



Mid-Atlantic
Association of **Museums**

March 11-13, 2026
Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor

An aerial photograph of the Baltimore Inner Harbor at dusk. The water is dark blue, reflecting the city lights. In the foreground, a large marina with many wooden docks and small boats is visible. The background is filled with a dense urban skyline of various skyscrapers and buildings, some with glowing windows. The sky is a mix of purple, blue, and orange.

Building Museums™ Symposium

2026 Symposium Program and Schedule

welcome to *Building Museums*

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Hello and Welcome to the 2026 Building Museums™ Symposium in Baltimore, Maryland!

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums (MAAM) Board and the Building Museums™ Planning Committees, we are delighted to welcome you to Baltimore—Charm City, where history, innovation, and culture meet at the water's edge. With its iconic Inner Harbor, vibrant neighborhoods, and rich museum landscape, Baltimore offers an inspiring setting for this year's conversations about building the museums of tomorrow.

As a national conference dedicated to best practices in constructing new buildings, rehabilitating existing structures, and renovating museum spaces, we invite you to join timely, relevant discussions that shape how our institutions serve their communities. Our program brings together panelists and special speakers from across the U.S. and Canada, representing museums of all types, disciplines, and sizes. Together with you—leaders and practitioners in the field—we explore how museum buildings embody our missions and provide places of preservation, connection, and reflection in an increasingly complex world.

This conference is made possible by a dedicated group of volunteers who reviewed proposals, secured sponsorships, and worked tirelessly to create an exceptional experience. Their names are listed under the Committee tab in Sched—please take a moment to thank them throughout the next two days. We are also grateful to the MAAM Board Members for their support and to our executive director, Kahla DeSmit, for her leadership. A special thank-you goes to the Baltimore-area museums that generously opened their doors for behind-the-scenes tours and events. Finally, MAAM and the Symposium planning committee extend deep appreciation to our sponsors, whose generous support is invaluable to this program and to the museum community as a whole.

Your feedback is essential. Session evaluations, in-person comments, and insights shared with MAAM help guide future programming and ensure this Symposium continues to evolve.

It has been our honor to serve as co-chairs of the 2026 Building Museums™ Symposium. We hope you find the program thoughtful, useful, and energizing—and we look forward to hearing from you.

Melissa Kiewiet

Melissa Kiewiet {New York Rep}
Executive Director,
The Dyckman Farmhouse Museum

David Searles

David Searles {At Large Rep}
Partner,
JacobsWyper Architects

Building Museums™ Symposium

2026 SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

*Registration Required

8:00 am–5:00 pm **Registration** Key South Foyer

8:30 am–4:30 pm **Ready, Aim, Build Workshop*** Poe A–B
Pre-registration required; Additional fee

10:00 am–2:30 pm **Off Site Tours** Various Locations
Pre-registration required

4:00 pm–5:00 pm **First Time Attendee Reception*** USS Constellation
Sponsored by Altieri; Pre-registration required 301 Light Street

5:30 pm–7:00 pm **Opening Reception** Baltimore Museum of Industry
Sponsored by Solid Light with 1415 Key Hwy
transportation sponsored by Goppion

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

*Registration Required

7:30 am–5:00pm **Registration** Key South Foyer

8:00 am–8:45 am **Breakfast,** Key Ballroom
Sponsored by Kohler Ronan Consulting Engineers

8:00 am–6:00 pm **Exhibitors' Hall Open** Exhibitor's Hall Foyer

9:00 am–10:15 am **Keynote: An Architecture Critic on the Virtues of the Smaller Museum,** Key Ballroom
Sponsored by Ayers Saint Gross

10:15am–10:45am **Coffee Break,** Exhibitor's Hall Foyer
Sponsored by Aegis Property Group

10:45 am–12:00 pm **Breakouts Sessions** Various Key Ballrooms

12:00 pm–1:30 pm **Lunch on your own**

1:45 pm–3:00 pm **Breakouts Sessions** Various Key Ballrooms

3:00 pm–3:15 pm **Coffee Break,** Sponsored by Accenture Exhibitor's Hall Foyer

3:15 pm–4:30 pm **Breakouts Sessions** Various Key Ballrooms

4:30 pm–6:00 pm **Exhibitors Reception** Exhibitor's Hall Foyer
Sponsored by TYLin

Building Museums™ Symposium

2026 SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

7:30 am–5:00 pm	Registration	Key South Foyer
7:45 am–8:45 am	Breakfast & Roundtable Discussions, Sponsored by Studio Gang	Key Ballroom
8:00 am–4:00pm	Exhibitors' Hall Open	Exhibitor's Hall Foyer
9:00 am–10:00 am	Plenary, Get Smart! An aspirational look at intelligent building system design to further mission	Key Ballroom
10:00 am–10:15 am	Coffee Break, Sponsored by Hartman-Cox Architects	Exhibitor's Hall Foyer
10:15 am–11:30 am	Breakouts Sessions	Various Key Ballrooms
11:30 am–1:00 pm	Buidly Award Luncheon, Sponsored by DLR Group	Key Ballroom
1:15 pm–2:30 pm	Breakouts Sessions	Various Key Ballrooms
2:30 pm–2:45 pm	Coffee Break, Sponsored by Monadnock	Exhibitor's Hall Foyer
2:45 pm–4:00 pm	Breakouts Sessions	Various Key Ballrooms
5:00 pm–6:30 pm	Closing Mixer & Behind the Scenes Tour with support from the Baltimore National Heritage Area	Parkway Theatre 5 W North Ave

places to eat



places to explore



view sched



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guest speaker

KEYNOTE: AN ARCHITECTURE CRITIC ON THE VIRTUES OF THE SMALLER MUSEUM

Thursday, March 12, 9:00 am

Museums in the U.S. and around the world have been engaged in something of an expansion arm's race in recent decades, so much so that the life of an architecture critic can sometimes seem to consist almost entirely of traveling to see one gleaming new suite of galleries after another. While it may be true that museum commissions "offer one of the few remaining opportunities for architects to realize the full potential of their calling," as Julian Rose argues in his recent book *Building Culture*, from the point of view of museum leaders (to say nothing of artists and visitors) building smarter can often pay richer dividends than building bigger.

This keynote will explore the often overlooked virtues of gallery buildings that are smaller, more focused, and—architecturally or museologically—more coherent than the typical expansion. Organized as a critical global tour of recent museum architecture, and featuring exemplary case studies in adaptive reuse alongside ground-up projects, it will conclude by addressing a timely question: As museum leaders and architects face what may be a prolonged period of budget pressures and overarching uncertainty, what key lessons might they draw from successful gallery buildings that have done more with less?

Learning Objectives:

1. Draw specific, transferable lessons from recent museum architecture in the U.S. and abroad to inform professional practice across design, planning, and institutional leadership contexts.
2. Assess current and future institutional growth plans by critically examining assumptions about scale, expansion, and architectural ambition in light of financial, operational, and cultural constraints.
3. Evaluate smaller-scale, focused museum projects—including adaptive reuse and new construction—to understand how architectural, operational, and curatorial coherence can be achieved while reducing capital and long-term operating costs.
4. Analyze case studies to identify design strategies that balance spatial quality, sustainability, and programmatic clarity, and apply "doing more with less" principles to early-stage planning and decision-making regarding scope, scale, and investment priorities.



Chris Hawthorne

Senior Critic, Yale School of Architecture

AIA Continuing Education Course Number,
BMS2026-29 (1.25 LU|Elective)

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guestspeakers

PLENARY

GET SMART! AN ASPIRATIONAL LOOK AT INTELLIGENT BUILDING SYSTEM DESIGN TO FURTHER MISSION

Friday, March 13, 9:00 am

Intelligent building systems are rapidly transforming how museums function, engage visitors, and plan for the future. This plenary cuts through the noise to show why these technologies matter now and how they can become powerful drivers of institutional mission—not just operational upgrades.

We'll break down what "smart systems" actually include, clarify the terminology that often muddies the conversation, and spotlight real world wins and stumbles from recent projects. Attendees will get a clear picture of how these systems are designed, specified, and evolving at a pace that demands attention.

The session then shifts to the human side: how architects, engineers, and museum professionals can collaborate to integrate these systems seamlessly and sustainably. We'll tackle client readiness, generational differences in tech adoption, cross disciplinary coordination, and the long-term realities of commissioning, maintenance, and lifecycle planning.

By the end, participants will understand how to turn intelligent building systems into strategic assets that amplify mission, values, and visitor experience—not just high-tech infrastructure.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the strategic value of intelligent building systems
2. Identify the core components and terminology of smart building systems
3. Recognize what successful (and unsuccessful) implementation looks like
4. Understand how interdisciplinary collaboration shapes outcomes
5. Anticipate operational and lifecycle considerations

AIA Continuing Education
Course Number,
BMS2026-28 (1LU|Elective)



Susan B. Wertheim,
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RA



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Eli Kuslansky,
Partner, Chief Strategist
Unified Field

WORKSHOPS, EVENTS, RECEPTIONS

Ready, Aim, Build- A Museum Planning Workshop

Wednesday, March 11, 8:30 am-4:30 pm

During this full-day workshop, our multidisciplinary collective of museum experts provide a roadmap of best-practices to guide you through your museum capital project with lessons gleaned from decades of experience in projects like yours. Delivered through a mix of presented content, targeted activities, and open dialogue, our industry experts in institution planning, design, engineering, costing, and construction will lead you through the critical steps of a successful capital project—from inception through to opening day and beyond. As always, the session includes a special guest speaker from an institution who has been in your shoes before! Leave with an intimate knowledge of a time-tested process that will lead to success on your next project. Box lunch provided to participants.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-1

First-Time Attendee Reception

Wednesday, March 11, 2026, 4:00 pm-5:00 pm
Location: USS Constellation|Historic Ships

Sponsored by

Altieri

The reception will be held aboard the historic USS Constellation, the last all-sail warship built by the U.S. Navy and a National Historic Landmark docked in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. Guests will have the opportunity to experience the ship while it undergoes a major rerigging project, an important preservation effort that helps ensure Constellation's long-term care and continued public access. Please note that portions of the reception may take place outdoors or in cooler temperatures.

Opening Reception

Wednesday, March 11, 2026, 5:30 pm-7:00 pm
Location: Baltimore Museum of Industry

Sponsored by

solidlight

Join friends and colleagues at the Building Museum's Symposium's Opening Reception. Enjoy drinks and hors d'oeuvres as you mingle, make new connections, and catch up with peers from across the museum field. The evening offers a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Complimentary Drink ticket provided.

Transportation sponsored by

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The Art of Case Design

Exhibitors' Reception

Thursday, March 12, 2026, 4:30 pm-6:00 pm

Sponsored by

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Unwind after a day of sessions with a drink and hors d'oeuvres in the Exhibitor's Hall. Meet and network with service providers, engineers, architects, and museum professionals. One complimentary drink ticket is provided. The hotel is cashless, and additional drinks can only be paid by card.

Buldy Awards Luncheon

Friday, March 13, 2026, 11:30 am-1:00 pm

Sponsored by

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ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING PLANNING INTERIORS

Celebrate museum innovation! The Buldy Award honors institutions, staff, and design teams behind exceptional building or renovation projects that showcase creativity, careful planning, and lasting impact.

MUSEUM TOURS

Tours are free, but space is limited. You must add the tour to your schedule in Sched. A waitlist will be available. Transportation is on your own. Pre-Registration Required.

Tour: National Aquarium

Wednesday, March 11, 10:00 am–11:30 am

Discover the National Aquarium's Harbor Wetland, a 10,000-square-foot constructed wetland and public access dock system in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. This guided tour, led by Aquarium staff experts and project partners, will take participants through interactive stations highlighting the innovative design and construction process, the diverse aquatic and terrestrial wildlife that now call the wetland home, and the interpretation, experiential exhibit elements, and programming offered to engage visitors. Learn how this unique habitat contributes to urban ecological restoration, fosters community connection, and serves as a model for combining conservation and public access in urban environments.

Tour: The Peale

Wednesday, March 11, 10:00 am–11:30 am

Step inside The Peale, Baltimore's historic gem, and Buildy Award recipient, for an exclusive tour highlighting its innovative renovations and thoughtful preservation. Explore updated exhibition spaces, interpretive design, and public areas, and learn how the project balanced modern needs with historic integrity. Along the way, hear about The Guild @ The Peale—our restorative arts apprenticeship program—and The Lab @ The Peale, Baltimore's center for innovation in the GLAM sector. This tour offers museum professionals, designers, and architecture enthusiasts a unique opportunity to see how careful restoration and adaptive reuse create vibrant, engaging, and sustainable museum experiences.

Tour: Baltimore Museum of Art

Wednesday, March 11, 10:30 am–12:00 pm

Tour recently completed renovations with the architects and general contractors, with special visits from the BMA's curatorial and education staff. The renovations focus on opening major site lines through the historic John Russel Pope Building, creating flexible galleries, and heightening visitor engagement through study centers and interactive education galleries. Tour The Center for Prints Drawings and Photographs and The Center for Matisse Studies, including galleries, print study rooms, and a large stained-glass installation by artist Stanley Whitney; The Joseph Education Center, including hands-on galleries, a studio classroom, Insight Lab, and "Wall of Wonder" and two newly opened main floor galleries.

Tour: Jewish Museum of Maryland

Wednesday, March 11, 1:00 pm–2:30 pm

Explore how the Jewish Museum of Maryland (JMM) has evolved into a fully modernized 21st century culturally specific museum. In February 2025, JMM reopened its doors following an eighteen-month closure during which time the Museum's front-of-house was transformed through the execution of deep architectural planning and the installation of state-of-the-art technologies designed to advance a participatory practice. During this tour project leaders will share insights on the design and construction process, and reflections since reopening.

Tour: Port Discovery Children's Museum

Wednesday, March 11, 1:00 pm–2:30 pm

Explore the recent renovations at Port Discovery Children's Museum in Baltimore on this exclusive tour. Designed to enhance visitor experience, accessibility, and sustainability, the updates transform the museum into an even more engaging space for children and families. Tour participants will see revitalized exhibition areas, interactive play spaces, and updated public amenities. Museum staff, the architecture team, and exhibit design teams will share insights into design decisions, challenges, and innovative solutions implemented during the renovation.

Tour: The Walters Art Museum

Wednesday, March 11, 1:00 pm–2:30 pm

Join us for an exclusive insider preview of the Walters Art Museum with the curators overseeing the reinstallation of the Hackerman House collection. While the tour will take place in public areas of the museum, participants will enjoy a rare opportunity to learn directly from the curators about the upcoming installation—gaining insight into the process, the curatorial vision, and the stories shaping the newly reimagined presentation of the collection. After the tour, you are welcome to explore the museum's galleries at your own pace.

BUILDY AWARD WINNERS

The Buildy Award is MAAM’s highest recognition for completed museum building projects, honoring institutions that demonstrate exemplary leadership in planning, design, and construction—and achieve transformational organizational impact after project completion. The award celebrates museum directors, staff, trustees, and design and construction teams whose collaborative efforts result in sustainable, mission-driven cultural facilities that serve their communities for generations to come.

What sets the Buildy Award apart is its emphasis on leadership, collaboration, and institutional impact. Projects of all sizes and budgets are eligible, with evaluation focused on how effectively museum leadership navigated complex stakeholder interests—including staff, trustees, donors, designers, contractors, and visitors—to create lasting, financially sustainable assets that advance mission and serve the public.

This year, MAAM recognizes two Buildy Award Winners and three honorable mentions:

Folger Shakespeare Library, Buildy Award

The Folger Shakespeare Library was selected for its exemplary integration of historic preservation, architectural innovation, and public access. The renovation repositions a world-class research library as an open,

welcoming cultural destination, introducing a new public “front door,” dramatically improved accessibility, expanded exhibition and public spaces, and advanced preservation infrastructure. Highlights include the first-ever permanent public display of all 82 copies of Shakespeare’s First Folio in a purpose-built, environmentally controlled gallery. The project balances scholarly rigor with broad public engagement and has resulted in a significant increase in visitation and community use, while preserving the integrity of Paul Philippe Cret’s iconic building adjacent to the United States Capitol campus.

The Folger Shakespeare Library project team included KieranTimberlake (architect), OLIN Studio (landscape architect), Studio Joseph (exhibit design), Pentagram (graphic design and wayfinding), MTFA (historic preservation), Silman (now TYLin) (structural engineering), Altieri (MEP/FP), Tillotson Design Associates (lighting design), Gilbane Building Company (construction manager), and Becker & Frondorf (owner’s representative).



BUILDY AWARD WINNERS

Jackson Hole History Museum, Buildy Award

The Jackson Hole History Museum earned a Buildy Award for its deeply collaborative, community-driven approach to museum expansion and interpretation. Emerging from a grassroots effort to “Save the Block” for public use, the project reimagines the museum as a civic and cultural hub that centers local history, Indigenous partnerships, and shared public space. The new campus integrates preserved historic cabins, contemporary galleries, outdoor gathering areas, and a highly visible mural by an Indigenous artist. Exhibitions and programs foreground underrepresented voices and regional narratives, while providing universal accessibility, sustainable site strategies, and flexible, well-planned public and back of house spaces that strengthen the museum’s role as a community anchor in a rapidly changing region.

The Jackson Hole History Museum project team included HGA (lead architect), Prospect Studio (local architect), Gallagher & Associates (exhibit design), ACM (contractor), Berning Project Management (owner’s representative) and extensive collaboration with the Eastern Shoshone and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. Working with Jackson Hole Public Art, a large mural was painted by Nanibah Chacon in partnership with Eastern Shoshone educator, Lynette St. Clair. Nina Simon, Alissa Rupp, and Michele Pacifico provided strategic planning guidance and museum expertise.



BUILDY AWARD HONORABLE MENTIONS

Nature Education Center at Cylburn Arboretum

The Nature Education Center at Cylburn Arboretum received a Buildy Award Honorable Mention for its thoughtful integration of historic preservation and contemporary design. The Buildy Review Committee commended the effective use of modern materials alongside the restored Carriage House and the project's responsive approach to the surrounding environment.

Serving as a campus anchor, the Center advances Cylburn's mission by expanding year-round educational programming and strengthening connections between visitors and the arboretum landscape—offering a strong model for adaptive reuse in a public garden setting.



Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation at the American Museum of Natural History

The Buildy Review Committee commended the Gilder Center for creating contemplative gallery spaces that invite interaction, introducing natural light to enhance the visitor experience, and improving circulation by thoughtfully connecting the Museum's historic wings. This transformative project advances the Museum's mission through experiential architecture that strengthens connections, enriches public space, and deepens engagement with the natural world.



Joslyn Art Museum

The Joslyn Art Museum received an Honorable Mention for its creative unification of multiple historic buildings into a cohesive, light-filled campus. The Buildy Review Committee recognized the project's bold addition of a new front-facing pavilion that complements the Museum's iconic Art Deco and modernist structures. The Hawks Pavilion introduces contemporary materials that reference the signature Georgia Pink marble and creates a dramatic new entry leading to galleries, gardens, and community spaces. The expansion thoughtfully connects legacy buildings while advancing the Museum's mission and strengthening its role in the Omaha community.



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Zone Display Cases



Breakout Session #1

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM

Bold, Practical, Sustainable: Exhibits and Infrastructure in Balance

Every museum leader knows that infrastructure upgrades never stop, you're always planning for the next system. The same is true for exhibitions. Both age, both require reinvestment, and both must serve the next generation of visitors.

This session looks at exhibitions as living infrastructure through the case study of The Franklin Institute. With a building nearly a century old, the Institute has faced the dual challenge of upgrading mechanical systems while completely reimagining its galleries. This meant gutting entire wings, installing future-proof technology, and ensuring the infrastructure put in place today can serve audiences and staff long after the exhibits change again.

What makes this process innovative isn't just the hardware, it's the design process. From community engagement to iterative testing, from balancing diversity of stories to designing for long-term operations, this work demonstrates how to align exhibits and infrastructure with bold vision, practical solutions, and sustainable outcomes.

This panel will share candid lessons learned from architects, exhibit designers, and museum leaders who wrestled with the messy reality of modernizing a historic institution. Attendees will gain strategies for connecting facility planning with exhibit design, and ideas for how to create flexible infrastructure that sustains both the building and the visitor experience for decades to come.

Learning Objectives:

- Link exhibit design cycles to facility infrastructure planning.
- Identify design strategies that are bold yet realistic in historic contexts.

- Apply sustainability principles to exhibitions and building systems alike.
- Explore collaborative approaches across architects, designers, operators, and community.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-24 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenters: Steven Falkowski, Jacobswyper, Architect; Eric Welch, The Franklin Institute, Director of Experiences; Dan Picard, MDSX, LLC, Owner & Executive Creative Director; Courtney Rigger, The Franklin Institute, Assistant Director of Operations

Museum Flood Risks: Moving from Assessments to Solutions at the Mystic Seaport Museum and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History

Based on current climate projection models, sea level rise and increasing levels of precipitation will continue to put historic museum buildings, and the collections housed within them, increasingly at risk. Assessing and addressing flood risks is a complex process that involves making informed predictions about an uncertain future. With long term planning, mitigation strategies can offer multifaceted benefits to a museum's mission and programs.

This presentation will show how to assess different types of flood risk, consider mitigation options, set priorities and build consensus, and develop a plan and budget for both short term (interim) and long term (permanent) solutions.

Breakout Session #1

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM

Mystic Seaport Museums' on-going campus facility planning process has involved an intense and comprehensive stakeholder engagement effort. One of the foundations of this process has been an overarching goal to increase institutional resilience while also enhancing MSM's visitor experience and taking steps to make its collections, research and other endeavors more broadly accessible to a larger audience.

At the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, location, site, and aging infrastructure influence flood risks to the building and its collections. NMAH's master plan includes mitigation strategies related to increased severity of storms, sea level rise, municipal stormwater drainage, building systems, and site topography. Implementation relies on temporary solutions to mitigate risk in the short term and long-term solutions that mesh with plans for improving the visitor experience and accessibility in the building and its grounds.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify site and facility vulnerabilities caused by a variety of flood risk types
- Identify the expertise needed to develop and implement flood risk mitigation solutions
- Prioritize resiliency planning and implementation through consensus-building and stakeholder engagement
- Identify and understand how best to deploy a variety of short-term (such as deployable flood barriers) and long-term solutions (such as elevation, migration, and permanent flood barriers)

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-25 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: Ed Rice, Annum Architects, Associate Principal/Director of Sustainability; Cory R. Brett, Simpson Gumpertz and Heger, Senior Project Manager; Shannon McKenzie, Mystic Seaport Museum, Vice President of watercraft Operations and

Preservation; Michelle Miller, HGA, Architect; Lindsey Vanderdray, Smithsonian Institution, Design Manager, Office of Planning Design and Construction

Reimagining a Landmark: Transforming the Barnes Foundation into the Frances M. Maguire Art Museum

In 1925, Albert Barnes commissioned Paul Philippe Cret to design a museum in Merion, Pennsylvania, that united art, architecture, and nature in everyday life. Barnes arranged artworks, decorative arts, and objects to reveal relationships of form, color, and light. After the collection moved to Center City, Cret's building and landscape became part of Saint Joseph's University. Today, reimagined as the Frances M. Maguire Art Museum (MAAM), the site advances the University's mission of imagination, critical thinking, and dialogue.

This session will describe the transformation of the revered Barnes Foundation building from a prescriptive space to one with dynamic exhibitions, public events, and integrated teaching. Emily Hage, Ph.D., the Maguire's Founding Director, and Jamie Unkefer, AIA, of DIGSAU will share design and program strategies for accessibility, inclusivity, and public engagement. They will highlight modifications to enhance visitor experience, approaches to managing light and comfort in a 97-year-old landmark, and surprises uncovered during renovation. This talk will resonate with museum administrators, architects, engineers, and educators seeking insights into adapting historic landmarks for contemporary teaching, research, and public engagement.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how the former Barnes Foundation building was adapted to meet the needs of contemporary audiences while advancing the pedagogical mission of an academic art museum.

Breakout Session #1

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM

Learning Objectives:

- Discover subtle yet impactful adjustments to the building's original configuration that transformed it into a modern, flexible gallery.
- Examine how light, views, acoustics, and air quality shape the visitor experience.
- Explore renovation strategies that achieve full accessibility throughout a historic museum.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-4 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Emily Hage, Ph.D., Frances M. Maguire Art Museum, St. Joseph's University, Founding Director, Professor; Jamie Unkefer, DIGSAU, Principal

The Dubuque Museum of Art: Building Relevancy in Micropolitan America

Founded in 1874 as the first cultural institution in Iowa, the Dubuque Museum of Art (DuMA) has grown into a Smithsonian affiliate with a collection that focuses on 20th-century American Regionalism as well as contemporary American work. Since opening its first dedicated home in 1999, attendance and support has been static. Today, the Museum is building a transformative new campus that will reimagine what an arts institution can be in Iowa's first city—and differentiate Dubuque as it competes for population, workforce, and tourism. The new indoor-outdoor campus will host a wide range of inclusive programs for pre-schoolers, students, families, creative professionals, and older adults. A pivotal step in this journey came when Museum staff attended the Building Museums Conference in 2022, gaining foundational insights into how a building project can be rooted in community impact.

DuMA and its design team led an extensive community engagement process to ensure the campus reflected the voices of the entire community, including those who do not regularly visit art

museums. Three priorities emerged: creating a place where kids can be kids, ensuring strong local representation, and establishing a shared space for the community. These values challenged traditional notions of an art museum and shaped an ongoing dialogue between object-centered and guest-centered experiences.

With construction now underway, a temporary museum space allows staff to test curatorial ideas and refine programs, creating a key moment to share progress and invite conversation about the Museum's future. This session will explore how designers and museum leadership translated community priorities and institutional needs into architecture, and how the resulting building provides a flexible framework that can adapt with artists and audiences over the next century.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify effective strategies for engaging diverse community stakeholders in the planning and design of cultural facilities, with a focus on reaching audiences historically underrepresented in museum attendance.
- Apply community-driven programming principles to the development of museum spaces that integrate cultural, educational, and civic functions.
- Evaluate design approaches that connect museum buildings to surrounding public spaces to enhance visibility, foster engagement, and help to catalyze downtown revitalization.
- Assess methods for integrating innovative lighting strategies and transparency in museum design to enhance visitor experience, protect collections, and support healthy interior environments.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-6 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: Paul Schulhof, Schulhof Rashidi Architects, Partner; Gary Stoppelman, Dubuque Museum of Art, Executive Director; Azadeh Rashidi, Schulhof Rashidi Architects, Partner

Breakout Session #1

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM

The Studio Museum In Harlem: How Architecture Reflects The Mission

The Studio Museum in Harlem was established in 1968, during a time of civil unrest and deep inequities across American cultural institutions. Its mission as a nexus for artists of African descent, and for work shaped by Black culture, has guided its evolution as a site for the dynamic exchange of ideas about art and society. Located in the heart of Harlem, the Museum has long served its neighbors through education programs, public engagement, and its renowned Artist-in-Residence program.

The design of its new home needed to reflect and amplify this mission. Drawing inspiration from Harlem's stages, sanctuaries, and streets, the building centers accessibility, community welcome, and belonging. Features such as the inverted stoop on 125th Street, flexible gathering spaces, artist studios connected to K-12 learning environments, and a rooftop terrace that opens to the city all reinforce the Museum's commitment to cultural resonance and public experience.

In this session, the Director of Capital Projects, Executive Architect, Design Architect, and Chief Program Officer will discuss the making of this landmark project from early visioning through completion. Panelists will share never-before-discussed insights about navigating a multi-year cultural project in a rapidly evolving neighborhood, the complexities of designing purpose-built space for artists of African descent, and the lessons learned about partnership, process, equity, and storytelling through architecture. Together, they will explore how the new Studio Museum models a redefined relationship between cultural institutions and the communities they serve.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify strategies for embodying institutional values through design.
- Analyze methods for integrating programmatic and community needs.
- Evaluate strategies to create flexible and inclusive gathering spaces.
- Assess lessons from aligning mission and architecture in capital projects.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-22 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Erin Flynn, RA, Corgan, Principal; Betsy McClelland, Studio Museum in Harlem, Director, Capital Projects; Natasha L. Logan, Studio Museum in Harlem, Chief Program Officer; Pascale Sablan

Breakout Session #2

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 1:45 PM-3:00 PM

Best Practices Bundling Projects: Finding Efficiencies in Project Implementation

This session will describe the multiple small projects, with multiple design teams and various internal museum departments, which were executed together under the West Building Exterior Renovation effort. These included: full building re-roofing, stone re-pointing and repairs, a refresh of permanent collection galleries, a new banner hanging system, a major area of landscape restoration facing the National Mall, and replacement of our exterior doors facing the National Mall. The speakers will describe each component of the project and cover planning, budgeting, successes, and challenges of this way of working. The presentation will look at synergies between the components that led to cost savings by implementing concurrently. All presenters were personally involved in the project for multiple years of its life.

The project touched on many of the museum's strategic priorities, including critical maintenance and preservation of our historic building envelope, branding and wayfinding to benefit visitor experience, gallery upgrades, and collections care.

Combining several smaller projects into a single construction effort led to a large team, with a wide variety of skill sets and expertise. The session will cover the communication strategies and construction project controls which the team employed, both the successes and challenges.

Our intended audience is a wide range of Building Museum attendees, as the lessons learned from bundling projects are applicable to a wide range of institutions. The general outcomes are that attendees will learn about the multi-disciplinary approach employed by this project team, and the thoughtful, inclusive upfront planning that paid dividends.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the early work that led to this project's large team having effective coordination.
- Identify multiple components of the combined project which had synergies for implementation.
- Identify strategies the team used successfully to communicate and maintain project controls on the construction work.
- Summarize the connections between the museum's strategic priorities and the project work.
- Apply successes of this project to their own work in small projects or multiple requirements.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-3 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Jaime Kurry, National Gallery of Art, Acting Chief Architect; Michael Laphorn, National Gallery of Art, Chief of Design; Hillary Lord, National Gallery of Art, Engineer & Program Manager; James 'JR' Rollyson, The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, Senior Project Manager & Group Leader

Building a Modern Legacy on a historic site; Challenging traditional norms of how we build and experience museums

This panel explores the extraordinary design and construction journey of a new 347,500 square-foot museum in the heart of Los Angeles. Spanning a busy boulevard and rising from a geologically complex "tar pit," this project faced unprecedented logistical and engineering challenges. A collaborative team of international and local experts had to overcome a series of obstacles, from adapting an architect's vision on his first ever build in the US to sourcing specialized materials from 11 different countries amidst a global pandemic. The project required the installation of the world's largest glass panels and designing a re-engineered foundation system supported by more than 1,800 piles and 56 base isolators.

Breakout Session #2

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 1:45 PM-3:00 PM

This case study is not just about overcoming technical hurdles; it is a masterclass in resilient collaboration, innovative problem-solving, and future-proofing a cultural institution. Museum directors will gain insights into managing complex international partnerships and mitigating risks in high-stakes projects. Curators and designers will learn how to integrate an owner's visionary philosophy—that the museum itself is a piece of art accessible to all—into a permanent, architecturally ambitious, and structurally demanding design.

The panel will reveal how the ability to pivot, paired with proactive and coordinated planning, were essential to managing an evolving design and ensuring the building's longevity and operational flexibility. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies for navigating complex builds, fostering communication among diverse stakeholders, and creating institutions that are both iconic and enduring.

Learning Objectives:

- **Design for a Broader Visitor Experience:** This objective will show attendees how the project's foundational philosophy—that the museum should be a welcoming, non-intimidating space for the masses—was realized through design and operational decisions. Participants will learn about specific strategies for creating a more accessible and transparent experience, including how spatial design was used to remove traditional barriers to entry, engage diverse communities, and broaden the definition of who a museum is "for."
- **Master Collaborative Communication with Diverse Stakeholders:** Participants will gain actionable strategies for fostering effective communication and collaboration among all project stakeholders—including a visionary owner, an international architect, and a domestic construction team—to ensure a shared vision is executed despite evolving designs and logistical hurdles.

- **Understand Risk Management in Large-Scale International Projects:** Attendees will learn to identify and proactively address unforeseen challenges in a complex building project, from geological conditions to global supply chain disruptions, and gain insights into mitigating risks when working with diverse, international teams.
- **Implement Strategic Budget Management in High-Risk Environments:** This objective will provide insights into how a project team managed a high-stakes budget despite significant unforeseen conditions—such as the "tar pit" foundation redesign and evolving design elements—that could have caused massive cost overruns. Attendees will learn about the financial planning, contingency strategies, and collaborative decision-making processes necessary to maintain fiscal responsibility on a project with continuous changes and high expectations.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-27 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Julie Wietecha, Clark Construction, Project Executive; LJ Hartman, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Sr. Vice President of Operations; Art Vasconcelos, Clark Construction, Construction Executive; Carol Ann Ruiz, SOM Architects, Senior Associate Principal

Breakout Session #2

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 1:45 PM-3:00 PM

Moving Math: A World of Numbers . . . and Beyond: The Strategic Relocation and Expansion of the National Museum of Mathematics

Following the COVID-19 pandemic—when cultural institutions were struggling to recover and cities were working to revitalize—the National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath) made the bold decision to relocate and expand after a decade of success in Manhattan’s Madison Square North Historic District. Since 2012, MoMath has engaged diverse audiences of all ages through dynamic exhibits and programming, becoming a vital anchor in the city’s cultural landscape. To sustain the museum’s finances during relocation, the team secured and opened a temporary space. MoMath’s new permanent home creates flexible spaces for interactive exhibits, educational programs, and fundraising events.

“Moving Math” examines a phased relocation strategy that maintained operational continuity while navigating New York’s challenging real estate market and regulatory environment. The initial phase involved a methodical search for optimal ground-floor space in a prime Manhattan location. It was followed by the rapid conversion of a gymnasium into a temporary museum on a minimal budget. The final phase required the integration of 100-plus bespoke exhibits while respecting landmark preservation requirements and coordinating numerous fabricators to transform space in a 1902 building in the Ladies’ Mile Historic District.

This presentation is for museum professionals considering institutional growth via adaptive reuse.

Learning Objectives:

- Examine the process of moving and expanding an interactive museum, including the major phases involved in realizing a complex capital project.

- Analyze how strategic timing can convert challenges into opportunities—for example, how MoMath’s post-COVID relocation benefited from reduced real estate competition, motivated sellers, and increased contractor availability—and how counterintuitive timing requires strong stakeholder communication and confidence in long-term vision.
- Explore how interim solutions can sustain an institution’s mission during relocation, including maintaining operations in a temporary space, preserving community relationships, supporting staff expertise, and protecting revenue streams. Emphasis is placed on framing relocation as growth and engaging neighborhood stakeholders as partners.
- Assess methods for balancing historic preservation requirements with modern functional needs when adapting historic-district retail space into a contemporary museum, including early regulatory engagement and flexible design strategies.
- Understand the strategic coordination required when collaborating with multiple fabricators of interactive exhibits, including scheduling protocols, quality standards, and centralized project management to ensure a cohesive visitor experience.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-17 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: Nick Leahy, Perkins Eastman, Co-CEO and Executive Director; Andres Pastoriza, Perkins Eastman, Principal; Cindy Lawrence, National Museum of Mathematics, CEO and Executive Director; Andy Bast, Zubatkin Owner Representation, A Cumming Group Company, Senior Principal; Tim Nissen, National Museum of Mathematics, Associate Director

Breakout Session #2

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 1:45 PM-3:00 PM

Shaping + (Inheriting) + Leading: Lessons From Leadership Change During A Major Museum Expansion

In the summer of 2019, the Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA) was beginning the programming process of a major expansion project that would open to the public in May of 2025. At the time MAASS began programming interviews, the current Executive Director had announced her retirement and the search for her successor had begun. That successor stepped into role of Executive Director in April 2020, just as the Covid pandemic was taking hold, only to depart in July 2023 once the project's design by BVH Architecture was complete and just over a year after construction began in the spring of 2022. In November of 2023, Andrew Dunehoo assumed not only the role of Executive Director at MONA, but also the design of a major expansion shaped by his predecessor's aspirations.

Leadership change during an expansion project is more common than most expect. This panel discussion delves deep into the planning, programming and design process of the recently completed MONA expansion in the American Heartland. The project's architect, Mark Bacon along with Sue Quambush and Tom Gallagher, both previous Board Chairs and members of the project's steering committee, will join the project's Owner Representative, Jon Maass, to discuss shaping of the project: early master planning, the programming process, and the 18-month design effort. Andrew Dunehoo will join the group to share the challenges, surprises and rewards of inheriting a project-in-process and ultimately bringing the project to life in both the local Kearney, NE and statewide Nebraska Communities.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn from an effective programming process, including goals, participants, methods and documentation.

- Understand the interrelation between the programming and design process.
- Understand the challenges and opportunities associated with assuming an Executive Directorship in a project midstream.
- Understand the challenges of assuming an Executive Director's responsibilities in the opening of a new museum for which you did not play a primary role in the planning, programming and design of the building.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-13 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Jon Maass, MAASS, Director; Andrew Dunehoo, Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA), Executive Director; Sue Quambush, Museum of Nebraska Art, Past President, Board of Directors; Tom Gallagher, Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA), Chair, Board of Directors; Mark Bacon, Design Principal, Design Principal

The Neighborhood of Play: How a Museum Expansion Transformed a Neighborhood

In 2014, the City of Rochester began discussions about removing the "Inner Loop East" Expressway, a sunken, underused roadway constructed during the middle of the 20th-century. The prospect of new, developable land provided a much-needed opportunity to expand The Strong National Museum of Play's footprint and achieve key mission-centric goals—as well as work with the City of Rochester and other outside partners to reimagine the entire neighborhood around The Strong as the Neighborhood of Play, a transformative, green, and walkable space for people to visit, live, work, and play.

Working with the City and private developers (Indus Hospitality and Konar Properties), the museum went beyond conventional boundaries and took the lead in the creation of a new neighborhood that was not possible by any single organization.

Breakout Session #2

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 1:45 PM-3:00 PM

In the best interest of the community, The Strong, the City of Rochester, and these private developers saw beyond their own interests and found common ground needed for improvements in civic life. Working together with CJS Architects, the team developed a model for sharing planning expertise, costs, land, infrastructure, and funding. The vision was centered on a new amenity rich, public, mixed-use street—Adventure Place.

In this session, museum leaders, fundraisers, and community relations professionals will learn how to think beyond their own walls, how to leverage City and private relationships for large-scale projects, and how to engage their communities to transform their neighborhoods into economic and tourism drivers.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand how cultural or institutional projects leverage surrounding mixed-use projects by private developers to create synergistic developments that benefit the museum and build stronger, more sustainable communities.
- Examine how museums can partner with municipalities to create development plans that extend beyond the boundaries of the institution to open the door to funding resources that would not be available for a museum project alone.
- Explore how to use limited institutional and commercial ground floor transparency paired with activated residential streetscapes to create a safe and walkable public realm and neighborhood.
- Apply design strategies to museum projects such that the museum's program functions and spaces, including Exhibit, Archive, Admissions, Parking, etc. and how it can be structured to best contribute to the active streetscapes required for successful neighborhoods.
- Explore the possibility of replacing museum parking lots with a parking structure to create developable land that can contribute to the success of the museum and surrounding community.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-12 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: Steve Dubnik, The Strong National Museum of Play, President and CEO; Dana Miller, City of Rochester, Commissioner, Neighborhood and Business Development; Craig Jensen, CJS Architects, Architect; Tim Schmid, Konar Properties, President

Breakout Session #3

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 3:15 PM-4:30 PM

Build Only What is Necessary: Realizing Mission through Architecture, Landscape, and Systems at Storm King Art Center

Storm King Art Center's first-ever capital project (opened May 2025) provides the outdoor art museum with a singular opportunity to amplify its vision of enhancing the visitor experience; protecting its art, landscape, and people; and advancing its program of art and nature. A diverse and collaborative team of design and project professionals embraced the mantra of "build only what is necessary" to provide necessary operational spaces--parking, ticketing, restrooms, group orientation, and facilities for conservation, fabrication, and maintenance--while prioritizing the visitor's journey through the landscape for art. To do so required programmatic clarity from the client, including standards for physical accessibility; an architectural team that closely interrogated building footprint, materiality, and detailing to create structures that match the integrity of the Art Center's collection; landscape design that efficiently shelters systems and increases biodiversity while intuitively guiding the visitor journey; and building systems that reduce operational maintenance and energy loads, facilitate the light-on-the-land ambition of the architecture, and move Storm King's campus toward a net-zero future. The session, presented by the leaders of the client, project management, design, and systems teams, will provide museum personnel and seasoned project specialists with new questions to ask to use financial and spatial resources efficiently and effectively.

Learning Objectives:

- Analyze how deep engagement with an institution's vision can yield design outcomes that produce extraordinary spaces and strengthen mission alignment.
- Explain how programmatic clarity facilitates and integrates project direction, communication, fundraising, and future operations.

- Apply strategies for balancing the imperatives of design, program, and budget.
- Evaluate how passive design strategies and selective active systems can align with institutional mission and operational capabilities.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-5 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Adrienne Hepler, Envoie Projects, Owner and Co-Founder; Oliver Meade PE, Buro Happold, Principal; Beka Sturges, Reed Hilderbrand, Principal; Amy Weisser, Independent, Independent; Claire Weisz, WXY architecture + urban design, Principal-in-Charge

Early and Often: A Conversation about Integrated Financial Planning

Launching a museum building project requires more than an inspiring vision—it demands an integrated financial framework that links aspirations to sustainable operations. This session explores the essential intersections of capital budgets, operating budgets, and fundraising capacity, underscoring why alignment between these areas is critical from the earliest stages of planning. Participants will gain insight into how capital projects affect attendance, revenue, and expenses, and how realistic financial forecasting supports both short-term feasibility and long-term vitality.

The panel will unpack the differences between budgets and cash flow, revealing how timing, phasing, and fundraising strategies shape the path from concept to completion. Panelists will also address the importance of rightsizing and value engineering, offering practical strategies for scaling ambitions to fit financial and institutional realities without compromising mission or vision.

Breakout Session #3

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 3:15 PM-4:30 PM

Early and Often: A Conversation about Integrated Financial Planning

Through case studies—including the Studio Museum in Harlem, Oklahoma Contemporary, Storm King Art Center, Perez Art Museum Miami, and the Norton Art Museum—attendees will see how early integrated planning helps institutions clarify project scope, anticipate operating implications, and build the confidence of stakeholders and funders.

Specialists in financial planning, cost estimating, and fundraising will illustrate the tools and information required to develop accurate budgets, assess capacity, and manage decision-making pinch-points. The intended audience is Board members, directors, senior staff, curators, museum consultants, and architects; all of whom should understand the importance and process for integrating capital and operating budgets and scaling a capital campaign.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the components and subcomponents of a fully integrated planning model (capital, operating, fundraising).
- Differentiate between budgets and cash flow, and explain how each informs project feasibility.
- Apply principles of rightsizing and value engineering to align scope with financial and institutional realities.
- Assess fundraising capacity in relation to total project cost to determine an achievable project scale.
- Identify key decision points where integrated financial planning can prevent cost overruns and support long-term sustainability.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-26 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Amy Kaufman, Amy Kaufman Cultural Planning, Principal; Sheila McDaniel, International African American Museum, Chief Operating Officer; Abby Ashley, Norton Museum of Art, Chief Strategic Advancement Officer; Robert Portnoff, Paratus Group, Project Director

Immersion, Innovation, and Infrastructure: The Shedd Transformation

Shedd Aquarium is in the midst of a once-in-a-century transformation that bridges its historic 1930s building with its mission to inspire compassion, curiosity, and conservation. Building on its Centennial Master Plan, Shedd is addressing aging infrastructure, circulation challenges, and complex structural systems while creating immersive and participatory animal exhibits that advance its mission, enhance guest experiences, and provide best-in-class animal care. This session will reveal how a cultural icon is being reimaged for the next 100 years, while remaining open to millions of visitors throughout construction.

Attendees will learn how building systems impact the integration of new exhibit projects and discover strategies for balancing historic preservation with contemporary mission goals. The presentation will also highlight sustainable and regenerative strategies tailored to historic buildings, including measurable outcomes already achieved in the current phase of work. Finally, the session will explore the human side of long-term transformation: assembling and managing multidisciplinary teams for multi-year design and construction efforts, with an emphasis on effective communication and collaboration.

This session is designed for museum professionals, preservationists, architects and engineers who are grappling with the complexities of modernizing historic buildings. Participants will gain actionable plans for navigating the intersection of preservation, sustainability, and innovation; practical tools for managing design and construction teams over extended timeframes; and valuable lessons from Shedd's ongoing journey to align mission and building.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify strategies to balance historic preservation with long-term institutional mission needs.
- Analyze how building systems affect the integration of new exhibit projects.

Breakout Session #3

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 3:15 PM-4:30 PM

Immersion, Innovation, and Infrastructure: The Shedd Transformation

Learning Objectives:

- Evaluate sustainable and regenerative design strategies applicable to historic buildings.
- Develop approaches for assembling and managing multi-year design and construction teams with an emphasis on effective communication.

**AIA Continuing Education Course Number,
BMS2026-10 (1.25 LU|Elective)**

Presenter: [Bob Larsen, P.E., MSA, Director of Engineering](#); [Kristen Neria, Shedd Aquarium, Director of Exhibits](#); [Sheri Andrews, Valerio Dewalt Train Associates, Principal](#); [Bob Wengel, Shedd Aquarium, Senior Vice President of Facilities and Security](#)

Space + Story + Stewardship: Creating Spaces for Collective Engagement

How do we design museums and civic spaces that invite belonging — not just on opening day, but for generations? Narrative designer and museum planner Aki Carpenter (Vice President & Chief Creative Officer, Ralph Appelbaum Associates), architect and public interest designer Monica Chadha (Founder, Civic Projects Architecture), and museum director Ben Garcia (Executive Director, The American LGBTQ+ Museum) come together for a lively conversation about co-creation and community care.

Drawing on examples from community-centered museum planning to civic infrastructure design, the panel explores how space, story, and stewardship work together to build public places that reflect and serve their communities. Together they will discuss: Space: How architecture and exhibits can embody generosity, transparency, and invitation; Story: How narrative environments can amplify a multitude of voices and connect visitors to one another; and Stewardship: How curatorial strategies, design decisions and programming sustain radical welcome and engagement long-term.

Learning Objectives:

- Use the “Space + Story + Stewardship’ framework to imagine museums as places that invite belonging and empower visitors to engage with urgent civic questions.
- Select and adapt tools for co-creation—such as workshops, facilitated dialogues, and hands-on engagement —that give communities a voice in shaping space and narrative.
- Craft design strategies that move beyond representation to activate participation, encouraging visitors to find their own voice in the story.
- Identify opportunities for museums to become civic platforms, where community members not only intake content but participate and contribute.

Attendees will leave with practical tools and inspiration, including:

- Examples showing successful engagement methods and a framework for balancing space, story, and stewardship in museum projects.
- Strategies for inviting communities into narrative development and civic infrastructure planning.

**AIA Continuing Education Course Number,
BMS2026-30 (1.25 LU|Elective)**

Presenter: [Ben Garcia, American LGBTQ+ Museum, Executive Director](#); [Monica Chadha, Civic Projects Architecture, Founder and Principal Architect](#); [Aki Carpenter, Ralph Appelbaum Associates \(RAA\), Vice President and Chief Creative Officer](#)

Breakout Session #3

CONTINUED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 3:15 PM-4:30 PM

Balancing Conservation and Carbon: Sustainable Building Strategies at Princeton University

The new Princeton University Art Museum and renovated Marquand Library house collections of fine art, works on paper, sculpture, and rare art history books across 200,000 GSF. The museum program includes galleries, multipurpose conservation and education spaces, object study rooms, collections storage, seminar rooms, café and sculpture terraces. The new museum replaces five generations of construction over a century. Pavilions enhance the art experience by connecting galleries on one level compared to the previous 20+ levels. While Marquand Library remained largely intact, the library's dated envelope has been enhanced or replaced, and HVAC systems converted to low temperature heating and humidification systems.

The project advanced the University's ambitious Sustainability Action Plan, targeting net-zero carbon emissions by 2046. A central strategy is replacing fossil fuel-generated steam with low-temperature hot water supplied by geo-exchange facilities. While the technologies are not new, their application in a museum and library context, with strict environmental setpoints, sensitive collections, and Mid-Atlantic climatic variations is relatively uncommon. Careful study of both new construction and existing buildings was required to evaluate risks, manage condensation, and adapt conventional design practices to this new system.

This session will first ground participants in traditional practices for maintaining strict environmental conditions in museums and libraries, then explore how Princeton adapted those methods to achieve a sustainable conversion. Attendees will gain insights into envelope design, HVAC strategies, risk mitigation, and effective monitoring. These lessons are particularly relevant and applicable to institutions of all scales pursuing both preservation and carbon emissions reduction.

Learning Objectives:

- Use the “Describe the traditional, industrial era types of heating, ventilation and humidification systems commonly found in older museums, summarizing their simplicity in their function.
- Explore techniques to assess existing envelope construction.
- Identify critical environmental temperature and relative humidity ranges to establish basis of design criteria for condensation risk analysis.
- Compare different heating and humidification methods and their effectiveness.
- Explore ways to improve condensation resistance, thermal & infiltration performance in the building envelope.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-8 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: Joe Russo, PE, Kohler Ronan Consulting Engineers, Senior Associate; John Hannum, PE, RA, Princeton University, Executive Director of Engineering & Campus Energy; Erin Flynn, RA, Corgan, Principal; Andrew Maier, Heintges, Associate Principal; Chris Newth, Princeton University Art Museum, Senior Associate Director of Collections and Exhibitions

Breakout Session #4

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 10:15 AM-11:30 AM

A Comprehensive Study of the Impact of Fenestration on Museum and Gallery Spaces

Fenestration plays a vital role in a building's architectural expression, daylighting, ventilation, and energy performance. In the context of museums and galleries, its significance is further amplified as it contributes to a building's identity and character, enriches the visitor experience, and supports the long-term preservation of collections for current and future generations. The session will highlight the benefits of, and challenges associated with museum and gallery fenestration, covering key topics including:

- The importance of transparency (fenestration) as an architectural tool for drawing visitors to museums and for making museums feel more welcoming,
- The challenges of designing for existing buildings versus new,
- How glazed wall openings define "museum" from the exterior, while glazed roof openings define how daylight punctuates interior spaces, flooding artwork with filtered daylight,
- Designing for high performance,
- and the impact of: Geography (climate) on design; Shading systems on building and envelope design; Natural light (solar radiation) on collections; Glare on the viewer experience, and Glazing on temperature and humidity control, energy use, and operational budgets.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify strategies for harnessing natural light while minimizing direct sun glare
- Evaluate shading and controls that mitigate fluctuations in light and temperature, and comparing fixed versus mechanized shading elements, their applications and performance characteristics.
- Understand how interpreting daylight studies and assessing collection light exposure tolerances in curatorial environments informs design of daylight-responsive lighting and shade controls that maintain collection exposure within curatorial limits.

- Understand the importance of thermal breaks and integration of glazing systems with surrounding elements
- Understand the impact of glazing systems on HVAC design, energy use, and occupant thermal comfort and the importance of formulating HVAC strategies to mitigate condensation risks.
- Become familiar with: analytical tools used to study glazing and wall configurations, envelope performance specifications, prototype testing, and mockups; and glazing construction details to prevent condensation and maximize thermal performance.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-19 (1.25 LU/Elective)

Presenter: Paula Martinez, Fisher Marantz Stone, President; Azadeh Rashidi, Schulhof Rashidi Architects, Partner; James R. Gainfort, James R. Gainfort AIA Consulting Architect PC, President; Aaron D. Martin, PE, LEED AP

A Strategy for Public Approvals Success: The New York Historical's new Tang Wing for American Democracy

Obtaining public approvals for a sizable addition to a landmarked historic, nationally recognized cultural institution in a densely developed and politically active neighborhood in a major metropolis is a complex and political process fraught with many challenges.

This session, led by the New York Historical's own project manager, independent owner's representative, construction manager, and architect, will present a concise strategy with practical insights on planning each party's role and responsibilities, approaching external stakeholders, building consensus, crafting and presenting the design proposal presentation and successfully obtaining public approval that can be applied to your museum's future project.

Breakout Session #4 CONTINUED

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 10:15 AM-11:30 AM

A Strategy for Public Approvals Success: The New York Historical's new Tang Wing for American Democracy

Learning Objectives:

- Identify potential capital project public approvals supporters and opponents and learn how to engage each in a successful approvals process.
- Learn to plan a carefully sequenced communication strategy in support of capital project public approvals.
- Explore how to present a capital project proposal that engenders historic landmark regulatory agency support.
- Understand how new museum facilities can support the needs, identity, and mission of an exceptionally diverse museum community and how this diversity can support capital projects and public approvals.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-18 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: Roy Moskowitz, The New York Historical, Project Manager; Graham S. Wyatt, FAIA, Robert A.M. Stern Architects, LLP, Partner; Mahan Khajenoori, Zubatkin, a Cumming Group Company, Vice President; Andrew Malvetti, Turner Construction Company, Project Manager

Expect the Unexpected: Reimagining A Small Museum Founded by Women

During 2018, The Hopewell Museum (Hopewell, New Jersey) began assessing its vast collection largely reflecting the women's sphere and re-imagining its exhibit spaces. Unfortunately, these efforts were thwarted by the Covid-19 pandemic. With the small museum closed to the public, the institution's leadership seized the opportunity to refine the museum's mission and address the challenges of exhibiting and preserving its collection in a 1877 Second Empire structure.

Led by an all-volunteer board with diverse backgrounds, this governing body formed sub-committees to focus on specific areas to "re-imagine" operations and building concerns. The architects at Layer X were hired to guide the museum through a feasibility design process. As the program developed and the museum was evaluated, the board had several unexpected discoveries. Hazardous materials, out-of-date mechanical systems, uninvited critters, and wonderful artifacts -hidden in plain sight- surfaced and challenged the board's re-imagination's aims. With guidance and unwavering support from Layer X, Wendy Claire Jessup, and colleagues across the state and nation, The Hopewell Museum has begun to achieve its long-term vision.

This session will describe the museum's Reimagination process including both the feasibility study and textile conservation efforts. The feasibility study not only allowed the museum to make timely decisions but helped clarify the museum's vision for the future. When the unexpected happened, like the discovery of carpet beetles in the collection, the museum was both grounded and nimble, allowing it to focus on protecting historic textiles and costumes without losing momentum.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the skill sets needed to run a volunteer-based museum and describe the road map to create independent leadership without losing touch with the local community.
- Describe the components of a feasibility study and how an effective feasibility study can provide an action plan for achieving the museum's vision.
- Discuss how unexpected events can both inform and adjust the museum's vision.
- Discuss how the museum rapidly addressed its carpet beetle infestation and protected its collections.
- Illustrate building design strategies to facilitate functional exhibit spaces for contemporary interpretation

Breakout Session #4

CONTINUED

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 10:15 AM-11:30 AM

Expect the Unexpected: Reimagining A Small Museum Founded by Women

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-7 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Asher Lurie, The Hopewell Museum, Executive Director; Sarah Mezzino, The Hopewell Museum, Trustee; Wendy Claire Jessup, Wendy Jessup and Associates, Inc., Conservator; Wolfram Arendt, Layer X, Inc., Principal

How change in physical configuration of a museum can be used to forge greater connections to the immediate and greater community as well as amplify and strengthen an institution's mission.

This session explores effective strategies for amplifying institutional mission and enhancing visitor experience during projects involving master planning, renovations, or exhibit development. Attendees will examine approaches for aligning physical changes with organizational goals, focusing on methods that ensure design and operational decisions reflect the institution's broader purpose.

Participants will evaluate how looking beyond a project's immediate scope can inform difficult decisions and lead to stronger, more mission-driven outcomes. The session will outline techniques for establishing clear goals and guiding principles that provide meaningful measures of success. It will also highlight methods for engaging community stakeholders to clarify priorities, build support, and reinforce the institution's role within its broader civic context.

Additionally, the session will analyze how physical alterations—when guided by mission and community insight—can strengthen connections with audiences, enhance public value, and broaden community support. Strategies for integrating these considerations into planning and implementation will be discussed with a focus on practical application.

These concepts will be demonstrated through a case study of the B&O Museum renovation in Baltimore, illustrating how mission-aligned planning, community engagement, and a holistic project perspective contributed to the project's success.

Learning Objectives:

- Explore multiple approaches and methods for amplifying mission and enhancing visitor experience in projects involving physical alterations, including master plans, renovations, and exhibit development.
- Evaluate the importance of looking beyond a project's immediate scope to understand how broader institutional context informs difficult but essential decisions. Attendees will establish goals and guiding principles that provide measures of success and apply methods for effectively engaging the community to clarify goals, garner support, and align physical changes with mission.
- Analyze how physical changes can strengthen community connections, increase community support, and more clearly express an institution's mission.
- Examine these strategies in action through a case study of the B&O Museum renovation in Baltimore, highlighting how these methods drive project success.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-2 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Meg Dunfee, Roto, Principal; Matthew Herbert, Design Collective, Inc., Principal; Kris Hoellen, B & O Railroad Museum, Executive Director; Brian Reetz, Design Collective, Principal

Breakout Session #4

CONTINUED

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 10:15 AM-11:30 AM

Radical Accessibility: Planning, Designing, and Building the Museum of the Blind People's Movement

New capital museum projects involve many different teams with various roles and responsibilities – architects, trades, engineers, exhibition designers, media producers, fabricators, technologists, interpretive planners, researchers, curators and interpreters, fundraisers, communicators, and more. Managing a net-new, large-scale project with so many various participants, relies on robust, succinct, and accurate communications and the design and production of various project materials, as we move from project topics like corporate structure, policy and protocols, and through architecture, environmental, and experience design.

Museum design-build projects rely on a wealth of documentation, design drawings (layouts, floorplans, elevations, wireframes, schematics, diagrams, 3D models) and communication protocols that are typically fully inaccessible and therefore can exclude key project participants.

Attendees will gain insight into how inclusive design tactics have helped ensure the creation and dissemination of information throughout the project is accessible to all participants. Particular focus will be given to how information has been constructed and circulated, how tactile documentation, maps, and graphics, have been created and used, how design charrettes have been structured and administered, how both visual and guided tactile description has been used across project tasks, and how communications have been facilitated across multiple modalities ensuring disabled participants, especially those who are blind and low vision, are fully engaged in the museum's design and creation.

By emphasizing the human-centered approach to design and planning, the session will illustrate how equity and accessibility are achieved through intentional, collaborative, and adaptive methodologies, and how the approach welcomes everyone into design planning and development, even those with

limited literacy or experience for these types of projects and their materials and tools. This session aims to inspire architects, designers, project managers, and those working on new museum projects to adopt a proactive approach toward inclusivity, ensuring that museums not only serve as welcoming spaces for both creators and visitors of all abilities, but are developed and created equitably as well.

Learning Objectives:

- Establish a project using an inclusive design methodology that minimizes additional resourcing while positively influencing ways of working, task sequencing, and the inclusiveness of project outcomes.
- Identify and apply planning approaches and tactics that help maintain project schedule integrity as more—and more varied—modes of interaction are incorporated among project participants.
- Implement effective strategies for developing and communicating design materials (e.g., floorplans, elevations, mood boards) to blind and low-vision partners as well as participants with differing levels of design-build experience.
- Manage a capital project accessibly by using tools and techniques for budgeting, scheduling, and risk management that support all participants, including those with limited experience or lower literacy with typical project documentation.
- Explain and evaluate the broader methodology of Inclusive Design, recognizing accessibility as one of several beneficial outputs—alongside operational sustainability, increased earned revenue, and stronger performance across strategic indicators.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-9 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Corey Timpson, Prime Access Consulting Inc., Principal; Mark Riccobono, National Federation of the Blind and the Museum of the Blind People's Movement, President; Michael Plamondon, Origin Studios, President; Alison Tyler, National Federation of the Blind and the Museum of the Blind People's Movement, Museum Project Lead; Sina Bahram, Prime Access Consulting Inc., Principal

Breakout Session #5

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 1:15 PM-2:30 PM

Building the Participatory Museum

As a forward-thinking, culturally specific institution, the Jewish Museum of Maryland launched a capital project, designing a building to bridge past and present. Spaces were created to foster a practice of uplifting community traditions and stories through participatory digital storytelling in partnership with enhanced collections display.

This presentation outlines the conceptual and spatial reimagining of The Jewish Museum of Maryland. The project moves away from a conventional, transaction-based model of discrete, one-sided exhibitions toward a participatory environment grounded in narrative, community, and shared authorship.

One significant design shifts involves the transformation of traditional programmatic elements. The museum store gives way to a recording studio, multimedia gallery, and control room—spaces that foreground creation, dialogue, and the real-time generation of authentic content. Production spaces are intentionally visible, with content pushed into communal areas to support both personal and public engagement. Surrounding this anchor space, exhibits unfold across both traditional galleries and experimental zones, all connected by the thread of Jewish history in Maryland. Digital media is fully integrated with the physical environment, posing the collections materials alongside interactive digital interfaces while allowing visitors to navigate at their preferred pace.

Initiated during the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, and opening in early 2025, the project was delivered through a phased design and fundraising strategy.

This work proposes a new model that positions the museum as a cultural infrastructure for participation, connection, and evolving public memory. Presented by museum leadership and the design team, the session outlines the transformation's core strategies.

Learning Objectives:

- Develop an understanding of the collaborative thought processes in which design and museum leadership teams can engage when embarking upon a capital construction planning process.
- Understand the importance of cultural transactions in a modern museum and how digital and physical infrastructure enhances this transaction.
- Explain the funding, design and construction sequences necessary to reposition a cultural institution.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-16 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Trillion Attwood, Jewish Museum of Maryland, Deputy Director; Sol Davis, Jewish Museum of Maryland, Executive Director; Ethan Marchant, Quinn Evans Architect, Principal

Preservation in Practice: Managing Systems, Structures & Stories in the Alfred W. Fleisher Memorial Synagogue

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site is home to the Alfred W. Fleisher Memorial Synagogue, the first known synagogue in an American prison. First used circa 1920, the space remained active through the prison's closure in 1970 when the site fell into a period of abandonment. After Eastern State reopened as a museum, the Synagogue was thoroughly studied, carefully restored and opened to the public.

In 2023, an undersized and failing HVAC system prompted a capital project including upgraded climate control, maintenance and preservation work in the Synagogue, and an update to the adjacent exhibit on Jewish Life. The HVAC replacement is complete, preservation work is underway, and the new exhibit is expected to open in 2026.

This interdisciplinary session, led by Eastern State's preservation, learning and engagement staff, will explore how the physical environment and thoughtful interpretation can and should work together to create meaningful experiences and deep learning.

Breakout Session #5

CONTINUED

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 1:15 PM-2:30 PM

Preservation in Practice: Managing Systems, Structures & Stories in the Alfred W. Fleisher Memorial Synagogue

Presenters will share about the planning process, modes of research, and interdisciplinary touchpoints, alongside construction challenges and strategies, while highlighting how to leverage in-house talent in creative ways.

This session will also address lessons learned in communicating about preservation to the public, emphasizing how the site's 'stabilized ruin' approach is intentionally applied in the Synagogue. Finally, speakers will discuss the visitor experience, sharing plans for new exhibit components that center the lives of the incarcerated Jewish community and the deeply involved network of volunteers that supported them, while presenting a nuanced story of preservation.

Learning Objectives:

- Develop communication strategies to articulate preservation philosophies, such as Eastern State's 'stabilized ruin' approach, to public audiences.
- Design interpretive components within budget, preservation, and site constraints that center the voices of people with lived experience.
- Describe how preservation strategies and interpretive planning can work together to deepen visitor learning in historic spaces.
- Identify interdisciplinary approaches to planning a capital project, including assessment, research methods, schedule and budget while leveraging in-house talent.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-11 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Tammy Mann, Finch Brands, Creative Director; Liz Trumbull, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Senior Director of Preservation & Operations; Lauren Zalut, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Senior Director of Learning & Engagement

Re-invigorating a community treasure

The Manassas Museum started in 1972 when a group of local citizens created an exhibition for the celebration of the town's centennial. The exhibit was so popular that a permanent museum was established in an old bank building on Main Street. Quickly outgrowing this first building, a new, modern structure was constructed along Prince William Street, opening its doors in 1991. A major renovation was completed in 2023 that re-envisioned how the museum physically connected to the community, added a large special event hall, collections storage, and additional gallery space, while also upgrading offices and existing public spaces. Leaning into the idea of creating a museum that was of, by, and for the community, staff engaged local residents every step of the way from building design to what the exhibits would be. The project culminated in new and renovated space that features stunning new bilingual exhibits that tell the history of Manassas from multiple points of view as well as indoor and outdoor community space. The project has resulted in an 85.7% increase in visitation over FY19 numbers (last year before the pandemic), including a dramatic increase in attendance at the Museum's outdoor spaces. This session will focus on lessons learned from this major renovation and expansion project through the lens of the City, the Museum, and the design team, and will encourage an open dialogue to foster ideas on how museums can revive their indoor and outdoor space to welcome and serve their communities.

Learning Objectives:

- Examine how the team balanced preserving the Museum's history while advancing new goals for growth.
- Explore how the Museum is activating new indoor and outdoor spaces for expanded programming and revenue generation.
- Understand the strategies used to plan for increased visitation—and the realities experienced after reopening.
- Identify the approaches taken to develop new exhibits that present a more inclusive history of the City.
- Assess how the team successfully integrated the park site and the building to create a more welcoming arrival experience for visitors.

Breakout Session #5

CONTINUED

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 1:15 PM-2:30 PM

Re-invigorating a community treasure

**AIA Continuing Education Course Number,
BMS2026-14 (1.25 LU|HSW)**

Presenter: Kate Scurlock, GWWO Architects; Kisha Wilson-Sogunro, Manassas Museum, Culture & Recreation Division Manager (City of Manassas); Mary Helen Dellinger, Manassas Museum, Curator of the Museum and Historic Sites; Matt Arcieri, Manassas Museum, Planning & Community Development Director / Assistant City Manager (City of Manassas); Terry Squyres

The Hustle and the Struggle: Creating The Hip Hop Museum

The upcoming opening of The Hip Hop Museum is all about the “How?” How did the idea of creating a home for Hip-Hop emerge in the borough where Hip Hop was created? How do you then tell the story of a culture that is now international and spans from music to deejaying to art and to dance? How do you build an organization from the ground-up and then find the support to make the building real? And how do you do it all at the same time?

This presentation tells the story of how The (now under-construction) Hip Hop Museum has come together and the persistence and creativity that has been necessary to get to this point. It is meant to openly describe the challenges faced in crafting a story and a focus when historical opinions differ and the availability of prospective collections is not assured. It also captures the delicate balance of organizational capacity, project funding and project timeline, and not letting any of these project elements get too far ahead or too far behind the overall project progress. The Hip Hop Museum has been a project more than ten years in the making and the challenges faced and addressed through this process are ones that should be shared with other nascent organizations or even more established institutions that are in the midst of realizing their own building projects.

Learning Objectives:

- Navigate the process of focusing an original museum vision when working with diverse perspectives, conflicting histories, and differing opinions about the narrative to be presented.
- Develop exhibition content in parallel with the ongoing acquisition of collections and artifacts, using flexible and iterative content-planning methods.
- Identify and evaluate a range of funding sources—including public, private, and project-financing options—and align them with the overall advancement of the project.
- Determine the organizational capacities required at various stages in the development of a nascent museum organization, and prioritize when each capacity must be in place.

**AIA Continuing Education Course Number,
BMS2026-23 (1.25 LU|Elective)**

Presenter: Jordan Learner Barr, DBI Projects, Principal; Rocky Bucano, The Hip Hop Museum, Executive Director and Founder; Aki Carpenter, Ralph Appelbaum Associates (RAA), Vice President and Chief Creative Officer; Michael Ford, FAIA, NOMA, NCARB, BrandNu Design, Founding Principal; Bevin Savage Yamazaki, Gensler, Senior Associate

Breakout Session #6

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 2:45 PM-4:00 PM

A Place for Art, A Park for All: Landscape and Mission at the Speed Art Museum

Speed Art Park is a three-acre landscape expansion to the Speed Art Museum that opened October 2025 after a journey of fifteen years from conceptualization to realization. Free and ungated, Speed Art Park welcomes the greater Louisville community to engage with works of contemporary sculpture from the Museum's collection while immersed in the cooling shade of 150 trees and ecologically rich plantings. This panel follows the project's story through budget reallocations, delayed implementation, leadership changes, a pandemic, and other external setbacks. The extended schedule afforded the Museum and design team time to learn from the landscape and adapt the design to discovered uses, new priorities, and shifting needs. Even as the specific design evolved, original principles and ambitions for Speed Art Park endured.

Panelists representing museum leadership, curators, operations, and landscape architect explore what practices and approaches ensured the project's success. They evaluate a virtuous cycle of strong design, donor enthusiasm, stakeholder engagement, and board support as well as agile tactics by leadership and design team to sustain momentum. This new community amenity, with all its inherent programmatic and educational opportunities for the Speed to engage Louisville's broader public, required the project team to build a deep understanding of the site and visitor experience. To create equitable access to art and nature, to promote wellness, and to shape community resilience, the Speed focused on fundamentals: universal accessibility, flexibility for diverse programming, and futureproofing. The Speed's story highlights opportunities and challenges for anyone involved with or considering a landscape activation project.

Learning Objectives:

- Observe how landscapes can be transformative for the museum visitor's experience, expanding the museum's influence in the greater community.

- Appreciate how project leaders build momentum and board support of a vision to navigate an idea through external challenges and setbacks.
- Assess ways in which due diligence around accessibility and flexibility for diverse programming can open up authentic and exciting design opportunities.
- Evaluate diverse complementary and competing priorities within a project, such as safety, security, access, and ongoing management of a collection within the public realm.
- Understand health and wellness impacts of access to garden-like urban public realm features, including continuous shade canopy.
- Follow an institution and design team's incremental learning about their site, visitor experience, and sense of opportunities to take programming outdoors.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-15 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: [Leslie Carter](#), Reed Hilderbrand, Senior Associate; [Tyler Blackwell](#), Speed Art Museum, Curator of Contemporary Art; [Catherine Surratt](#), Speed Art Museum, Chief Operating and Business Officer

Designing for Mission: The National Medal of Honor Museum

The National Medal of Honor Museum is a landmark civic project that translates courage, sacrifice, and integrity into architecture, exhibitions, and visitor experience. This session offers a behind-the-scenes case study of how client, architect, exhibition designer, and construction manager collaborated across design, construction, and storytelling to deliver a unified, mission-driven museum.

The project's multi-year journey began with the challenge of site selection. Originally slated for Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, the museum faced regulatory hurdles that prompted the foundation to launch a five-year national search.

Breakout Session #6

CONTINUED

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 2:45 PM-4:00 PM

Designing for Mission: The National Medal of Honor Museum

After evaluating finalists including Denver, New York City, San Diego, and Washington, D.C., Arlington, Texas, was chosen in 2019 for its strong local support, proximity to major attractions, veteran and military community, and its position within the city's burgeoning Arts & Entertainment District. Opened in March 2025, the museum serves as both a tribute to Medal recipients and a cultural anchor reinforcing Arlington's civic identity.

Panelists will discuss how Rafael Viñoly Architects' bold architectural form, a massive steel-clad block suspended 40 feet above ground, was realized through structural innovation and symbolic clarity; how G&A crafted human-centered storytelling; and how Linbeck, as Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR), ensured constructability, budget oversight, and design integrity were balanced. Discussion will include how the project's budget evolved from original estimates to final costs, and how adjustments were reviewed, debated, and approved to safeguard mission and vision.

Through candid discussion of challenges and triumphs, attendees will gain strategies for managing interdisciplinary teams, aligning values with design, and leveraging delivery methods to balance vision, cost, and mission.

Learning Objectives:

- Translate mission into design: Articulate how institutional values can guide architectural, exhibition, and construction decisions.
- Apply immersive strategies: Assess multi-sensory techniques to enhance narrative resonance in museum environments.
- Manage interdisciplinary alignment: Develop methods for ensuring client vision and mission integrity across design, exhibition, and construction teams.

- Balance design, delivery and budget: Evaluate approaches for addressing budget, schedule, and fundraising realities within Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) and other delivery methods, including how changes from original to final cost were reviewed, discussed, and formally approved.
- Navigate site selection and relocation: Analyze how regulatory, community, and logistical factors shape project siting and influence long-term institutional mission.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-20 (1.25 LU|Elective)

Presenter: Jennifer Surgalski, National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation, Chief of Strategy; Bassam Komati AIA OEAB, Rafael Viñoly Architects, Partner; Michael G. Lewis, G&A, Executive Creative Director; Rebecca Burleson, Linbeck, Vice President, Senior Client Executive

From Institution to Ecosystem: The Vero Beach Museum of Art's 21st-Century Transformation

Since opening in 1986 as an arts education center, the Vero Beach Museum of Art (VBMA) has grown into one of the most-visited small museums in the country, fostering community engagement, lifelong learning, and robust event programming. Yet its facility—an assemblage of decades-old projects—no longer reflects its mission or stature as a cultural leader.

To address this, VBMA launched a planning and fundraising effort to create a more welcoming, resilient, and flexible home. Designed by Allied Works, the new museum will amplify VBMA's programming, showcase its growing collection, and prepare for future environmental challenges. New gardens, designed by Baltimore-based Landscape Architects Unknown Studio, will weave the surrounding park into the visitor experience, creating an immersive setting for art and connection to nature.

This vision to align physical infrastructure and mission-driven programming is made possible by VBMA's largest-ever capital campaign—led by CCS

Breakout Session #6

CONTINUED

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 2:45 PM-4:00 PM

From Institution to Ecosystem: The Vero Beach Museum of Art's 21st-Century Transformation

Fundraising, leveraging early gifts of confidence and full Board endorsement that has informed the project scope and raised sights among the broader philanthropic community.

In this session, museum leadership, the design team, and fundraising consultants will share how a three-year process—beginning with facility assessment and benchmarking, moving through conceptual visioning and stakeholder messaging—culminated in a fall 2025 groundbreaking. Attendees will learn how design, philanthropy, and institutional strategy can intersect to strengthen community engagement, expand membership and the collection, and inspire philanthropic support for future generations.

Learning Objectives:

- Analyze priorities and decision-making criteria for renovation vs. new construction to determine approaches that maximize visitor experience, support public programming, and improve long-term building performance for the community.
- Develop a step-by-step strategy for implementing a facilities master plan that secures client/board and community buy-in by aligning expert input, institutional vision, and shared goals.
- Evaluate environmental risks and resilience strategies to protect collections, ensure continuity of operations, and advance sustainability goals that safeguard cultural assets for future generations.
- Identify opportunities to integrate designed gardens and local ecosystems, and community-use spaces into building design to expand public access, strengthen civic connection, and enhance the overall visitor experience.

AIA Continuing Education Course Number, BMS2026-21 (1.25 LU|HSW)

Presenter: Peter E. Hoskow, CCS Fundraising, President and COO; Chelsea Grassinger, LEED AP, Allied Works, Principal; Brady Roberts, Vero Beach Museum of Art, Executive Director/CEO; Claire Agre PLA ASLA, Unknown Studio, Principal & Founder