Equity and Inclusion Roadmap
Smith College Museum of Art
2018-2022

SUMMARY

The priorities of equity and inclusion are fundamental to our mission as an institution dedicated to connecting people with art, ideas and each other. We need to proactively incorporate working practices that acknowledge and embrace differences of perspective, experience and background in order to engage our audiences with art and museum practice. Below are our 2018-2022 equity and inclusion goals, which will support the museum's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan and the Smith College Strategic Plan. Further details are here.

Equity and Inclusion Goals

1. Foster a working culture that embraces differences of belief, experience and background
2. Promote diversity and inclusion in staff, programs, student and faculty visitors, donors and local audiences
3. Proactively integrate the priorities of equity, inclusion and access into our choices about exhibitions, programs, interpretation, and collections management
4. Integrate the priorities of equity, inclusion and access into our interactions with audiences by developing our visitor services and creating a more visitor-focused culture
5. Build a network of colleagues in special collections and other departments at Smith College, the Five Colleges, Museums10 and public institutions to jointly advance and bolster this work

Initiatives and Next Steps
Steps in green are in progress

AREA	STEPS
Shared Resources and Learning *Build awareness of our current culture and broader discussions about equity and inclusion*	• Develop working definitions of key terms • Create a tool for staff to share readings, events, and other materials • Develop a series of staff events and facilitated discussions • Roll out unconscious bias trainings in collaboration with the Office of Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (OIDE) • Consult with OIDE and Institutional Research (IR) about a possible museum environment survey
Staffing and Internal Practices *Implement practices to promote equity and inclusion in our staffing and ways of working*	• Establish internal working process to create accountability around these goals • Add equity and inclusion goals to performance reviews • Collaborate with the Visiting Committee on defining their role in advancing equity and inclusion initiatives • Develop metrics to assess progress on equity and inclusion goals • Identify funding needs and possible grants to support equity and inclusion initiatives • Implement strategies to expand and diversify the pathways for applicants to museum positions
Collaborative Dialogues *Connect with colleagues and peers to bolster our work and promote joint accountability and support*	• Establish dialogue and coordination with OIDE • Continue dialogue with MASS Action partners • Consult with external experts on equity and inclusion in the museum field • Consult with Museums10, Five Colleges and colleagues at public institutions who have been engaged with equity and inclusion work • Conduct research on the history of SCMA, Smith College and Northampton in collaboration with the Botanic Garden, the Library, Campus Planning and Sustainability, and OIDE
Programming and	• Integrate this work into Centennial exhibitions and programs

Collection	• Develop a collections management and storage plan that prioritizes accessibility and our working definitions of equity and inclusion
Integrate priorities of equity, inclusion and access into our choices about exhibitions, programming, collections management, and acquisitions	• Investigate new strategies for interpretation and display that prioritize equity and inclusion
	• Identify key areas of our collection that need deeper research and study, such as Indigenous Americas
	• Develop an acquisitions plan that prioritizes a working definition of inclusion
	• Deepen understanding and interpretation of collections without dedicated staff experts, including African Art and Islamic Art, and continue to deepen expertise in Asian Art
	• Bring in program partners who can interrogate the history of our collections and specific objects
	• Develop strategies to surface stories about artworks that are not on view and that complicate dominant histories
	• Consider establishing an SCMA postgraduate fellowship on equity and inclusion
Audiences and Accessibility	• Bolster support, training and staffing for visitor services at SCMA
Promote a visitor-focused culture by ensuring that all audiences feel welcome and included	• Consult with the Smith College Office of Disability Services about steps to improve accessibility and consider applying for a grant through MCC's Universal Participation Initiative
	• Assess hours, admissions and membership policies to reduce barriers
	• Create a plan for student and community outreach to advance our definition of inclusion
	• Coordinate with colleagues at the Five Colleges and Museums10 to establish benchmarks for inclusive practices
Transparency and Communication	• Share and discuss Roadmap with SCMA Visiting Committee, members and donors, and Smith College, Five College, and Museums10 communities
Develop communication plans to make our work on equity and inclusion transparent to our audiences	• Incorporate a statement about our commitment to equity and inclusion into the SCMA website
	• In coordination with the College, incorporate language about indigenous objects and the museum's physical site into online and on-site interpretive materials
	• Develop strategies to share our work on equity and inclusion through the website and social media
	• Review the language and images in our current marketing and communications materials to identify opportunities for greater inclusivity
	• Inform Native American tribes of collection objects

DETAILED PLAN

The priorities of equity and inclusion are fundamental to our mission as an institution dedicated to engaging people with art and ideas. Since its founding, the Smith College Museum of Art has been guided by the premise that works of art are a vital component of a liberal arts education, opening up unique intellectual and aesthetic insights and fostering engagement across cultures, places and periods.

In order to carry this mission forward, we need to proactively incorporate working practices that acknowledge and embrace differences of perspective, experience and background. We must be attentive to the priorities of inclusion and diversity across all areas of practice and operations, including exhibition and collection planning, programming, security and visitor services, and budgeting. These steps will allow us to expand access to and deepen inquiry around our collections. They are also crucial in order to remain relevant to our audiences and the Smith College students and faculty who are our core constituents.

These goals are urgent not only for SCMA, but for museums broadly. The field of art history and art institutions do not reflect the historical and growing diversity of our communities, even though our defining principles—including the values of inquiry, openness and cross-cultural exchange—demand that we incorporate a greater range of voices and perspectives. As a college museum, we have a distinct opportunity and responsibility to act. We can catalyze transformations in the field by involving students who may not previously have had access to or interest in museums, and offering the professional experiences needed to develop careers in the field. The mentorship and training SCMA has provided through programs such as the Museums Concentration, the Post-Baccalaureate program, the Museum Volunteer Program and Student Museum Educators demonstrate our ability to engage students and equip them for leadership roles in museums and art history. Through our programs and collection, we can also promote inclusive thinking and practices among young people at a formative stage in their educations.

This roadmap outlines goals and steps to advance equity and inclusion at SCMA. These goals are intended to support the Smith College Strategic Plan, which identifies "Diversity, Inclusion and Equity" as a key priority and stresses that the College was founded on a commitment to expanding access to higher education.

The goals described here are also essential to successfully realizing SCMA's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Incorporating inclusive practices across museum departments will provide a basis from which to achieve all five of our strategic priorities: conveying welcome across audiences; connecting museum programs to campus discourses; establishing best practices for collection management and access; fostering active and experiential learning; and reaching beyond four walls. Areas of direct overlap between steps in this roadmap and Strategic Plan tactics are noted below.

Working definitions of "equity," "inclusion," "diversity" and other key terms are provided here. These definitions are not fixed and are intended to evolve; a key preliminary step of this roadmap is to refine our understanding of these terms in the context of SCMA and Smith College.

Equity and Inclusion Goals

We consider this work a long-term commitment that will require sustained, proactive engagement by all museum staff. During the next four years, our efforts will focus on five overarching goals:

● Foster a working culture across all museum departments that embraces differences of belief, experience and background
● Proactively integrate the priorities of equity, inclusion and access into our choices about exhibitions, programs, interpretation, and collections management
● Promote diversity and inclusion in our collections, programs, staff, student and faculty visitors, donors and local audiences
● Integrate the priorities of equity, inclusion and access into our interactions with audiences by developing our visitor services function and creating a more visitor-focused culture
● Build a network of colleagues in special collections and other departments at Smith College, the Five Colleges and Museums10 to jointly advance and bolster this work

Next steps to advance these goals are enumerated below. We will also identify specific goals and steps to prioritize each year.

NEXT STEPS

I. Shared Resources and Learning

As an initial phase of this roadmap, we will build awareness of our current culture and the history of our collections and institution.

Steps:

1) Develop working definitions of key terms such as diversity, equity, inclusion, access and decolonization to inform our efforts

2) Create a tool accessible to all staff to share readings, events, courses and other materials on equity, inclusion and accessibility in the museum field

3) Develop a series of staff events and facilitated discussions that members of all departments can attend [Tone & Personality, Incorporate Inclusive Practices, 1.3]. Events that have already happened or are planned include:
    a) MASS Action staff meeting in December 2017
    b) Decolonization seminar led by Emma Chubb, Winter 2018
    c) M10 Annual Summit Meeting about equity and inclusion on May 14, 2018
    d) Screening and discussion of the documentary 13th, June 4, 2018
    e) Aprile Gallant attending AAMC annual meeting on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity, May 2018
    f) Staff meeting about the equity and inclusion roadmap, August 29, 2018
    g) Pursue other opportunities for professional development in this area, including the possibility of an IMLS grant

4) Develop and roll out regular, required unconscious bias trainings for all museum staff in collaboration with OIDE [Tone & Personality, Incorporate Inclusive Practices, 1.3]

5) Investigate an appropriate way to arrive at a deeper understanding of SCMA staff experiences in relation to equity and inclusion [Tone & Personality, Support a More Positive and Affirming Culture, 1.6]
    a) Review the process, content and impact of the 2017 Smith College campus climate survey
    b) Consult with the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Equity Inclusion and Diversity about best practices and possible approaches to gaining insight into SCMA staff experiences

II. Staffing & Internal Practices

As a second phase, we will focus on implementing practices to promote inclusiveness and equity in terms of our staffing, internal culture and ways of working.

Steps:

1) Establish an internal working group to maintain momentum and create accountability for this work

2) Add specific equity and inclusion goals to performance reviews for all museum staff. EC members can help define how these goals fit into larger institutional priorities.

3) Implement strategies to expand and diversify the pathways of candidates who apply to positions in any museum department. We will collaborate with OIDE and IR to develop specific tools and approaches.

4) Collaborate with the Visiting Committee on defining their role in advancing our equity and inclusion

initiatives. An initial discussion of the roadmap at the Fall 2018 Visiting Committee meeting will provide a starting point.

5) Ongoing Assessment: Develop metrics to assess our progress on an ongoing basis. We will need to define our starting point and what "success" looks like in specific, measurable terms. [Enabling principle of our Strategic Plan] Possible metrics could include:
   a) Museum environment surveys to indicate shifts in internal culture
   b) Completing updates to collection storage areas that achieve specific targets for increased accessibility
   c) Updating aspects of our physical building, digital presence and installations (e.g., type sizes, pedestal heights) that meet specific accessibility goals
   d) Shifts in diversity (defined by multiple factors, e.g. maker's race, gender identity, geography, media) of works in the collection and works on view in the galleries
   e) Experimenting with alternative layouts in the galleries that challenge long-standing art-historical narratives
   f) Shifts in attitudes to the museum, as indicated by visitor surveys (past surveys for strategic planning and the Design & Communications Project could provide a baseline)
   g) Shifts in diversity (defined by multiple factors, e.g. race, gender identity, geography, age, religion, abilities/disabilities, first generation, field of concentration) of museum constituents including:
      i) Staff members
      ii) Students and classes that visit the museum and students who volunteer at the museum
      iii) Students in the Museums Concentration
      iv) Student organizations that collaborate with the museum
      v) Faculty, scholars and curators who collaborate with the museum on programs, exhibitions, or other activities
      vi) Vendors the museum works with (e.g., in the Shop)

6) Identify funding needs and possible grants to support equity and inclusion initiatives. We will begin by reviewing near-term initiatives, developing cost estimates, and coordinating with colleagues in Foundation Relations and Stewardship to strategize about grant opportunities.

III.   <u>Collaborative Dialogues</u>

Connect with colleagues and peers to bolster our work and promote joint accountability and support.

Steps:

1) Develop an ongoing dialogue with OIDE about coordinating our work across College departments

2) Consult with other special collections and departments at Smith, the Five Colleges, Museums10 and public institutions about steps they have taken
   a) Identify other potential partners on campus (including colleagues from the Botanic Gardens, the Libraries, the School for Social Work, and Maureen Callahan, the Sophia Smith archivist)
   b) Consult with the Museums10 Inclusion Committee and colleagues from the Five Colleges about initiatives that could dovetail with our efforts
   c) Establish a Working Group with members of SCMA and other special collections to promote joint accountability and support
   d) Identify colleagues at public institutions who have been involved with equity and inclusion initiatives and could share strategies and approaches
   e) Continue dialogue, networking and support with institutional partners established through MASS Action

3) Conduct research on the history of SCMA, Smith College and Northampton through the lens of decolonization
   a) This could be a collaborative research project growing out of the decolonization seminar and developed with the Botanic Garden, the Library, Campus Planning and Sustainability, and OIDE.

4) Consult with external experts on equity and inclusion in the museum field about possible approaches to adopt at SCMA
   a) Consider opportunities for these conversations and ongoing dialogues with MASS Action and M10 members to develop into deeper partnerships on equity and inclusion initiatives

IV. <u>Programming and Collection</u>

The third phase will focus on our programming and collection, including the works we choose to display, how we exhibit them, and how we understand and share knowledge about our collection.

Steps:

1) Develop a plan to deepen understanding, accurately interpret, build and refine collections without dedicated staff experts
   a) Develop plan around the future interpretation of African Art
   b) Prioritize and plan for use and interpretation of other collections (i.e. Art of the Islamic world, Indigenous Americas)
   c) Continue to deepen expertise and staff skills focused on Asian collections

2) Create strategies to show and share stories about works that are not on view in the galleries (for conservation reasons, for example) and that complicate and enrich the histories our galleries have historically foregrounded
   a) Our social media platforms (including expanded SC Blog) could help support this

3) Make this work a key component of Anniversary year exhibitions and programs
   a) Art Activated Research interpretive project
   b) Sacerdote exhibition (to open May 2020)

4) Assess the feasibility and benefits of establishing an SCMA postgraduate fellowship focused on equity and inclusion
   a) This person could focus on defining and advancing equity and inclusion in relation to our collections and exhibitions, and on compiling the institutional research needed to anchor this work.

5) Develop a collections management and storage plan for 2018-2022 that places primacy on accessibility and updates object records to reflect current scholarship around decolonization [Collection Stewardship & Access, Increase Online Accessibility, 3.2]
   a) Curatorial department to review descriptions in MIMSY to remove biased terms (such as "transvestite")
   b) Curatorial department, in consultation with Collections Management to devise new cataloguing standards addressing DEIA issues

6) Investigate new strategies for collection interpretation and display that prioritize equity, inclusion and accessibility [Collection Stewardship & Access, Expand Expertise & Deepen Collection Research, 3.3]
   a) Develop a new plan for display of African art (Susan Kart's July 2018 installation to serve as test case; engage in active evaluation about successes and challenges of installation
   b) Bring in artists, critics, scholars, faculty, students and staff who can interrogate and reflect on the history of our collections and specific objects [Also a Strategic Priority, Collection Stewardship & Access, Expand Expertise & Deepen Collection Research, 3.3]
   c) Some of this work could also be set up as a student research project, possibly with funding and as part of the Museums Concentration

7) Identify key areas of our collection (e.g., indigenous objects) that need deeper research and study [Collection Stewardship & Access, Expand Expertise & Deepen Collection Research, 3.3]
   a) Priority for the Curatorial Department
   b) Scholar of Native American Art engaged to provide identifying information for Native American objects as first step in plan for NAGPRA compliance

8) Develop an acquisitions plan that includes a working definition of inclusion in the context of our existing collections (e.g. gender, geography, culture) and prioritizes this notion of inclusivity in identifying future acquisitions [Collection Stewardship & Access, Grow the Collection to Support Teaching and Learning, 3.6]

V. Audiences & Accessibility

Ensuring that all audiences feel welcome and included at SCMA is critical to our larger equity and inclusion goals. To help accomplish this, we will develop our visitor services function and encourage a more visitor-focused culture at the museum.

Steps:

1) Bolster support, training and staffing for visitor services at SCMA:
    a) Build internal expertise on current best practices by identifying professional development opportunities for FOH staff and cultivating networks with visitor services staff at peer institutions
    b) Establish a budget for visitor services training and supplies within the museum's operating budget
    c) Develop a regular visitor services training for all FOH staff and student workers
    d) Provide FOH staff with buttons or uniforms that can clearly identify them for visitors
    e) Integrate visitor services staff into meetings and initiatives focused on visitor experience, audience engagement and high-attendance events including NAYM, Community Day, Free Fun Friday, and Reunion Weekend
    f) Review and update current practices for the placement and training of FOH staff at high-attendance events (Community Day, FFF, Family Day, Reunion weekends)
    g) Incorporate fuller staff participation into our visitor services model, especially on high-attendance days

2) Develop required trainings focused on equity and inclusion for all staff who regularly interact with museum visitors (these trainings could be a supplement to the unconscious bias trainings for all museum staff)

3) Review past Smith College, SCMA and M10 audience surveys to investigate the possibility of surveying core constituents about their experiences in relation to equity and inclusion. Based on this assessment, determine whether to conduct an audience survey ourselves or in conjunction with M10 or other partners.

4) Coordinate with colleagues at the Five Colleges and in Museums10 to establish benchmarks for inclusive practices at peer institutions

5) Consult with the Smith College Office of Disability Services about improving the accessibility of our programming, communications and building. Based on initial assessment, determine whether to apply for a grant through MCC's Universal Participation Initiative.

6) Assess hours, admissions and membership policies to reduce barriers [Tone & Personality, Prioritize a Visitor-Centered Approach, 1.1]

7) Create a plan for student and community outreach focused on advancing our working definition of inclusion (which could include the range of academic fields represented by our visitors and collaborators) [Beyond Four Walls, Build Campus & Community Connections, 5.1]

VI. Transparency and Communication

Making this work visible is essential to its success. We need to ensure that our messaging on equity and inclusion shows the depth and breadth of the work we are doing. This will help to make clear that we are integrating equity and inclusion into our daily working practices and culture, rather than simply spotlighting these issues in order to draw audiences or participate in current discourses.

To support this aim, we will develop communication plans to make our work on equity and inclusion transparent to our key constituencies and audiences—including the Visiting Committee, Smith students, faculty, staff, alumnae, and museum members and donors—and to involve them in our equity and inclusion initiatives.

Steps:

1) Share and discuss our equity and inclusion plans with the Smith College, Five College, and Museums10 communities

2) Share and discuss our equity and inclusion plans with the Visiting Committee and SCMA members and donors

3) Incorporate language about indigenous objects in our collection and the museum's physical site into online and on-site interpretive materials

4) Incorporate a statement about our commitment to equity and inclusion into the SCMA website and all SCMA job postings

5) Develop strategies to make our work on equity and inclusion transparent to all audiences through our website and social media platforms [Beyond Four Walls, Enhance Online Communications, 5.2]

6) Review the language and images in our current marketing and communications materials (including the website, social media and print materials) to identify opportunities for greater inclusivity [Beyond Four Walls, Enhance Online Communications, 5.2]

Key Terms

These definitions are drawn from the MASS Action Toolkit. They are intended as a starting point to develop working definitions that will support our equity and inclusion goals at SCMA.

Decolonization:
Definitions generated during the decolonization seminar in February 2018:
-return of land
-decenter whiteness
-promote mindfulness of implicit biases and colonial histories, raise awareness of histories of colonialism
-dismantle historic structures of colonialism
-share power and information

Diversity:
The variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more. In the context of museum collections and exhibitions, diversity can refer to a range of factors—such as culture, geography, gender, race, time period, media, and others—that characterize an artist or object.

Engagement:
An increasingly widespread term in the museum field, engagement is often used to describe a connection or relationship with museum visitors that is relevant, impactful and sustained, and that inspires further learning about works on view or the discussions they prompt. The growing prevalence of the term signals shifts in U.S. and European museum practice from didactic, authoritative models to ones that emphasize a reciprocal, participatory and responsive relationship with audiences.

Equity:
The fair and just treatment of all members of our community. Equity describes the goal of a truly just and inclusive museum that reflects the diversity of our community. We believe that in order to achieve this goal, we need to proactively create policies and take actions that acknowledge histories of oppression and colonization in museums and higher education.

Inclusion:
Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision- or policy-making in a way that shares power. Many museums use the idea of "inclusion" in a way that implies assimilation into dominant, oppressive systems. Likewise, in assimilationist diversity, diversity implies that whiteness is and always will be the norm; all else will be considered different or diverse. These models for diversity and inclusion allow museums to perpetuate oppressive systems and to enjoy the reputational benefits associated with diversity and inclusion without the work of institutional change.

Intersectionality:
Coined in 1989 by feminist legal scholar, critical race theorist, and civil rights advocate Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, the term intersectionality proposes that identities such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact and intersect in individuals' lives, in society and social systems, and are mutually constitutive.