

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 70

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

194785-Roberts2020

Organization Name

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

060653111

Principal Contact Name

Angelina Altobellis

Title

Corporate and Foundation Relations Manager

Email

angelina.altobellis@thewadsworth.org

Phone

(860) 838-4033

Address

600 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
United States
[Map It](#)

Website

<http://www.thewadsworth.org>

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 70

Amount requested this application

\$20,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

Holding its collection in trust for all people, the Wadsworth Atheneum is dedicated to advancing knowledge and inspiring everyone to experience and appreciate excellence in art and culture. It aims to be the place where contemporary culture meets great masterpieces; where all feel welcome; where diverse groups of the changing populations of our region participate in meaningful ways; and where the vibrancy, character, and well-being of the greater Hartford region are strengthened.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

Established in 1842, the Wadsworth Atheneum is the oldest continuously operating public art museum in the United States. Founder Daniel Wadsworth opened the museum in 1844 with his collection of about 80 paintings, many purchased directly from the artists. Today the collection exceeds 50,000 works of art spanning more than 5,000 years. Highlights include: 5,000 works of European art from the Middle Ages to the present day; a groundbreaking collection of contemporary art, formed in part through the museum's innovative MATRIX program; one of the most outstanding collections of early Italian Baroque art in the country; an unparalleled collection of Hudson River School paintings; French and American Impressionist paintings and pastels; a pioneering collection of both European and American Surrealist masterpieces; and 7,000 objects of European decorative art. To complement the art on view, the museum also features a wide range of interpretive programs including conversations and lectures, gallery talks, art studio events, public and school tours, concerts, and films to enrich and educate participants of all ages. The Wadsworth collaborates with surrounding organizations in Hartford and beyond to deliver many of its public programs, broadening audiences and opportunities. Continued and longstanding partnership with The Amistad Center for Art & Culture enhances our program via exhibitions and activities. The museum also continues to acquire a wide range of works—including contemporary art—to ensure that its encyclopedic collection will stay relevant into the future.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

The Wadsworth Atheneum serves an average of 100,000 visitors annually. The museum is located in downtown Hartford, Connecticut, the city with the lowest median income in the state and where three in ten residents live below the poverty line. Approximately 20% of our visitors come from the City of Hartford, 65% from Connecticut (excluding Hartford), and 15% from out-of-state. Visitors from Hartford include participants in the museum's Wadsworth Welcome program, which provides free year-round admission to the city's residents. Wadsworth Welcome visitors come from 4,600 households representing 54 different languages spoken at home. On average, about 38% of museum visitors participate in a program at the museum, an indication that social and educational experiences are vital to audience engagement.

In addition to Wadsworth Welcome, the museum engages underserved populations through a variety of free educational programs. Each year, approximately 13,000 youth (55% from Hartford) participate in programs such as Art & Writing, Museum on the Move, and the Community Arts Program. Designed in partnership with Hartford Public Schools educators, these programs employ classroom lessons, museum visits, and writing and art-making activities in an arts integration curriculum to improve written and oral communication skills. In addition, approximately 4,500 children and adults visit the museum each year for Second Saturdays for Families, a free program held on the second Saturday of every month that offers thematic and family-centered art making activities, docent-led tours, presentations, and performances.

Describe your organization's governance.

The Wadsworth's Board of Trustees consists of 28 trustees, 18 honorary trustees, and four ex-officio members. Meeting monthly or bimonthly, committees include Audit, Austin House, Curatorial, Education, Executive, Ethics, Facilities, Finance,

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 70

Governance, Institutional Advancement, and Investment. The trustees meet six times per year. Average board meeting attendance rate is 65%, and 78% of trustees donate to the museum.

Describe the diversity of your board.

Of the Wadsworth's 28 trustees, twelve (42%) are women, 27 (97%) are white, and one (3%) is Latina. Ex-Officio Trustees (four total) include four women, of whom one is Black and one is Asian/Pacific Islander.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

78% of our Board of Trustees made personal financial contributions to the Wadsworth in FY20.

Project Name

Advancing a Culture of Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion at the Wadsworth Atheneum

Project Description

The moment of reckoning compelled by the murder of George Floyd and the voices of the Black Lives Matter movement has made more apparent than ever that as civic institutions, museums must take an active role in advancing racial equity. Values of diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion (DEAI) must guide a radical re-imagining of our work – from the scope of programs and services, to collecting, exhibiting and interpreting art, to our hiring practices and internal culture. To accelerate the development of practices and services embodying these values, the Wadsworth Atheneum seeks a grant from the Roberts Foundation to support foundational DEAI work with the consulting firm VallotKarp. Over a four-month period, consultants from the firm will conduct interviews with staff to understand challenges to DEAI at the museum; deliver a series of interactive seminars for staff and board members; and develop a roadmap that will operationalize DEAI practices through our new strategic plan.

Total estimated project budget

\$22,000.00

Project start/opening

10/01/2020

Project end/closing

03/31/2021

Project venue

Wadsworth Atheneum

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

N/A

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 70

The project will be promoted internally to Wadsworth staff and board members through a project kick-off announcement, as well as regular project updates at monthly all-staff and bi-monthly board meetings.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Roberts funding will be used to engage VallotKarp, a leading consulting firm specializing in developing and integrating diversity and inclusion initiatives into organizational practices. Funding would support interviews with a diverse cross-section of staff; the design and presentation of seminars, grounded in topics such as unconscious bias, for all staff and board members; and a report of findings to inform the creation of specific DEAI actions in the museum's new strategic plan.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

Where appropriate, we will recognize the Roberts Foundation for its generous support of advancing diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion at the Wadsworth. Most prominently, support by the Roberts Foundation will be recognized in the museum's FY21 Annual Report, to be sent to over 2,400 households. Crafting a transparent DEAI commitment statement will be one goal of this project and a public opportunity to credit the Roberts Foundation.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

The Wadsworth Atheneum is committed to engaging the public with artistically and historically significant works of art by providing world-class exhibitions as well as educational programming, performances, films and community events. By holding its offerings to the highest standards and making them accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds, the museum inspires people to come together and experience the power of art.

The Wadsworth's collections, history and exhibitions engage local communities, attract visitors from across the globe, and make significant contributions to the broader fields of curation, conservation, museum studies and art history. The museum publishes landmark scholarly catalogues, offers unique research-based activities such as renowned symposia and lectures with visiting scholars and artists, engages living artists and showcases time-honored masterpieces, and presents highly-regarded exhibitions that create opportunities for meaningful conversations.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

Over the past decade, the Wadsworth has made significant efforts to engage a broader, more diverse audience with its offerings. Key examples have included our 2010-2015 Community Engagement Initiative (which produced an array of new public programs, such as Second Saturdays for Families, designed to draw diverse intergenerational audiences to the museum) and the Wadsworth Welcome program, launched in 2016, designed to eliminate financial barriers to museum access for residents of Hartford. While these efforts have been successful in many ways, the events of the past several months have made it apparent that to be a truly meaningful presence in our community, we must prioritize values of diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion in all we do. The proposed project is the start of a new multi-year initiative to re-imagine a Wadsworth experience that is rooted in the expression of these values at all levels of our institution and across our operations.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

The goal of this project is to strengthen the Wadsworth Atheneum's ability to advance racial equity through the cultivation of practices and services that build a more inclusive museum experience on multiple levels – through our public programs, exhibitions, interpretation, educational offerings, and our internal culture. By committing our institution to understanding and systematically addressing challenges to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion at the Wadsworth, we will strengthen our role as a civic institution serving the people of Connecticut and, more immediately, the people of Greater Hartford.

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 70

How will this project be evaluated?

The success of this project will be determined by the completion of our work with VallotKarp culminating in three actions. These actions will lay the groundwork for the Wadsworth to create a roadmap that advances a culture of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion at the museum:

- * The articulation of specific DEAI goals and action items in our strategic plan;
- * The creation and approval of a DEAI Commitment Statement;
- * The launch of a task force comprised of board members, senior museum leadership, and community members at large, charged with implementing and evaluating DEAI actions across the museum.

Cover letter

- [Cover-Letter-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Board list

- [Board-of-Trustees-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [501c3-determination-letter-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [Audited-Financial-Statements-June-30-2019-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [FY20-Full-Year-Budget-to-Actuals-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [FY21-Operating-Budget-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [Balance-Sheet-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [Project-Budget-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

Yes

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 70

Annual report

- [Annual-Report-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

No

Grant Report

- [Wadsworth-Atheneum-Museum-of-Art-Grantee-Reporting-Form-2020.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [ValloKarp-Proposal-Wadsworth-Atheneum.pdf](#)

The Wadsworth Atheneum continues to demonstrate strong fiscal health through strengthened fundraising efforts and prudent spending. In planning for FY21, significant focus was placed on ensuring that digital outreach programming would be implemented as well as safe, state-compliant reopening protocols for our guests and visitors. A balanced budget was approved by the museum's Board of Trustees, and careful monitoring of actual results will occur throughout the year.

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes