Providing professional development to museum professionals since 1935

ABOUT THE
Western Museums Association

Mission Statement
Transforming the museum field through collaboration.

Vision
Dynamic museums connecting with thriving communities.

The Western Museums Association (WMA) is a nonprofit, membership organization dedicated to serving museums, museum professionals, as well as the related organizations and individuals, by providing vision, enrichment, intellectual challenge, and a forum for communication and interaction. The WMA is primarily comprised of members across the Western states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington, the Western provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, and the Pacific Islands, among others.

The WMA sustains itself through memberships, the Annual Meeting, and partnerships.

Providing professional development to museum professionals since 1935
“This is an amazing opportunity to meet colleagues from other museums and learn how we’re doing our jobs differently.”

—WMA 2019 Annual Meeting Attendee
WESTERN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

2019 Annual Meeting

The Western Museums Association’s 2019 Annual Meeting was held in Boise, Idaho on October 4-7, where we proudly welcomed 400 museum professionals. The theme of the 2019 Annual Meeting was ENGAGE and focused on the ways in which museums engage with their communities, staff and other institutions. The innovative sessions, engaging discussions and inspiring takeaways that took place at this year’s Annual Meeting mirrored the vibrant spirit of Boise.

The 2019 Program provided a multitude of perspectives representative of today’s museum landscape and continued the WMA’s rich tradition of provocative programming and educational opportunities. In addition to our adventurous pre-conference tours, hands-on workshops and inspiring sessions, we were delighted to kick off WMA 2019 with our Keynote Speaker, Sina Bahram.

Sina Bahram is an accessibility consultant, researcher, speaker and entrepreneur. In 2012, Sina founded Prime Access Consulting (PAC), an inclusive design firm that helps design and implement accessible solutions that make knowledge, culture, and technology available to the widest possible audience. A recognized expert in accessibility and user experience (UX), Sina collaborates with museums to weave the notion of inclusion into the fabric of an organization, helping to define accessibility standards. As Keynote, Sina challenged us to consider “disability” versus “accessibility,” and demonstrated how museums can better provide accessibility to its audiences through exhibition design.

Each year, the WMA recognizes achievements of western museum professionals by presenting recipients with the Charles Redd Award, the Impact Award and the Leadership Award. The Charles Redd Center for Western Studies Award for Museum Exhibition Excellence honors an exhibition that furthers the study and understanding of the American West. This award is vital to the success of the Annual Meeting as it represents an opportunity for museums to be recognized for their exhibitions. The 2019 Charles Redd Award was presented to the High Desert Museum for its exhibition Desert Reflections: Water Shapes the West.
“Attending WMA feels like returning to summer camp each year—you see old friends, make new connections, and learn useful skills. It truly is a joy.”

—WMA 2019 Annual Meeting Attendee
The Leadership Award celebrates outstanding achievement in the museum field by a professional whose career has had a sustained, considerable and lasting impact on museum practices. The 2019 Leadership Award was presented to Janet Gallimore, the Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer at the Idaho State Historical Society. The Impact Award celebrates a mid-career museum professional who’s leadership has had a positive effect on their museum, the surrounding community, or the museum field. The 2019 WMA Impact Award was presented to Tricia Canaday, the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer and SHPO Administrator of the Idaho State Historical Society.

The 2019 conference wrapped up with our annual General Session and Panel where museum industry leaders shared their approaches to institutional change and dug deep into the ways museums can ENGAGE with their communities, staff and with one another. This year we welcomed panelists Maren Dougherty (EVP of Communication and Visitor Experience, Autry Museum of the American West), Seema Rao (Senior Experience Officer, Akron Art Museum), Adam Rozan (Director of Programs and Audience Development, National Museum of American History), and Philip Thompson (Executive Director/Board President, Idaho Black History Museum), with moderator Scott Stulen (Director and President of the Philbrook Museum of Art).

THANK YOU to all attendees, sponsors, volunteers, Program and Host Committee members, staff and the WMA Board members for making WMA 2019 a huge success! We look forward to seeing you next fall at WMA 2020 in Portland, Oregon.

“One of the best museum conferences! Engaging, helpful, and inspiring. Highly recommended.”

–WMA 2019 Annual Meeting Attendee
“I learned something **new** at each session, and usually more than one thing.”

—WMA 2019 Annual Meeting Attendee
A Special Thanks to Our 2019 Annual Meeting Sponsors
“This was my first time and I felt truly welcomed in this conference. It was very immersive. I loved it!”

—WMA 2019 Annual Meeting Attendee
**Attendees**

**ATTENDEES: Work Area**

- Education/Public Programs: 19%
- Exhibition Design/Curation: 18%
- Fundraising/Business Development: 14%
- Marketing/Communication: 6%
- Collections Care/Shipping: 6%
- Administration/Finance: 28%
- Art: 9%
- Multidisciplinary: 3%
- Other: 3%

**ATTENDEES: By Location**

- Western Region: 84%
- States outside of WMA Region: 13%
- International: 3%

**ATTENDEES: Career Stage**

- Emerging Museum Professional: Less than 10 years: 45%
- Mid-Career: 10-20 years: 28%
- Advanced Career: 20+ years: 27%
- Other: 9%

**ATTENDEES: Museum Type**

- History: 35%
- Other: 21%
- Science: 12%
- Children’s: 7%
- Multidisciplinary: 23%
- Art: 6%

**ATTENDEES: First Time**

- Yes: 52%
- No: 48%

**ATTENDEES: Registration Rate**

- Regular Registration Rates: 57%
- Reduced or Free Registration: 43%

“Networking, developing professional skills, and sparking ideas for our institution were the highlights.”

—WMA 2019 Annual Meeting Attendee
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