic Landmark in 2017, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture is one of the world's leading cultural institutions devoted to the research, preservation, and exhibition of materials focused on African American, African Diaspora, and African experiences, featuring diverse programming and collections spanning over 11 million items that illuminate the richness of global black history, arts, and culture.

BLACK INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS ARE NOT ONLY CONNECTED TO ACADEMICS BUT ALSO PERSONAL LIVED EXPERIENCES, BLACK CHURCHES, AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE DOMINANT POLITICAL THOUGHT. EVEN WITHIN THE LARGER NYPL, SCHOMBURG IS VERY MUCH PART OF AN INTELLECTUAL TRADITION THAT EXISTS OUTSIDE THE DOMINANT CULTURE AND HAS ITS OWN VALUES AND RULES.

—JOY BIVINS, Director

URBAN CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM IN HARLEM

NEW YORK, NY

BIRTHED: Slated to open in 2025

campaignforequity.org/plan/museum

   [naturbanleague](#)

 bit.ly/YTSubNUL

URBAN CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM IN HARLEM

The Urban Civil Rights Museum in Harlem will be a first stop for area visitors, with a focus on the development of Harlem as a “beacon for African American progress.

Exhibitions and programs will use high- and low-tech interactives to create opportunities to explore Harlem-area attractions, historic and contemporary sites of interest. The Museum would look to partner with area organizations, tour companies, and institutions to serve as an orientation site for tours and activities, preparing visitors and residents alike with fun experiences.



An information hub: This space will provide resources for residents and visitors on cultural opportunities throughout the area.

A museum focused on urban civil rights:

The Museum’s permanent exhibition, developed in partnership with local projects, and its educational and public programs will:

- Showcase the role of the civil rights movement in the development of northern cities.
- Provide interactive and educational experiences suitable for children and adults about the long, historic fight for justice featuring individuals and organizations that were key in the Movement, including the National Urban League’s work in helping historically disadvantaged people pursue, obtain, and maintain economic and social opportunities.
- Capture the stories of the Harlem Renaissance and the Great Migration and ways people have organized to secure better lives for themselves.”

LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE THE HEART AND SOUL OF WHAT MAKES A PLACE VIBRANT AND MEANINGFUL. WHEN THEY IDENTIFY WITH THE STORIES WITHIN THE MUSEUM AND WHEN THEY FEEL A SENSE OF PRIDE AND OWNERSHIP OF THE HISTORY, THAT’S HOW WE WILL KNOW THAT THE MUSEUM IS A SUCCESS.

—JENNIFER SCOTT, Founding Executive Director and Chief Curator

WABANAKI YOUTH AND CULTURAL CENTER

BANGOR, ME

BIRTHED: Set to open in 2026



Wabanaki Youth & Cultural Center

A place where all people can build connections in Wabanaki territory.

The Wabanaki Youth and Cultural Center in Downtown Bangor will provide much-needed youth services and spaces for culturally-focused and supportive programming for our youth, including after-school enrichment activities for all of Bangor's children.

The space will provide a unique local attraction for families with a range of child ages. After-school drop-in programs with outdoor programming, art space, and safe spaces to hang out will benefit all youth in meaningful ways that keep them engaged.

Our center will have numerous features and capabilities including: a traditional foods café, an outdoor walkway to the Penobscot River, a Mount Katahdin rock climbing wall, cozy cave corner, faux trees and indoor forest, a Penobscot River epoxy floor installation, a Youth art gallery, and a youth after-school workplace.



We are creating areas that will be interactive with a focus on our rich Wabanaki cultures and preserving our important natural resources here in Wabanaki Territory.

We hope you support our vision to share our food, our land, and our culture to connect with all people living in Wabanaki territory.



APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Special thank you to all interviewees. We appreciate you!

We are grateful to all participating Hue museums and cultural centers and their Hue Custodians, whose stories and insights created the qualitative sections of this report. Information about the missions and programs of participating organizations is provided in the body of the report under “Hue Custodian Profiles.”

Jordia Benjamin

Executive Director
Indigo Arts Alliance

Joy Bivins

Director
The Schomburg Center for Research in
Black Culture

Asantewa Boakyewaⁱ

Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum

Sarah Clunis, PhD

Executive Director
The Amistad Center for Art & Culture at
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole

Director (2009–2017)
National Museum of African Art

Justin Cree

Director
Akwesasne Cultural Center

Jose DaMoura

Executive Director
Cape Verdean Museum

Vashti DuBois

Executive Director and Founder
The Colored Girls Museum

Francisco G. Gomez

Director and Co-founder
Raíces Cultural Center

Libertad Guerra

Executive Director and Chief Curator,
Clemente Soto Véllez Cultural &
Educational Center

Linda Harris

Executive Director
Harriet Tubman Museum and
Educational Center

Sabriyah Hassan

Programs Director
Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum

Amy Hau

Director
The Noguchi Museum

Rob Hayward

Director of Museum Marketing
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation

Ivan Henderson

Former Director
Jane and Littleton Mitchell Center for African
American Heritage, Delaware Historical Society

Anne Ishiiⁱⁱ

Executive Director
Asian Arts Initiative

ⁱ Since YC's conversation, Asantewa Boakyewa has transitioned from the deputy director role at the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum.

ⁱⁱ Since YC's conversation, Anne Ishii has transitioned from Asian Arts Initiative.

Nasheli Juliana Ortiz Gonzálezⁱⁱⁱ

Executive Director and CEO
Taller Puertorriqueño

Robert Lee

Executive Director
Asian American Arts Centre

Marta V. Martínez

Executive Director and Founder
Rhode Island Latino Arts

Lauren Nechamkin

Director of Education
Museum of Chinese in America

Lisa Sasaki

Deputy Under Secretary for Special Projects
Smithsonian Institute

Jennifer Scott

Founding Executive Director and Chief Curator
Urban Civil Rights Museum

Brenda Simmons

Co-founder and Executive Director
Southampton African American Museum

Yvonne Smart

Education Coordinator and Curator
Cape Verdean Museum

Lisa Sockabasin

Co-CEO
Wabanaki Public Health & Wellness

Kimberly Springle

Executive Director
Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives

Randee Spruce

Curator
Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center

Doretha Williams

Center Director
The Center for the Digitization and Curation of African American History (Smith Center) at the National Museum of African American History and Culture

Nicole Wines

Co-founder
Raíces Cultural Center

Cynthia Woo

Director
Pao Arts Center

iii Since YC's conversation, Nasheli Juliana Ortiz González has transitioned from Taller Puertorriqueño.

APPENDIX B: ANNOTATED CONVERSATION GUIDE

If we aren't vigilant about safeguarding our identities and telling and documenting our stories in our own voice, someone else can and they will rewrite and define who we are.

—Lisa Yancey

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR HUEMUSEUMS NORTHEAST ANNOTATED CONVERSATION GUIDE

Greetings!

Thank you for saying yes to a conversation with us at Yancey Consulting (YC)! YC is an organizational and leadership development consulting firm committed to unlocking, provoking, facilitating, and collaboratively imagining equitable social impacts on the local to national level™. Our mission is transformation toward just, equitable, and thriving societies. We are committed to dismantling white supremacy and building systemic practices rooted in values of humanity, equity, and love.

CONVERSATION PURPOSE

Museum Hue (MHue) is developing a digital platform dedicated to the exploration of museums founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/x, Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and other people of color across the Northeast region of the United States. By developing the digital platform, MHue seeks to bring more people and resources to those museums, increase their visibility, and support the connections between them. YC has been engaged to be in conversation with select museums to gather their stories, experiences, impacts, and insights, and provide recommendations for the platform. An output of this work will be a report. See more information about the MHue initiative [here](#).

We have organized our session around four areas of inquiry: seeding, tending, dreaming, and collective action and desired manifestation. We seek to hear your origin stories (seeding), understand how you and your colleagues keep the organization operable and remain attuned to evolving community needs (tending), and discuss your hopes, needs, and preparedness for the future (dreaming). We also want to hear what you hope will come out of this initiative (collective action and desired manifestation).

We have planned an intimate, 60-minute conversation with you and possibly another person from a different organization. A member of the MHue team will also attend the session.

Requesting your consent to record our conversation

With your consent, we'd like to record our conversation. We want to have access to your authentic language and recall the inflections in your voice to reflect emotional nuances. Written notes will capture the gist, but not everything. Further, we are working in collaboration with the MHue team and Slover Linett at NORC (project partners). There will be moments when our partners will also want to hear your words to fully understand.

That said, WE WILL ONLY PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE RECORDINGS TO PROJECT PARTNERS. Moreover, we generally provide content anonymously in our reports unless we have the expressed permission by the speaker to quote them. If there are powerful statements that would be further validated by attribution, we will ask permission. This being said, know that we are happy to stop recording at any time at any participant's request.

So, we need your expressed consent. Please answer the following question: Do you consent to Yancey Consulting recording the conversation and sharing that recording with Museum Hue and Slover Linett at NORC? Please check either box below.

- Yes, I consent.
 No, I do not consent.

CONVERSATION QUESTIONS

Without further ado, we are pleased to share the following questions (and contextual information) below.

SEEDING: Origin Story

The questions below are designed to understand what was happening at the time (for instance, socially or politically) that led to the organization's becoming. We aim to document the original purpose and vision of the organization. Additionally, we seek to make visible the character, motivations, human qualities, and organizing skills of the founder(s), as well as their drive for establishing the entity. We believe it is important to know the past to understand the present.

1. Tell us your origin story.
2. Was there something specific about the time your organization was coming into being that was special and critical to its becoming? What needs was it addressing?
3. Did place matter?
4. Could that origin story happen today?
5. How was the organization initially funded?

TENDING: Operational Stewardship and Attunement to Community Needs

These questions reflect a yearning to understand your organization's programmatic approach, how your organization serves your community, and in what ways your organization stays relevant to their evolving needs.

6. How do you do what you do?
 - a. Where have you made ways out of no way?
 - b. Are there any approaches or methodologies unique to your organization or its cultural heritage?
 - c. How is the organization funded today?
 - d. Are there stories or unique ways of doing things that you believe don't get enough attention and you would like to elevate now?
 - e. What are you most proud of?

7. How do you know you're doing it well
 - a. How do you ensure you stay relevant?
8. For whom
 - a. Describe the profiles and personalities that come to and support your organization.
 - b. When engaging with you, what need do you believe people seek to satisfy?
 - i. What desires do you fulfill?
 - c. For the community you serve, how would they describe you?
 - d. In the museum ecosystem of where you are, how do you think you will be described?
9. Are there audiences or communities that you want to engage with but currently aren't?
10. Why do you think they are not engaged? What would you need to engage them?
11. Where do you get stuck?

DREAMING: Hopes & Preparedness For the Future

We believe we are the architects of our futures. The questions in this section are designed to create space for you to share your organization's boldest, baddest, and most joy-filled aspirations and what is needed to manifest them.

12. Do you feel you have space to dream as an organization? And if not formally, does it happen informally?
 - a. If yes,
 - i. What are some things that have come up as yearnings?
 - ii. How far into the future do you dream?
 - iii. Do you dream just about your organization or for the field at large?
 - b. If no,
 - i. What would you need to create that space?
13. What needs to be created or activated for the dream to become reality?
14. Do you believe what you want to manifest for your organization is possible?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. If yes, under what conditions?
15. What do you want to change, if anything?

COLLECTIVE ACTION AND DESIRED MANIFESTATIONS: Leveraging the Initiative

We want to hear where you believe the MHue initiative could catalyze collective action that benefits your organization and others like it.

16. What would make this MHue initiative most valuable for your organization and the museum field at large?
17. Lastly, YC's mission is transformation for just, equitable, and thriving societies. We are committed to that mission. With that said, is there anything that you haven't said that you need or hope could be an outcome of our collective intentions that would lead to a more just, equitable, and thriving society? Society, in this sense, can speak to your institution, communities, and/or the museum field writ large.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to our conversation with you.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY RESPONDENTS

We are also grateful to the Hue Custodians who completed surveys for the quantitative portion of this research. Answers from the 45 organizations that responded fuel the analyses and graph measures woven throughout the body of this report. Since both the qualitative and quantitative phases were voluntary, and therefore reliant on the organizations that elected to participate, there is some variance in the two groups. However, outreach and follow-up were made to the same list of 135 organizations for both phases, all organizations met the same criteria as outlined in the Methodology section, and the survey data both illustrates and builds upon the information gathered during the listening tour. The survey respondents were:

Akwesasne Cultural Center	North Country Underground Railroad
Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture	Historical Association
African Art Museum of Maryland	Pao Arts Center / BCNC
Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation	Raíces Cultural Center
Asian American Arts Centre	Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African
August Wilson African American Cultural Center	American History & Culture
Brownsville Heritage House Inc.	Seneca Nation Onöhsagwë: de' Cultural Center
Cape Verdean Museum Exhibit	Smithsonian National Museum of the
Center for Puerto Rican Studies	American Latino
Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives	Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum
Cultural Society/AAPI History Museum	Southampton African American Museum, a.k.a.
Delaware Historical Society	East End African American Museum
Eastville Community Historical Society	Studio Museum in Harlem
El Museo del Barrio	Tomaquag Museum
Harriet Tubman Museum and Educational Center	Teatro Experimental Yerbabruja Inc.
Indigo Arts Alliance	The Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural and
Josiah Henson Museum and Park	Educational Center
Kennard Alumni Association, Inc.	The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and
Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery	Garden Museum
Mashantucket Pequot Museum &	The Colored Girls Museum
Research Center	Urban Civil Rights Museum in Harlem
Ma's House & BIPOC Art Studio, Inc.	Veronica Robles Cultural Center
Mi'kmaq Nation museum	Visual Arts Research & Resource Center
Museum of Black Joy	Relating to the Caribbean d/b/a
Museum of Chinese in America	Caribbean Cultural Center
National Black Doll Museum of History & Culture	African Diaspora Institute
National Park Service	Weeksville Heritage Center
NMAAHC	

APPENDIX D: OUTREACH CRITERIA

The following is the complete list of criteria for the organizations to whom we reached out for this project. Museum Hue identified 135 organizations that met all of the criteria, which formed the outreach base for both portions of the research.

- Name or mission statement must include museum, cultural center, or a similar word
- The mission of the organization is to exhibit the art, history, and culture of Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, or another group of People of Color.
- Preserve, archive, memorialize, document, and exhibit the art, history, and culture of Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, and People of Color
- Have public-facing exhibitions centered on the mission on an annual, monthly, or weekly basis (can have set operating hours or be open by appointment)
- Present visual arts such as paintings, photography, sculptures, etc., and/or artifacts such as documents, tools, or any historical object made by a person
- Have been founded and led by People of Color (at least one founder is a Person of Color, and the organization has historically centered Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, or another group of People of Color).
- Be located in one of the following 11 states and 1 district: New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Maine, Rhode Island, Vermont, Maryland, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Delaware, and Washington, D.C.
- Have a physical space (except for organizations not yet open, undergoing capital projects, or seeking space)
- Located in historical communities of color (in consideration of changing and evolving landscapes, e.g., gentrification)
- Primarily collecting organizations (some non-collecting organizations will be considered)

The following did not qualify:

- Organizations whose mission and focus are not the art, history, and culture of Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, or another group of People of Color
- Organizations whose mission and focus are Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the arts
- Organizations whose mission and focus are performance arts (dance, theater, etc.)
- Galleries that focus on selling and showcasing arts but are not dedicated to preserving, archiving, memorializing, and documenting the cultural significance of the work
- Organizations whose mission and focus are primarily arts education programming

HUEARTS & CULTURES PROJECT TEAM

Big thanks to the entire team!

Stephanie A. Johnson-Cunningham

Co-Founder & Executive Director
Museum Hue

Adrienne Lei

Deputy Director
Museum Hue

Brittany Bellinger

Director of Programs and
Innovation
Museum Hue

Jinelle Thompson

Former Research and Partnerships
Manager
Museum Hue

Addison Tobias

Former Programs Manager
Museum Hue

Barbara-Shae Jackson, PhD

Quantitative Project Director
Slover Linett at NORC

Bayaz Zeynalova

Quantitative Lead researcher
Slover Linett at NORC

Tanya Treptow, PhD

Quantitative Strategic Guidance
Co-director
Slover Linett at NORC

Jolita Crosland

Senior Strategist and Facilitator
Yancey Consulting

Mikyta D. Daugherty, PhD

Chief thinker and Organizational
Design Engineer
Yancey Consulting

Kelli Lane*

Senior Strategist
Yancey Consulting

Qing Shaman, PhD

Master of Stories
Yancey Consulting

Lisa Yancey

Founder and President
Yancey Consulting

*Since YC's conversations, Kelli Lane has transitioned from Yancey Consulting."

ABOUT MUSEUM HUE

Museum Hue’s mission is to support Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all People of Color in the arts and culture field through advocacy, elevated visibility, and community engagement.

HueArts & Cultures Northeast is an expansion of Museum Hue’s HueArts New York City and HueArts New York State, seeking to connect and amplify cultural entities created and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino/e/x, Asian, Middle Eastern, and all Cultural Workers of Color through an online database that encompasses the history, geographic location, and significance of these organizations. Museum Hue is currently focusing on the Northeastern region of the United States, and its long-term goal is a full-scale national platform that serves these museums and cultural centers, as well as their stakeholders (current and future).

Museum Hue engaged Yancey Consulting and Slover Linett at NORC to connect with these Hue museums and cultural centers in the Northeast to hear their stories and insights and gather their data to guide the design of Museum Hue’s digital platform.

YANCEY CONSULTING

Yancey Consulting (YC) is an organizational and leadership development consulting firm committed to unlocking, provoking, facilitating, and collaboratively imagining equitable social impacts on the local to national level.™ YC specializes in systems analysis, cultural interventions, and generational forecasting.

YC’s mission is transformation toward just, equitable, and thriving societies. We work on projects that directly impact historically disinvested, ineffectively served, or otherwise marginalized communities. YC yields systemic practices that change oppressive systems, mitigate economic disparities, elevate visibility and truths, steward sustainable environments, and bolster leaders with bold visions. Advising across arts and culture, public space, environmental, and justice-based sectors, we bring over 23 years of experience in strategic collaborations. The company has directly served over a thousand nonprofit organizations, program officers, philanthropists, administrators, and entrepreneurs across the United States. Learn more about YC and our methodologies at yanceyconsulting.com.

Recently, YC moved into the individual planning space with the launch of its bespoke dream-planning journeys—THE DASH—in luxurious villas, which will have a platform-based digital arm in 2025. Yancey Consulting is a New York–certified minority/women business enterprise. Follow @YanceyWorld on Instagram.

SLOVER LINETT AT NORC

Slover Linett at NORC is a research and evaluation thought partner for the cultural sector, helping arts and culture organizations understand their communities and audiences, build relationships, and deepen impact. For more than 25 years, Slover Linett has been working with museums and cultural centers, performing arts organizations and venues, parks and gardens, public libraries, public media outlets, cultural heritage programs, science communicators, arts educators, and the public agencies, national organizations, and philanthropies that support them. Now part of The Bridge at NORC, Slover Linett connects rigorous research to innovative practice, from rapid-response experience design and market research projects to field-wide studies that inform systems change and collective learning. Its core team of social scientists and data analysts is skilled in quantitative, qualitative, and generative research, including population-level studies with representative sampling and advanced statistical modeling. Slover Linett at NORC's staff members have presented research findings and policy insights at gatherings of the American Alliance of Museums, League of American Orchestras, Dance/USA, Science Festival Alliance, OPERA America, Association of Performing Arts Professionals, Association of Science and Technology Centers, Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru), Institute of Museum and Library Services, National Endowment for the Arts, Barr Foundation, Wallace Foundation, and leading universities.

CONSULTANTS

Kelly Kuwabara

Content Editor

Marli Higa

Copy Editor

HOUSEOFCAKES

Graphic and Web Design

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

We also extend our gratitude to the Advisory Committee, who were thought partners in finalizing the content for this publication:



Melanie Adams
Executive Director
Anacostia Community Museum



Rob Hayward
Director of Museum Marketing
Mashantucket Pequot Museum
& Research Center



Melody Capote
Executive Director
Caribbean Cultural Center
African Diaspora Institute



Ivan Henderson
Executive Director
Delaware Historical Society
(DHS)



Justin Cree
Director
Akwesasne Cultural Center



Silvermoon LaRose
Assistant Director
Tomaquag Museum



Vashti DuBois
Founder and Executive Director
The Colored Girls Museum



Lisa Sasaki
*Deputy Under Secretary for
Special Projects*
Smithsonian Institution



Omar Eaton-Martinez
Senior VP for Historic Sites
National Trust for Historic
Preservation



Jennifer Scott
*Founding Executive Director
and Chief Curator*
Urban Civil Rights Museum
in Harlem



Linda Harris
Executive Director
Harriet Tubman Museum and
Educational Center



Cynthia Woo
Director
Pao Arts Center

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Cover: The Colored Girls Museum, photo: Zamani Feelings, 2015 (pictured: Ariadne and Vashti DuBois)

Page 2: National Museum of African American History and Culture, photo: Alan Karchmer, 2016 (pictured: building exterior).

Page 4: Smithsonian Institution, 2021 (pictured: Lonnie G. Bunch, 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian)

Page 6: Anacostia Community Museum, photo: Matailong Du, 2023 (pictured exhibition: A Bold and Beautiful Vision: A Century of Black Arts Education in Washington, D.C., 1900-2000)

Page 7: Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), photo: Valdon Baptiste, Verified Visuals, 2025 (pictured: Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham, with artwork by Iliana Emilia Garcia)

Page 9: HueArts & Cultures: Northeast Digital Map and Directory, 2026 (screen shot from museumhue.org)

Page 11: Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, 2022 (pictured: Education Powwow)

Page 17: Asian American Arts Initiative, photo: Albert Yee, 2023 (pictured: Seed Exchange program with installation, Overflow, by Eurhi Jones)

Page 26: Lewis Latimer House, photo: Nick Wheat, 2024 (pictured: tour of new permanent exhibition and gifting of special edition Curry 1 Retro shoes honoring Lewis Latimer)

Page 44: Raíces Cultural Center, photo: Raíces Digital Archive, 2024 (pictured: cultural art classes)

Page 59: Pao Arts Center, photo: Mel Taing, 2024 (pictured: visitors view Lunchbox Moment by Aime Bantz)

Page 61: Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library, photo: William Farrington, 2024 (pictured: Talks at the Schomburg: Black Curators Matter, Part III)

Page 73: Museum of Chinese in America (MoCA), 2023 (pictured: MoCA Fest tea presentation by Shunan Teng, founder of Tea Drunk)

Page 75: Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute (CCCADI), photo: Aryana Alexa, 2023 (pictured: CCCADI's Afribembé Festival)

Page 105: Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, 2022 (pictured: Education Powwow)



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