

# Engaging Young Patrons: Case Studies from Two Museums

## The Frick Collection

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# What will we learn in this session?

- How do museums successfully engage young adults?
- What kinds of programs are best for this demographic?
- How do museums build a culture of philanthropy through the education and engagement of young adults?
- What are some of our challenges?
- What are some of our successes?

# Overview of the Programs

# The Frick Collection: Young Fellows



**Mission Statement:** *The Young Fellows are a dynamic group of individuals and couples ages 21 to 45 that have the unique opportunity to attend social events and curatorial programs in the elegant setting of the Frick, one of New York City's few remaining Gilded Age mansions. Events include curator-led talks and behind-the-scenes events that illuminate the Frick's extraordinary collection of Old Masters and decorative arts. Highlights of the calendar include the stylish and widely covered Young Fellows Ball and the annual Spring Garden Party.*

# The Frick Collection: Young Fellows



## Giving Levels:

\$600 (21-39)

\$1,750, \$5,000, \$10,000 (21-45)

Number of members: 260

Programs: Curator-led gallery talks, evening receptions, private collection visits, behind-the-scenes tours, annual parties (Spring Garden Party, Holiday Cheer, and Young Fellows Ball)

Amount & Frequency of Programs: 5-10 per year (depending on level); 2-3 exhibition opening receptions

Age Range: 21-45

# LACMA: Avant-Garde



*Mission Statement: A membership group for young professionals, collectors, and art supporters interested in exploring LACMA and L.A.'s dynamic art world. Members enjoy access to behind-the-scenes and after-hours programs at LACMA and around the L.A. art community. Exclusive events throughout the year include curator-led tours, studio and collection visits, introductions to special projects at LACMA, curator-led outings to art venues throughout the city, social events at the museum, and more.*



# LACMA: Avant-Garde



Giving Level: \$1,000 per year

Number of Members: 140

Programs: Curator-led exhibition walkthroughs, artist-led gallery tours, private collection visits, behind-the-scenes tours, evening receptions, annual holiday party, and happy hours

Amount & Frequency of Programs: 6-7 per year; 2-3 exhibition opening receptions

Age Range: 21-40

# Building a Culture of Philanthropy Through the Education and Engagement of Young Adults at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art





# Purpose of the Study

- Examine a type of educational program designed specifically for young adults
- Learn about the kinds of educational opportunities offered
- Assess if members value the programming and consider it personally enriching
- Determine if museums can build and sustain a culture of philanthropy with members through this type of educational program



# Highlights: Museum Education

Learning in the Museum is informal, open-ended, unpredictable, personally motivated and at its most basic level it's about self-affirmation, expanding our understanding of ourself and the world around us.

Meaningful museum experiences are often aesthetic experiences that satisfy one or more of the identity-related needs that visitors seek to fulfill through their museum experience. The identity related roles categorized by Falk (2009) are Explorer, Experience Seeker, Hobbyist or Professional, Facilitator and Recharger

# Highlights: Philanthropy

## To Build a Culture of Philanthropy...

1. Place the Mission and Values Upfront
2. Make Customer Service a TOP Priority
3. Incorporate an Attitude of Gratitude
4. Create Engagement Opportunities
5. Tell Their Stories
6. Check your Systems
7. Reach out to the Millennials



# Highlights: Millennial Traits



- Open to Change
- Independent
- Linked
- Diverse
- Educated
- Special
- Confident
- Sheltered
- Diverse
- Communicative
- Achieving
- Pressured
- Team-Oriented
- Conventional
- Optimistic

# Highlights: Millennials Communicating and Learning

- Social Media is KEY
- Tap in Early
- Brand is Important
- New Blend of Cognitive Skills
- Different Social Skills
- Collaborative Approach to Learning
- Learning as Social Activity





# Highlights: Millennials and Philanthropy

## Core Beliefs that Impact Philanthropy ...

- Want to Make the World a Better Place
- Active Volunteers
- Work is MORE than a Paycheck
- Prefer Issues over Institutions and People over Organizations
- Expect Transparency, Authenticity and Community
- Giving Time, Talent, Treasure and Ties

# Findings

1. Members value the knowledge they acquire through the program and feel connected to the museum. They are learning about art and artists at the museum and in the community as well as how to collect art, and art making and curatorial practices.
2. The educational components meet the needs of the Millennial learners and provide meaningful opportunities to engage with the museum and to learn about the art, because of the variety in the programming and ability to tailor experiences in different settings to meet individual needs.
3. Members are most engaged when the setting is intimate, social and relaxed, and they appreciate interactive experiences but want to participate at their leisure.
4. Members join and stay engaged for a variety of reasons not limited to learning about art including the desire for a peer group, exclusivity and the LACMA Brand, networking and socializing.
5. The program is building relationships for the museum, but it could accomplish this goal to a greater degree if the culture of philanthropy was strengthened.

# Recommendations

## Successful museum programs that engage Millennial learners...

1. Provide opportunities for people to construct connections between the museum experience and their lives and allow for the personalization of information presented
2. Satisfy the identity-related needs by providing learning opportunities that are personally enriching and enjoyable
3. Offer a variety of educational opportunities in settings that are conducive to dialog allow for the Millennials to customize their experience and engage in a deep and meaningful way with the museum and others

## To build a culture of philanthropy through this type of program...

1. Take a donor-centered approach with the members
2. Develop programming and communication around the mission
3. Create volunteer opportunities that align with the mission
4. Build an engaging and dynamic online presence through the website and social media

# Challenges

1. Moving Members to the Next Level
2. Communicating the Mission
3. Developing a Culture of Philanthropy
4. Activating the Volunteers
5. Retention and Engagement Through Life Stages
6. Online Engagement



# Successes at LACMA

## Community Building

- No-Host Dinners
- Mixers
- Gathering at Jazz at LACMA
- Holiday Party/End of Year Dinner

## Variety in Educational Programs

- “Insider Access” to LACMA
- Experiences with Artists
- Tours of the Burgeoning Gallery Scene
- Private Collections





# Successes at The Frick

## Relationship Building and Commitment

- Tiered Membership
- Integration with Trustees
- Steering Committee
- Gala Participation

## Learning Opportunities

- Tours with Director and Curators
- Scholarly Programs
- Collection Visits



ANY  
QUESTIONS  
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# Contact Information

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