

Hoosier Heritage Alliance Recommendations

A. Awareness: Increase awareness among custodians of Indiana heritage collections as to their responsibilities to their collections and promote the importance of heritage preservation to the general public, including potential funders.

Current situation: Large numbers of Indiana heritage collections custodians are unaware of the contents and needs of their own collections. These custodians are not only the staff members of heritage organizations, but also their volunteers and board members. This lack of awareness regarding how to care for and manage collections places many historical objects and documents in jeopardy. Archives and libraries generally understand these concerns, while museums, historical societies, genealogy societies, and preservation societies often do not.

Specific Awareness Recommendations:

- The Indiana Historical Society's Local History Services department, Association of Indiana Museums, Indiana Genealogical Society, and Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana should make increasing awareness of collections stewardship a part of their day-to-day contact with their clients around the state. The Indiana State Library, Indiana Library Federation, and INCOLSA should also continue to make their clients aware of their responsibilities.

If funding for additional approaches becomes available:

- Develop traveling exhibits that enable heritage organizations to educate themselves as well as their communities and potential funders regarding collection stewardship issues in Indiana.
- Develop posters highlighting collection stewardship issues in Indiana for long-term display in heritage organizations.
- Hire dynamic experts to speak on collection stewardship issues in Indiana to continually educate and reinvigorate custodians of Indiana heritage.

B. Training: Increase training in collections stewardship, concentrating on fundamental concerns like environmental control, policy development, etc.

Current situation: Several training opportunities are available within Indiana from the Indiana Historical Society's Local History Services and Conservation departments, Association of Indiana Museums, INCOLSA, Indiana State Library, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, and others. Integrating the curriculum across traditional museum, library, and historical society divides will reduce the need to develop new, stand-alone training opportunities.

Specific Training Recommendations:

- Develop an integrated curriculum of basic collections management, building on programs already in place.
- Explore utilizing a variety of delivery methods, such as online educational content (e.g. Indianapolis Museum of Art's *Art Babble* online videos or Association of Indiana Museums' Web site and social networking site) and in-person traditional workshops.
- Collect case studies of small Indiana organizations' successes in improving collections stewardship and share via multiple-delivery methods.

- Training should focus on:
 - Organizational readiness for fund-raising.
 - Policy development, collections planning, and good overall governance.
 - Basic handling and physical storage techniques.
 - Basic environmental concerns including building integrity, site, and maintenance.
 - Assessing the collection, using condition surveys, and how to use the information obtained during those steps to develop and implement a conservation plan.
 - Storage furniture and archival storage materials.
 - Proper display conditions and techniques.

If funding for additional approaches becomes available:

- Hire someone to analyze and integrate the various training opportunities currently offered within Indiana and suggest changes to current training offerings to reduce overlap and implement new options as suggested by the analysis.
- Hire someone to visit organizations with Indiana heritage collections to analyze their current collections stewardship and develop hands-on training specific to that organization.

C. Funding: Increase funding for proper stewardship of Indiana heritage collections.

Current situation: Many custodians of Indiana heritage collections are unable to adequately care for the items in their care due to lack of proper funding.

Specific Funding Recommendations:

- Develop and maintain a list of potential funders for Indiana collections stewardship projects. (Note: This recommendation is currently being pursued by the Indiana Historical Society.)
- Making funders (philanthropic or governmental) aware of the needs of Indiana heritage collections should become a part of the standard operation of every collecting organization.
- The HHA partners should make increasing public awareness of collection management and the need for funding a part of their annual goals. Explore training heritage organizations to develop relationships with funders, and host networking events for funders and heritage organizations.
- Copies of this report should be made available to potential funders to increase their awareness of the vast needs of Indiana's heritage collections.

If funding for additional approaches becomes available:

- Regrant collections financial support to organizations with Indiana heritage collections.
- Help organizations with Indiana heritage collections write grant requests to potential funders.

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