

## CALL FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE 2014 MUSEUMS CONNECT PROGRAM

Museums Connect enables communities in the United States and abroad to develop a broader knowledge about and understanding of one another's cultures through innovative, museum-facilitated collaborative projects. Participating U.S. and foreign institutions have an opportunity to collaborate on a project concept that results in long-term institutional links and enhances their own ability to involve their local communities.

For more information about the Museums Connect program visit the Alliance's Museum Connect website at [www.aam-us.org/museumsconnect](http://www.aam-us.org/museumsconnect).

Interested museums in Macedonia are required to express their interest not later than September 25<sup>th</sup> to [Taneskab@state.gov](mailto:Taneskab@state.gov). Each museum would then submit a Museum Profile to [museumsconnect@aam-us.org](mailto:museumsconnect@aam-us.org) and [Taneskab@state.gov](mailto:Taneskab@state.gov) by October 7, 2013.

**ELIGIBILITY AND REVIEW CRITERIA:** For purposes of the Museums Connect program, the term 'museum' is used broadly to include both governmental and private museums of anthropology, art history and natural history, aquariums, arboreta, art centers, botanical gardens, children's museums, historic sites, nature centers, planetariums, science and technology centers, and zoos.

Consideration will be given to projects that include one of the cycle's designated themes:

**-Addressing Community Challenges:** Projects strengthen local communities by tackling critical issues (e.g., empowering women and youth; mitigating religious, cultural, or political tensions; or advocating for human rights), by providing opportunities for civic engagement and volunteerism or by creating a forum for the disengaged or disenfranchised. (Foreign policy goals: Strengthening Civil Society; Youth Engagement; Empowering Women and Girls; Outreach to Marginalized Populations; Promoting Human Rights and Peaceful Conflict Resolution)

**-Adapting to Changing Demographics:** Projects explore how museums can adapt to the changing culture and demographics of their communities (e.g., shifting age distributions, the implications of global migration, and reaching under-served communities). (Foreign policy goals: Strengthening Civil Society; Outreach to Marginalized Populations; Youth Engagement; Empowering Women and Girls)

**-Promoting Disability Rights and Engagement:** Projects promote disability rights and foster social inclusion by raising awareness about how to ensure enjoyment of rights by persons with disabilities of all types, including physical, sensory, cognitive, learning, and psycho-social; exploring ways to create an inclusive and accessible society for all; using museum resources to serve the needs of people with disabilities in ways uniquely suited to museums' missions; and by reducing barriers to access and participation. (Foreign policy goals: Strengthening Human Rights, including Disability Rights and Civil Society)

**-Investing in Green Practices:** Projects develop innovative strategies for green practices (e.g., sustainable agriculture, renewable and clean energy, food and water conservation, waste reduction, or sustainable tourism) or create models for implementing green practices locally on a grassroots level and/or more broadly on a policy level. (Foreign policy goals: Promoting Environment & Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy Practices)

**-Developing Amateur Experts:** Projects recruit and train community members as active participants in content creation through crowdsourcing, involvement as citizen scientists/citizen historians, and social media commentators as the role of museums changes from the voice of authority to that of mentor, moderator, and clearinghouse of trusted information. (Foreign policy goals: Strengthening Civil Society, Youth Engagement, Democracy, and Providing Educational Opportunities)

**FUNDING:** At least eight projects will receive \$50,000-\$100,000 each to divide between the U.S. and foreign museums collaborating on a project. Final funding levels will be based on the projects' proposed budget and negotiated in consultation with The Alliance.

Museums Connect **grants do not fund** construction or projects focused primarily on staff/institutional development or capacity building, staff training, standard exhibition design or object exchange, or artist residencies. The projects funded go beyond traditional exhibit-based exchanges by focusing on community engagement and participation and support the fundamental objectives of this program: increasing cross-cultural understanding and showcasing the role of cultural institutions as vibrant, engaged, and committed influencers in contemporary society.