

Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025



**Leading Academic Museums & Galleries
in the 21st Century**



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ADVANCING ACADEMIC MUSEUMS

For nearly forty years, the Association of Academic Museums & Galleries has served as the only national organization dedicated to supporting academic museums, galleries, and collections,* as well as the people committed to their success. In recent years AAMG's membership, capacity, and impact have grown dramatically, particularly with the expansion of AAMG's annual conference. In 2017, our association published *Professional Practices for Academic Museums & Galleries* and subsequently produced a "tool kit" to guide ethical deaccessioning and disposal of collections.

As the Covid-19 pandemic placed our institutions under stress – both financially and operationally—we raised our commitment to advocacy and the protection of university collections. This included taking stands on issues of importance, such as AAMG's Statement Against Monetizing the Collections of Academic Museums & Galleries, while continuing sponsorship of the Task Force for the Protection of University Collections. We also embraced the emergence of virtual programming to supplement our annual conference with a year round cycle of learning, dialogue, and engagement.

AAMG's 2022-25 strategy builds directly on our prior plan's advocacy for academic museums and galleries as institutions, while retaining our commitment to professional development and community building for our members—professionals and students alike. It also responds to a long-overdue awakening toward issues of social justice, racial equity, and participatory inclusion. We accept this work, not as a stand-alone statement or policy, but as principles, ideals and behaviors that must inform everything we do and, importantly, how we do everything. Unlike the prior AAMG plan, this one proposes values and beliefs to guide our decision-making, as well as a revised mission and new vision statement to raise our aspirations accordingly.

Like any professional organization, AAMG's success will derive directly from the participation, commitment, and engagement of its members. Join us at the annual conference. Log in to virtual programs. Share your challenges and successes with other members and welcome newcomers, particularly students, into our profession. Renew your membership and encourage others to join, including the museum or gallery at your own college or university. The communities we build together through AAMG will be as vibrant as the community you, as an active participant, commit to build.

The plan that follows derives from numerous listening sessions with AAMG constituents, input from regional representatives, and board retreats—many of them online due to covid-related lockdowns. Our plan was approved unanimously by the AAMG board of directors on June 13, 2022, and presented to the AAMG membership at its annual meeting in Logan, Utah.

*In most cases the use of “museum,” “gallery,” and “collection” throughout this document stands for all three elements, even when only one or two are listed. These include all manner of museums, such as art, history, natural sciences, and so forth. Similarly, “university” and “college,” singly or together, are shorthand for all institutions of higher education, including junior colleges, community colleges, and the like.

Mission

The Association of Academic Museums and Galleries establishes and supports sustainable practices, educational activities, and professional development that empower its individual members and enable its member institutions to fulfill their educational missions.

Vision

Academic Museums and Galleries will be widely regarded as central components of higher education—as essential as libraries, student centers, and athletic facilities.

Values

Community: We build supportive networks connecting people around a shared passion, purpose, and mutual respect—celebrating their accomplishments as well as contributions to their institutions and field.

Inclusion: We strives to create a culture of access, inclusion, and participation, seeking diverse ideas, experiences and perspectives, and contributions of people from a wide variety of backgrounds and academic disciplines.

Collaboration: We promote peer-to-peer learning and develop external partnerships to create knowledge content, advocate, and engage in meaningful alliances to address shared challenges and opportunities.

Trust & Accountability: We pursue the best interests of our members, seek to uphold ethical standards and behaviors, take responsibility for our actions, and act with integrity and transparency.

Beliefs

AAMG Believes that Academic Museums and Galleries ...

- Serve as central components of higher education, providing vital cross-disciplinary centers for academic life and welcoming entrances to campus for the public at large.
- Foster respect for diverse people and cultures; value the importance of science, history, and the creative spirit; uphold expressions of artistic and academic freedom; and advance scholarly research and academic inquiry.
- Provide an irreplaceable academic benefit in promoting experiential learning, praxis, and object-based scholarship.

Metrics of Success

In three years, AAMG will...

1. Be more diverse and equitable. Its leadership will be more inclusive, reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of our field, and our membership will more accurately represent the different disciplines of academic museums. We will create new and expanded opportunities for participation in AAMG activities and involvement with the field as a whole.
2. Provide its members with information and resources to advocate effectively and to communicate the value of academic museums and galleries to their parent organizations.
3. Offer multiple programs for institutional and professional development, including an annual conference, virtual courses, and mentorship for students and emerging professionals.
4. Be financially sustainable and organized to meet its goals, as well as the needs of its members.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND MAJOR INITIATIVES

2022 - 2025

1. **Professional Development and Community Building:** To establish opportunities for current and future members to engage and learn from each other and related experts, share insights and challenges, explore professional and career development, and create lasting professional communities.
 - a. Continue to develop AAMG's annual conference to meet our member's existing and future needs.
 - b. Offer structured training and scaffolded pathways to support academic, professional and career development.
 - c. Develop an annualized schedule of virtual programs to share recommended best practices and address issues of vital importance to our field.
 - d. Create mentorship programming to support students and emerging museum professionals by engaging experienced AAMG members.

1. **Advocacy:** To provide content, context, and field-wide representation in support of academic museums in their interactions with campus administrators, faculty, and other constituencies. To promote the adoption of AAMG's professional standards and, when needed, deploy the Task Force for the Protection of University Collections in support of institutions whose collections are placed at risk of inappropriate deaccession, monetization, or other mismanagement.
 - a. Continue to support academic museums and galleries through the Task Force for the Protection of University Collections.
 - b. Create strategies, alliances, and develop resources to advocate on issues important to our sector and to communicate the value of artistic and cultural participation in strengthening our campuses and society.
 - c. Foster networking and debate among museum professionals around issues, events, and practices with field-wide implications.

3. Professional Practices: To establish and disseminate AAMG-endorsed guidelines* for the activities and obligations of an academic museum, gallery, or collection, as well as for the professionals, volunteers, governance structures, campus users and administrators who supervise those entities and engage with those resources.

- a. Produce op-eds, white papers, and intentional conference participation for advocacy at the highest levels of our profession and in higher education.
- b. Seek partnerships with other museum associations to provide expertise and assistance to support our individual and institutional members.
- c. Survey membership to collect comparative data to benefit members and their academic museums & galleries.
- d. Develop a model of organizational standards, centered on service and the unique mandates of university museums and galleries, to supplement and support AAM Accreditation.

4. Organizational Sustainability: To develop systems, structures, and financial opportunities for sustaining AAMG operations and effectiveness. To attract and retain more racially and ethnically diverse members across the range of museum disciplines. To attract additional funders and revenue-generating opportunities. To understand the issues of our current and potential member base.

- a. Develop a comprehensive approach for AAMG communications to and from members, including social media and website.
- b. Review AAMG governance documents, committee structures, policies and procedures to align internal practices with organizational priorities.
- c. Increase capacity of AAMG through participation of members on ad-hoc committees, advocacy, and contributors to strategic initiatives.
- d. Build AAMG's financial sustainability by cultivating private support, exploring new earned income opportunities, and evaluating the structure of membership.
- e. Assess this plan annually, measure progress, and modify goals and initiatives as the needs of our association and its members require.

* For AAMG guidelines and professional practices, visit the website at www.aamg-us.org



Connect with us!

Join your colleagues for informative and spirited conversations on museum practice on our listserv: **groups.io/g/AAMG**

Check out membership with us at **aamg-us.org/membership**

To stay up to date with all things AAMG, follow **@AcademicMuseums** on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Check out our LinkedIn page for emerging professionals: **AAMG Exploring and Aspiring Museum Professionals**.

Questions?

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