AAMG Strategic Plan 2022–25

ADVANCING ACADEMIC MUSEUMS
(unedited – to be revised)

For thirty-five years, the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries has flourished as the only national organization dedicated to supporting academic museums, galleries, and collections* and the people committed to their success. AAMG’s membership, capacity, and impact have grown dramatically, particularly over the past half-dozen years.

Among its accomplishments, this all-volunteer organization has received 501(c)3 status; produced a comprehensive and broadly accepted set of professional standards that accelerate the wise stewardship and use of our irreplaceable cultural and educational assets; increased the attendance, duration, and programmatic offerings of the annual conference; and become a respected voice for the field. These and other activities align with AAMG’s ongoing ambition and imperative to be the leading proponent and resource for our members and others in the field.

Concurrent with AAMG’s growth, the higher education field has faced significant pressures from economic, demographic, and value-driven forces. In response, many campuses have actively highlighted their academic museums as integral elements of education, prominently integrating them into the mission and identity of their parent schools.

These same pressures, however, are placing many other academic museums, galleries, and collections at risk of being under-resourced and, in more dire circumstances, mismanaged or misappropriated. The tens of thousands of museum-based academic professionals (as well as their advocates, governance structures, and institutions) need more than ever the continuing guidance, resources, and engagement that AAMG strives to provide.

Consequently, AAMG’s 2022–25 strategy intends to strengthen the professionalism, educational and scholarly contributions, and overall impact of the academic museum field, within the academy and throughout the larger community. It also aims to strengthen AAMG’s position as the leading national organization representing academic museums, galleries, and collections. The AAMG Board has identified four strategic priorities for aggressive focus over the next three years and beyond. And we shall, as stated succinctly in our motto, continue to promote the belief that “Great universities have great museums.”

* 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
Shortened original version:
The Association of Academic Museums and Galleries establishes and supports best practices, educational activities, and professional development that enable its member organizations to fulfill their educational missions.

Modified version (similar)
AAMG establishes and supports best practices, educational activities, and professional development to make academic museums and galleries vital to their colleges and universities.

Other???

VISION

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

Or remain with none? [if we can’t come up with something compelling]

VALUES

Community: AAMG builds supportive networks connecting people around a shared passion, purpose, and mutual respect -- celebrating their accomplishments and contributions to their institutions and field.

Inclusion: AAMG strives to create a culture of access, civility, and inclusion, supporting diverse ideas and welcoming perspectives of traditionally underrepresented or marginalized groups.

Collaboration: AAMG promotes peer-to-peer learning and develops external partnerships to create knowledge content, advocate, and engage in meaningful alliances to address shared challenges and opportunities.

Trust & Accountability: AAMG pursues the best interests of its members, seeks to exceed ethical standards, takes responsibility for its actions, and conducts itself with integrity and transparency.

AAMG Believes …

--in the irreplaceable benefit of experiential learning and object-based scholarship;

--that Campus Museums and Galleries are central components of higher education, providing vital cross-disciplinary centers for academic life and welcoming entrances to campus for the public at large; and
--that Academic Museums and Galleries foster respect for diverse people and cultures; value the importance of science, history, and the creative spirit; and advance scholarly research and academic inquiry.

**AAMG CORE PRIORITIES** (unchanged)

AAMG strives to support its members and member institutions in these primary ways:

**Professional development and peer 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.

**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 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.

**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, and campus users and administrators who supervise those entities and engage with those resources.

**Organizational sustainability:** To develop systems, structures, and financial opportunities for sustaining AAMG operations and effectiveness. To attract and retain more members across a greater diversity of museums. To attract additional funders and revenue-generating opportunities. To understand the issues of our current and potential member base.

**AAMG MAJOR INITIATIVES: 2022-2025**

**Professional development and peer community building**
--Continue to develop AAMG’s annual meeting to meet our members’ existing and future needs
--Develop an annualized schedule of virtual programs, including series to share best practices and address issues of vital importance to our field
--Create a mentorship program to support students and emerging museum professionals by engaging experienced AAMG members

**Advocacy**
--Draft an Interns Bill of Rights
--Develop a “tool-kit” for academic museums and galleries to advocate their interest to their campus administrations

**Professional practices**
--Create an Equity & Inclusion Plan for AAMG that can serve as a model for individual museums as well
--Seek partnerships with other museum associations to provide expertise and assistance to support our member institutions.
--Survey membership to determine other policies and practices that could benefit members and their academic museums & galleries

**Organizational sustainability**

--Redesign the AAMG website
--Develop a comprehensive approach for AAMG communications to and from members, including social media
--Conduct a census of academic museums and galleries nationwide to assess the scope of our field.
--Review AAMG governance documents, committee structures, policies and procedures to align internal practices with organizational priorities.
--Assess this plan periodically, measure progress, and modify goals and strategies as the needs of our association and its members require.