

| THE WALTERS |
| ART MUSEUM |

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Goals *Report on Progress,* 2021–2024

December 2024



Executive Summary

In December 2020, the Walters Art Museum finalized a set of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) actions and multi-year goals in alignment with the museum's Strategic Plan. These goals are tied to the Strategic Plan's five priorities:

- I. Activate the Collections
- II. Engage through Personal Experiences
- III. Create Innovative Partnerships
- IV. Strengthen Accountability and Sustainability
- V. Build a Dynamic Team

This report provides an overview of our progress towards our goals from 2021 to 2024 in alignment with our Strategic Plan and three overarching commitments:

- **Expand the histories the museum examines and shares.** We are committed to examining and sharing the histories of the museum's origins and of the art that we steward to ensure an environment of anti-racism, inclusivity, collaboration, and welcome for visitors, volunteers, and staff.
- **Partner with our communities.** We reaffirm our commitment to partner with our communities and engage Baltimore.
- **Center equity, inclusion, and accountability in our culture and decision-making.** The museum's commitment to DEAI must begin with our own teams and workplace culture.

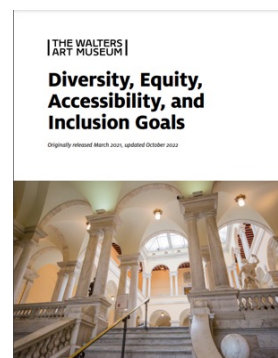
Over the course of three years, we have launched or strengthened a range of DEAI initiatives, listed in detail in the Appendix of this report, which indicate significant progress as well as long-term change. The following key themes or initiatives demonstrate commitment to DEAI work across the institution now and for years to come:

- **Unpacking histories and sharing research publicly**
- **Connecting historic art to contemporary practices**
- **Inviting youth participation and increasing ladders of opportunity**
- **Amplifying community perspectives and expanding access**
- **Establishing intentional reciprocal partnerships and retail collaborations**
- **Supporting Baltimore and Baltimore-based businesses**

Additionally, the Walters has made considerable progress on furthering accessibility at the museum, including working with a consultant to assess the museum visitor experience, accessibility, and inclusive design, and developing recommendations to improve accessibility across multiple areas of the museum and its operations. DEAI work is now embedded in the Walters' processes and multi-year institutional goals, demonstrating structural change. Over the next three years, we will measure our progress towards our multi-year institutional goals through metrics established in 2024.

Background and Purpose of DEAI Goals

In November 2015, the Walters launched a new [Strategic Plan](#) as a 10-year roadmap for the institution. In the plan, the Board of Trustees and staff made a commitment to a new vision for the Walters: to be a force for transformation in the Baltimore region. The plan calls for the institution to "situate itself more firmly in Baltimore—a diverse city that is majority African American—and the region by investing in its



citizens.” While the institution had made progress between 2015 and 2020 toward this vision, we recognized in 2020 the urgent need to do more. In December 2020, the Walters Art Museum finalized a set of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) actions and goals for 2021–2024 in alignment with the museum’s Strategic Plan. As part of those goals and to hold itself accountable, the museum committed to updating the public on its progress. An update was published on our website in 2022 to reflect on fiscal year 2022. To accelerate DEAI throughout the Walters’ work and culture, a working group comprising representatives from staff and the Board developed short- and medium-term actions and goals for the years 2021–2024. Those goals and the progress we made are now summarized in this document. See “[Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Goals](#)” for additional background information.

To ensure alignment around our DEAI work, a group of Walters staff and trustees developed the following definitions:

- **Diversity** is the totality of ways in which human beings are similar and different.
- **Equity** is access to resources that advance social justice by allowing for full participation in society and self-determination. This requires addressing structural and historical barriers and systems of oppression. Equity is not the same as equality. Equality implies sameness, while equity recognizes difference and takes difference into account.
- **Accessibility** is ensuring equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability, experience, and circumstance.
- **Inclusion** is a culture that creates and promotes environments of involvement, respect, and connection in which the richness of diverse ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives is valued.

In the discussions to develop the DEAI goals, three overarching imperatives emerged. These essential commitments for the Walters Art Museum are the following:

- **Expand the histories the museum examines and shares.** We are committed to examining and sharing the histories of the museum’s origins and the art that we steward to ensure an environment of anti-racism, inclusivity, collaboration, and welcome for visitors, volunteers, and staff.
- **Partner with our communities.** We reaffirm our commitment to partner with our communities and engage Baltimore.
- **Center equity, inclusion, and accountability in our culture and decision-making.** The museum’s commitment to DEAI must begin with our own teams and workplace culture.

Our DEAI goals sought to address the above commitments and also tie to five strategic priorities that were outlined in the current Walters Strategic Plan: I) Activate the Collections; II) Engage through Personal Experiences; III) Create Innovative Partnerships; IV) Strengthen Accountability and Sustainability; and V) Build a Dynamic Team. The rest of this document provides a summary of our progress from 2021–2024, and an appendix lists detailed initiatives for each of these priorities that were accomplished during this time frame.

Accountability and Sustainability of DEAI

The Walters Art Museum is committed to embedding DEAI in all of the museum’s work and establishing measures of accountability at all levels of the museum. During the time frame outlined in this document, departments identified specific activities to further our DEAI goals on an annual basis. The budget for projects related to DEAI goals was proposed annually in the spring, and the Board’s Finance Committee, as part of its own DEAI goals, reviewed the budget to ensure adequate resources. In 2022, the DEAI Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) was formed to provide feedback on DEAI work that benefitted from input from staff representing diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and job responsibilities. An update on the museum’s progress towards our DEAI goals was shared publicly on the Walters’ website in 2022. Now, in 2024, this document summarizes our work

throughout the duration of the goal period, from 2021 to 2024.

The DEAI SAC continues to convene to discuss DEAI initiatives, and on an annual basis, the Board of Trustees reviews progress against the institutional goals. In addition, every Board committee develops DEAI goals for their respective committees, and these goals are reviewed by the DEAI Board Committee and discussed with the Board of Trustees and the DEAI SAC annually.

In the spring of 2024, we embedded DEAI within multi-year institutional goals established for FY25–FY27 rather than having separate DEAI goals, which demonstrates institutional alignment with DEAI values and, ultimately, structural change. Our multi-year institutional goals are:

- Expanding stories and amplifying diverse voices told through art, programs, community engagement, and publications.
- Developing a diverse workforce through training and professional development.
- Broadening audiences, supporters, and partners to better reflect the demographics of Baltimore.
- Increasing the accessibility of the museum, its collections, and its programs (onsite, offsite, online).
- Stewarding the collection and buildings through sustainable practices, strategic collection and space planning, and capital improvement projects.
- Securing, managing, and allocating financial and technological resources to support museum priorities and long-term health.

We will measure our progress towards these multi-year institutional goals through metrics established in 2024.

Reflections on Progress from the DEAI Staff Advisory Committee

The Walters has made considerable progress in our DEAI work from 2021 to 2024, of which a detailed summary is provided in this document's Appendix. The list of accomplishments is long. However, the work that we have done to advance DEAI at the Walters is not just a checklist of accomplishments. We have incorporated many changes and initiatives that represent structural change, embedding these initiatives into processes that will continue for years to come.

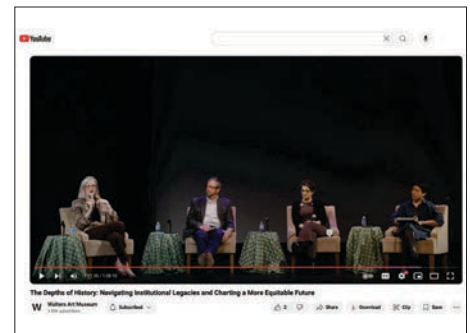
The DEAI Staff Advisory Committee identified key themes or initiatives over the past three years that represent long-term change, which are listed below and described in detail in the sections that follow.

- Unpacking histories and sharing research publicly
- Connecting historic art to contemporary practices
- Inviting youth participation and increasing ladders of opportunity
- Amplifying community perspectives and expanding access
- Establishing intentional reciprocal partnerships and retail collaborations
- Supporting Baltimore and Baltimore-based businesses

Unpacking histories and sharing research publicly

The Walters remains committed to broadening understanding of the histories of people and also the collections and buildings under our care.

In 2022, we publicly released an [expanded history of the Walters Art Museum](#), one that makes clear that our founders, William T. and Henry Walters, were Confederate sympathizers whose wealth came from businesses, such as the liquor and railroad industries, that depended on and profited from Southern economies based in slavery. We have also started, through the work of a Mellon



Fellow, to research the business, social, and political networks of William T. and Henry Walters and the ways in which the Walters family's support of the Confederacy undergirded their fortune and art collection. While this research is ongoing, we have begun sharing the histories of our founders in public programs. We launched an annual series called Depths of History, which investigates and interrogates the problematic histories of museums and other institutions. The 2022 program focused on navigating the legacies of cultural and educational institutions like the Walters and Johns Hopkins University and how these institutions have evolved from the racist legacies of their founders; the 2024 program explored the interconnectedness of artistic, business, and social circles in Mount Vernon and surrounding neighborhoods, including the circles in the Walters family's network. As we continue uncovering more context about the histories that have led us to our present times, we will look for opportunities to make these histories available to the public.

Connecting historic art to contemporary practices

Since the Walters opened in 1934, the museum has expanded its founding collection from 22,000 objects to now more than 36,000. In recent years, the Walters has strategically acquired contemporary works of art that activate various historical works in our collections, creating connections between the past and present and allowing the museum to tell new stories and highlight new voices. These contemporary works include a stained glass work by contemporary artist Kehinde Wiley and a painting by Baltimore-based artist Jessy DeSantis (see images below). Engaging local living artists also provides a unique opportunity to engage and inspire our audiences by facilitating in-person



connections. DeSantis worked with students at the Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women, a Title I public school in the Walters' neighborhood, by participating in a class critique of works that were then on display in the Walters' galleries in a special student art show.

Connecting the art and culture of the past to our current times is also a core principle of programs for all audiences at the Walters, one of several principles we developed in 2021 and updated in 2023. Those principles also include expanding and deepening relationships with a broad and diverse audience, especially voices and perspectives that are historically excluded from museums, including members of Black, Latino/a/e, LGBTQIA, AAPI, Indigenous, and disabled communities. As a result, all programs at the Walters are developed with these principles in mind, and this range of programs can be viewed in recordings we post on our [YouTube channel](#).

Inviting youth participation and increasing ladders of opportunity

For decades, thousands of PreK–12th grade students have participated in the Walters' school programs, primarily through field trips to the museum. Starting in 2023, we expanded our offerings for youth so that we serve not only those whose teachers provide arts and arts-integrated instruction during the school day but also those students who are looking for meaningful creative opportunities outside of school. Specifically, we launched a suite of new programs



for teens and college students to give them multiple points of entry and invite participation at any level. A high-school-aged student might stop by our Teen Lab afterschool to make art and explore the museum with friends or learn about museum careers in a career panel. Another teen might apply to take part in a multi-week photography course mentored by a professional photographer. Teens who are interested in more professional skill building could apply to be a part of our Teen Advisory Council and plan an event for teens, by teens, with guidance from museum staff. Such an event would, in turn, spark more interest in our teen programs, fostering a cycle of sustained engagement.

As we have built our teen programs, we have also strengthened opportunities for college students in 2023 and 2024. College students can now learn about the museum's resources through college fairs or museum tours, apply for contract work to be a teaching artist or musician in our Sketching Session program, or apply for a paid summer internship. By building up both teen and college programs, we have established a throughline of engagement where teenagers and young adults can see the museum as a place for social gathering, creativity, and professional development as well as art and, after graduation, may be inspired to frequent the museum or consider an internship or job in the cultural sector.

Amplifying community perspectives and expanding access

Traditionally, museums have included the perspectives of staff (primarily curators) on gallery labels and relied on in-house experts to make decisions about exhibitions and programs. Since 2021, we began convening community advisory groups, starting with our Ethiopian Community Advisory Group, to learn from the perspectives of people whose expertise from outside of the museum field—such as lived experiences, cultural connections, and religious affiliations—can provide meaningful contextual information for museum staff during the exhibition development process and for visitors once the exhibition is installed. In addition to guiding decision-making behind the scenes, we also feature community voices in the galleries through



community labels, audio, and video so visitors can hear the perspectives of community members directly. The Community Voices initiative was launched in 2023 with 14 labels and 2 videos in *Across Asia: Arts of Asia and the Islamic World*. For *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*, which opened later that year, several members of our Ethiopian Community Advisory Group, such as Deacon Dawit Muluneh, who teaches the Ge'ez language (pictured here), were featured in videos displayed in the galleries, sharing their own experiences and knowledge. These videos are also available on our YouTube channel to provide access to more people, and Deacon Muluneh's video, in particular, has received over 1,500 views in the first seven months. Since we convened the Ethiopian Community Advisory

Group, we have formed five more advisory groups for new exhibitions and installations (Islamic Art Advisory Committee, one community advisory group each for *Arte Latinoamericano / Latin American Art* and 18th–19th-Century European art, and two separate College Student Advisory Groups). We plan to continue forming community advisory groups to guide our decision-making and incorporating diverse community voices in exhibitions and installations for years to come.

Establishing intentional reciprocal partnerships and retail collaborations



Image courtesy of the artists

While we have made space for community members to share their perspectives on our offerings, we have also highlighted the offerings produced by creatives and vendors based in the DC-Maryland-Virginia area, especially Baltimore. In doing so, we are supporting local businesses and providing them with opportunities to build awareness of their brands while they also contribute valuable components to our programs. Examples of highlighting Baltimore-based vendors in public programs include offering tastings from Nihao restaurant and Peabody Heights Brewery at our annual Lunar New Year festival and providing complimentary hot chocolate from Jinji Chocolate at our Monument Lighting celebration.

We also aim to build long-lasting collaborations with local vendors. One example is The H3irloom Food Group, a Black-owned catering company in Baltimore founded by David and Tonya Thomas that focuses on uplifting the Black food narrative—its histories and stories in Maryland and the U.S. and its roots in Africa. Their sandwiches and pastries are sold in our Cafe, and in 2023 this dynamic couple spoke at a public program about the culinary history of African American cuisine and food traditions associated with Juneteenth. That December, they brought their expertise to the opening of our *Ethiopia at the Crossroads* exhibition, blending cultures in a custom menu and presenting the food culture of Ethiopia with a little Maryland flair. In 2024 Tonya Thomas spoke at another public program, where she shared her research about Sybby Grant, an enslaved cook who lived and worked in the Hackerman House, a building that now houses art in the Walters' collections.

Supporting Baltimore and Baltimore-based businesses

We have committed to directly impacting the Baltimore community at large as well as supporting local talent and businesses. Through impact investing we support our community's revitalization efforts while also growing revenue for the museum in the long term. For example, we provide low-interest loans that support the work of Rebuild Metro, a nonprofit whose mission is “to strengthen neighborhoods by rebuilding homes, restoring whole blocks and fostering enduring community relationships.” These loans allow Rebuild Metro to work with neighborhoods like Johnston Square, located just a few blocks northeast of the Walters, to help revitalize the neighborhood in partnership with community leaders. Rebuild Metro's initiatives in Johnston Square include providing money to people living in the neighborhood to fix their homes and supporting the development of 60 affordable apartments. Our impact investing work not only has a direct influence on our Baltimore community, but it is an example of social impact that has become a model for other museums around the country who are similarly aiming to make a difference in their communities.

Accessibility at the Walters Art Museum

In addition to the themes identified by the DEAI Staff Advisory Committee, the Walters has made considerable progress on furthering accessibility at the museum. As stated in our DEAI Goals, in 2021 the Walters committed to developing “a comprehensive plan to increase accessibility to the museum and museum resources, including the physical museum space as well as programs, onsite

and potential off-site experiences, collection resources, and digital engagement, in partnership with local accessibility partners and communities.” To begin the work of developing this plan, the Walters started with an accessibility audit process in the summer of 2021, in order to more fully understand the scope of accessibility-related challenges and best practices for our many audiences.

As the museum continues the work to meet all of our ongoing DEAI goals, it is essential to remember that people with disabilities are also members of every societal group, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, educational status, marital status, age—and are not solely addressed by the principles of “A” for accessibility.

In July 2021, the Walters contracted with the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD) to conduct an assessment of the museum visitor experience, accessibility, and inclusive design. The assessment includes three major facets of visitors’ initial experience at the Walters:

- the website’s basic accessibility for visitors with diverse abilities, who may be using a variety of assistive equipment and applications;
- program experiences, both online and in-person, for use by the museum’s diverse audience with a range of abilities and ages; and
- the physical site and facility, including parking, route to the museum from parking, public transit, and drop-off at the museum.

In 2022, a group of staff members representing various departments, levels, and job functions in the museum formed an Accessibility Team, a group dedicated to removing barriers to engagement and proactively designing universal opportunities for all people across the museum. In the first two years, this team has worked to build an understanding of the audit’s findings and conducted museum-wide listening sessions to systematically gather insights about what accessibility resources, processes, and procedures are already in place and what needs to be added or improved. At the end of 2024, the group completed a summary of prioritized recommendations to address five key areas of accessibility: Programs, Exhibitions, Physical Site, Administration, and Communication. We aim to make progress in each of these areas over the coming years.

Conclusion

Walters staff take great pride in our progress towards our DEAI goals from 2021 to 2024 and the resulting structural change that will embed DEAI into our work for years to come. We also recognize that this work is ongoing and there will always be more that we can do. For example, despite our progress in DEAI initiatives across multiple priorities in our Strategic Plan, we continue to face challenges in building awareness of these initiatives. Based on focus groups that we held in 2023 and 2024, specifically with Black and Latino/a/e community members, we have learned that some community members perceive the Walters as not changing, feel the museum does not have content and programs that align with their natural motivations for going to museums, or do not see enough connections to their race or culture when they do visit. Because we have made an explicit institutional goal of broadening audiences, supporters, and partners to better reflect the demographics of Baltimore, we hope to see this perception change over the years. Specifically, we have already integrated the feedback of community members and focus groups into our decision-making about planned openings of our Latin American art collections and reinstallation of objects from our Ethiopian art collection in 2025, and we continue to seek opportunities to broaden our collection with new acquisitions that can tell more diverse stories. We also aim to make more progress in amplifying diverse voices told through art, programs, community engagement, and publications; developing a diverse workforce; and increasing the accessibility of the museum. Since DEAI goals are now embedded in our multi-year institutional goals, we are assured that we will continue to make significant progress. We look forward to continuing to work on our institutional goals from 2024 to 2027, now with metrics designated to assess our progress on an annual basis.

Appendix

This Appendix is organized around the five strategic priorities outlined in the Walters Strategic Plan: Activate the Collections; Engage through Personal Experiences; Create Innovative Partnerships; Strengthen Accountability and Sustainability; and Build and Support a Dynamic Team. Under each priority are lists of key DEAI initiatives implemented from 2021–2024.

I. Activate the Collections

- A) Update and expand the biographies of the museum’s founders in order to publicly acknowledge William T. Walters’s and Henry Walters’s support of the Confederate cause, and to interrogate the ways in which William’s and Henry’s views informed the development of their collection.
- Developed and publicly released expanded “About the Walters” and incorporated expanded history in onsite signage and internal and external communications. **2021–23**
 - Launched the Depths of History program series to engage the public in ongoing discourse about the problematic histories of museums and other institutions. **2022–ongoing**
- B) Commence a thorough study of the economic, political, and social histories of William and Henry Walters and their historical legacies, including research by both internal staff and external historians. This study will both look at the history of the Walters and explore and highlight the wider role that art, art museums, and philanthropy have played in systems of oppression in the United States. The museum will share findings through programs, in the galleries, in onsite and online materials, and in staff, volunteer, and docent trainings.
- Post-doc Mellon Fellow’s research explores the ties between the Walters family’s businesses and their collections. **2023–24**
 - Research conducted by Mellon Fellow shared in Depths of History public program at the museum, which was recorded and will be made available online on our YouTube channel. **2024**
- C) Create an institutional land acknowledgment statement to be posted onsite and online that recognizes the original stewards of the land on which the City of Baltimore and subsequently the museum was created. The museum will share the statement with local organizations and partners, and compensate partners for their time and expertise. The museum will also develop new programming featuring Indigenous voices and partners, conduct a census of museum labels, create new online content, and support staff, volunteer, and docent trainings.
- Developed and shared Indigenous land and cultural heritage acknowledgement statement, with feedback and input from local organizations and partners, and incorporated the land acknowledgment in onsite signage, online, in longform video content, and in programming. **2021–22**
 - Ongoing public programming highlights Indigenous talent. Notable programs include “Creating, Displaying, and Engaging with Indigenous Art: Dare Turner,” for which a recording will be posted on the Walters’ YouTube channel, and Queering the Collection with Christine Duckworth. **2022–ongoing**
 - Conducted an audit to identify online and onsite information about objects that were made by or represent Indigenous peoples; revised descriptions of 200 works depicting Native Americans by 19th-century artist Alfred Jacob Miller to note biased information from a colonialist lens. **2021–24**

- Completed an inventory of works whose provenances require further investigation or consultation with tribal members. **2021–ongoing**
 - Catalogued and shared Native American works online. **2021–ongoing**
- D) Continue to conduct thorough investigations of the provenance of the Walters collections and to convey the issues surrounding colonialism and its implicit support for the spoliation and theft of works from other cultures, especially those of people of color.
- Researched and provided information for over 550 objects across the collection and for exhibition loans to the museum. These objects include 220 Thai and Cambodian sculptures, all sculptural religious works from Nepal and India, and ancient Italian and Turkish objects, which are reflected in our online collection at art.thewalters.org. **2021–22**
 - Launched the Provenance Task Force comprised of staff and Board members. **2022**
 - Curatorial attendance at multiple online provenance conferences and U.S. bilateral agreement hearings. **2021–ongoing**
 - Established curatorial representative (Chief Curator) as liaison between curatorial, administration, marketing and communications, and Board on provenance issues and updates. **2022**
 - Established a process for considering potential acquisitions according to new standards, including completing a detailed donor/seller provenance questionnaire and conducting thorough provenance research and an evaluation of provenance concerns, prior to review by the Board of Trustees. **2024**
 - Published the provenance of objects from the Walters Art Museum’s collection in *Ethiopia at the Crossroads* publication. **2024**
 - Curator of Provenance appointed; serves as point person for major provenance and art theft database checks. **2024**
 - The Walters Art Museum provenance statement was drafted and made public. **2024**
- E) Review existing installations, works online, and works on view to both ensure that the histories of and points of view embedded in the objects are explored and conveyed, and to increase access to the collection and information about the collection. The museum will also reassess current cataloguing practices and collection classification and categorization.
- Curators continue to audit and revise collection labels and didactics through a cross-departmental feedback process in order to broaden the perspectives that are included and rework culturally insensitive language. Completed revisions of labels include objects in Hackerman House and Chamber of Wonders and works included in our online collection at art.thewalters.org. **ongoing**
 - Completed cataloguing or updating language for 1,286 objects, including reviewing and editing to ensure cultural sensitivity and inclusive language and updating provenance information as needed. **2021**
 - Evolving institutional style guide is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect more inclusive and accessible language. **2021–ongoing**

- *Objects of Curiosity: What Will We Discover?* provided access to curatorial and conservation work in progress as staff first shared questions about a work's function and authenticity and then sought to answer them throughout the course of the exhibition. **2023**
 - *Stitched Memories: Celebrating Elizabeth Talford Scott* highlighted a Black Baltimore quilt artist whose work has been underrepresented in cultural institutions, part of a city-wide initiative to honor this artist's legacy. Additionally, college students enrolled in a course organized by the Maryland Institute College of Art were given the professional development opportunity to shape the exhibition. **2023**
 - *New on the Bookshelf: The Creative Power of Women* featured books and manuscripts that highlighted underrepresented stories, including an 1803 manuscript of a girl who was deaf, a letter by enslaved cook Sybby Grant, and books printed by the Calderón-Benavides family, notably run by women in Mexico across nearly 200 years. **2024**
 - Diverse representation was a priority when reinstalling 19th-century objects in *Selections from the North American Collection: People and Places*. Works on view included a bust by African American artist Henry Ossawa Tanner, a painting by African American artist Joshua Johnson, and a portrait by Alfred Jacob Miller of Antoine Clement, a hunter who is believed to have been gay and was part Native American (Cree). **2024**
- F) Diversify and contextualize the stories the museum tells through programs, loans, acquisitions, installations, exhibitions, collaborations with contemporary artists, and partnerships in order to be more inclusive of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) art, perspectives, and stories, as well as those of other underrepresented people and cultures.
- Established cross-departmental and collaborative processes to generate ideas for public programs. **2021**
 - Acquired art that broadens representation and brings new voices into the collection, including a work of stained glass by Kehinde Wiley, works by Baltimore-based artists Jessy DeSantis and Herb Massie, works by Yelimane Fall, a collection of Yemeni silver, an Ethiopian wall painting as well as several manuscripts and scrolls, Japanese kimonos, two works by India-born artist Anil Revri, a Joshua Johnson painting, a Mexican book by a female printer, an ancient Judaeian coin, and a Jewish marriage ring. **2021–ongoing**
 - Incorporated conservation stories from a broader range of collections at the museum and into public programs, including inviting the public to view conservation work on the Thai thammatt (pulpit) on the Sculpture Court. **2021–ongoing**
 - Collaborated with contemporary artists and poets on public programs, including art-making experiences and the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. **2021–ongoing**
 - Expanded the types of objects and cultures represented in the Conservation Window, where visitors can watch conservators as they work on objects from the collection. **2022–ongoing**
 - Created Principles for Programs, which ensures that programs reflect diverse talent and perspectives and amplify, uplift, and support Black, Latino/a/e, LGBTQIA, and Indigenous speakers, scholars, artists, and communities as a core principle. Consistently produce programs that adhere to this principle. **2022–ongoing**

- Developed framework for engaging living and local artists and connecting to their work, including conducting annual studio visits with past winners of the Janet & Walter Sondheim Art Prize and placing works by living and local artists (strongly prioritizing those of traditionally underrepresented groups, particularly BIPOC) in conversation with our historic art. Examples include *Activating the Renaissance*, *Across Asia: Arts of Asia and the Islamic World*, and *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*. **2022–ongoing**
 - First teen photography exhibition under the mentorship of Baltimore photographer SHAN Wallace. **2023**
 - Presented press previews for Kehinde Wiley’s *Saint Amelie* and *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*. **2023**
 - Launched first student art show in special exhibition galleries highlighting art by students in the Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women; exhibition was preceded by an art critique from Baltimore painter Jessie DeSantis, whose work was newly acquired by the Walters. **2024**
- G) Create a partnership of trust, open dialogue, and accountability with our communities by centering audiences and communities, and their feedback, in the Walters’ decision-making. The museum will develop mechanisms for representation and feedback throughout the Walters, including a strategy and structure for community engagement and advisory boards for exhibitions, installations, and programs; strengthened evaluation for exhibitions, installations, and programs; and continued visitor surveys and targeted surveys to test key initiatives. The museum will also commit to understanding more deeply what the Walters Art Museum represents to the community today and in the future.
- Restructured two audience-facing departments: Learning & Community Engagement department focused on strengthening community engagement work and Visitor Experience department, inclusive of Evaluation and Audience Impact Team. **2021**
 - Re-engaged long-term partners in annual programs such as Lunar New Year and incorporated their ideas into our planning. **2021–ongoing**
 - Convened Islamic Art Advisory Committee for *Across Asia: Arts of Asia and the Islamic World*, academic and advisory groups and focus groups for *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*, and a community advisory group and focus groups for *Arte Latinoamericano / Latin American Art*. **2021–24**
 - Co-created a definition of “community” through a cross-departmental process and developed pillars for community engagement, with relationship-building at its core. **2022–23**
 - Re-launched K–12 Teacher Advisory Group to guide myriad K–12 school initiatives. **2022**
 - Launched College Student Advisory Group to integrate college student perspectives in *Ethiopia at the Crossroads* and *Across Asia* and related programs; conducted listening sessions with college professors to inform current and future practice and engagement. **2022**
 - Conducted research offsite with participants at arts and cultural activities including Monument Lighting and Artscape to understand how the Walters is perceived by the broader Baltimore community. **2022–23**
 - Verbal and written testimonials suggested that welcoming and accessible spaces intentionally created in art-making experiences fostered trust. **2023**

- Implemented Hearts for Art, a fun and easy way to understand what visitors like in our collection, which indicated that representing people of color is incredibly important and highly valued by our visitors. **2023–24**
 - Conducted K–12 teacher focus groups, some of whom have not engaged with the Walters previously, to understand how the museum can better support K–12 students and teacher communities. **2024**
 - Conducted evaluation of *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*, which demonstrated that the exhibition expanded the Walters’ audiences into zip codes with larger populations of Ethiopian community members and that visitors within our target audience felt more personally connected and satisfied than general visitors. **2024**
 - Re-launched Teen Advisory Committee, now with a stipend for advisors, to develop programming for Teen Takeover. **2024**
 - Published an article in the Walters Art Museum’s journal on evaluation findings regarding the impact of including diverse representation in our galleries on BIPOC visitors as part of the exhibition *Activating the Renaissance*. **2024**
- H) Develop new and inclusive processes for selecting and developing exhibitions and installations, and for collections content, including feedback from staff, volunteers, and community participation.
- Introduced curatorial presentations to all staff to invite feedback on exhibition proposals. **2021–ongoing**
 - Introduced and implemented a new exhibition selection and development process that involves collaborative, cross-departmental work, including reviewing exhibition design and interpretive content through the lens of inclusion and accessibility. **2022–ongoing**
 - Applied the new exhibition development process to a rolling 5-year program of exhibitions and installations that ensures that the museum’s historic collections connect with diverse 21st-century audiences, especially by celebrating and integrating underrepresented points of view, including stories by BIPOC, LGBTQIA, and women artists and the disability community. **2022–ongoing**

II. Engage through Personal Experiences

- A) Develop a comprehensive plan to increase accessibility to the museum and museum resources, including the physical museum space as well as programs, onsite and potential off-site experiences, collection resources, and digital engagement, in partnership with local accessibility partners and communities.
- Continued to build, enhance, and grow ResourceSpace, a tool for both staff and the public to digitally access the museum’s collections. **ongoing**
 - Conducted a review of collections information to identify examples of culturally insensitive language and other forms of problematic language and continue to work collaboratively and cross-departmentally to revise the information for our internal database and online collection. **2021–ongoing**

- Completed an Accessibility Audit on the initial entry experience. Began to implement prioritized improvements, including assistive listening devices, corrected captions of prerecorded programs, map printed on matte paper, ADA compliant renovations to bathrooms, and ADA compliant seating in galleries. **2022**
 - Accessibility Advocate in the Visitor Experience department. **2022–24**
 - Added accessible evacuation plans into the Emergency Operations Plan. **2022**
 - Expanded digital access. Created pilot digital experience focusing on “Glass” across collection areas. **2022**
 - Reimagined the museum’s Visitor Services team to be the Visitor Experience department, centering the experiences of visitors in the work of the museum. **2022–23**
 - Facilitated the accessibility review of exhibition designs for *Across Asia*, Ethiopia at the Crossroads, and *Arte Latinoamericano / Latin American Art*. **2022–24**
 - Embedded accessibility considerations into the planning process across all formats of public programs. Examples include: sensory resources, quiet zones, and ASL interpretation in large-scale festivals and in Ford and Boshell lectures. **2023–ongoing**
 - Rebuilt navigation for improved accessibility across the museum’s two largest web properties: thewalters.org and art.thewalters.org. **2023**
 - Convened a standing, cross-departmental, diagonal Accessibility Team and developed an Accessibility Strategic Framework to prioritize work across the institution and define vision and principles to align accessibility initiatives. **2023**
 - Achieved KultureCity Sensory Inclusive Certification. **2023**
 - New Board Engagement Committee members representing the Arc of Baltimore and the League for People with Disabilities. **2023**
 - Disability in Art group convened to document and discuss works in the collection with disability narratives. **2024**
 - Revived art-making tour experience for the ARC and developing similar program for a wider group of visitors, with a focus on disability and care-related nonprofit organizations. **2024–ongoing**
 - Translated key information about the Walters into Spanish for Spanish-speaking visitors. **2024**
- B) As the museum continues to expand its digital programming and resources, continue to invest in resources and programs that serve audiences across the digital divide.
- Created and delivered 250 Art Kits to Howard County Arts Council to distribute at Head Start Centers and 125 Art Kits for Sarah’s Hope family shelter in West Baltimore. **2021**
 - Launched new videos and other teaching materials on Classroom Connect, a multimedia learning resource available on the Walters’ website, which builds visual literacy and critical thinking for K–8 students, in and out of the classroom. **2021**

- Created new guidelines for foreign language contributions to the Journal. **2021**
 - Launched virtual Collection Connections programming for Supporters. **2021**
 - Used the Journal to publish robust new research and findings related to collections objects and augment with dynamic digital components such as gifs. **2021-ongoing**
 - Continue to offer virtual tours as requested for schools for whom travel to the Walters is a barrier, even when demand for virtual tours decreased. **2021-ongoing**
 - Established a framework for determining format of public programs to continue to serve digital audiences (e.g., livestreaming Lunar New Year performances) while re-establishing onsite programs. **2022**
 - Posted videos featuring community voices in *Across Asia* and *Ethiopia at the Crossroads* on YouTube. **2023-24**
- C) Establish new vision for the Walters' school and teacher programs to deepen impact in Baltimore City and develop a scalable statewide strategy to reach all of Maryland.
- Launched virtual K-12 tours. **2021-ongoing**
 - Completed assessment of existing K-12 lesson plans and developed plan to revise and update them to current pedagogical best practices. **2022**
 - Reframed the School Programs unit as the School Communities unit, reflecting a more holistic approach and aiming to impact K-12 students in deeper, more long-term ways. **2022**
 - Re-established Teacher Advisory Group to ensure new vision aligns with teachers' current needs. **2022-ongoing**
 - Established multi-visit school partnerships as an ongoing offering (see section 3B). **2023-ongoing**
 - Piloted programs and resources to refine a new vision for school and teacher programs. **2024**
- D) Continue to roll out the Walters' Visitor Promise and extend it throughout the museum.
- Translated the Visitor Promise into Spanish with the aim of increasing Spanish translation across the museum in FY25 **2024**
- E) Continue to commit to audience assessment and evaluation, as part of a broader and strengthened approach to audience and community feedback.
- Expanded cross-departmental Metrics Team meets regularly to discuss metrics across the institution. **ongoing**
 - Established focus groups, community advisory groups, and teacher advisory groups (see section 1G). **2021-ongoing**
 - Implemented a standard exit survey for all temporary exhibitions. **2022**

- Launched a new practice for conducting summative evaluation, which includes surveys and interviewing a random sample of visitors for exhibitions, including *Majolica Mania*, *Activating the Renaissance*, *Across Asia*, *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*, and *Reflect and Remix*. **2022–ongoing**
 - Expanded the data collection practice for the Annual American Alliance of Museum Survey of Museum-Goers to explore differences in responses between survey respondents on our email list who are already connected with the Walters and casual visitors representative of our everyday audience. **2024**
 - Standardized a quarterly report of audience engagement metrics across Visitor Experience, Learning and Community Engagement, Marketing & Communications, and Development departments. **2024**
- F) With relevant and impactful projects and an understanding of what audiences want, continue to strengthen and build awareness of the Walters.
- Continue to expand representation in the museum’s photography. **ongoing**
 - Expanded the reach of the museum’s member magazine to the broader public, including distributing copies at the Visitor Experience desk when available. **2021**
 - Staff built rapport with regular attendees of programs, resulting in an increased awareness of audience needs and cross-promotion of multiple entry points for audiences to engage and participate. **2022–24**
 - Participate in Artscape with a Walters booth to spread awareness of the Walters exhibitions, programs, and free admission. **2023–24**
 - Partnered with the Ethiopia Community Center to charter a bus for community members who have never been to the Walters to attend the closing celebration of *Ethiopia at the Crossroads*. **2024**
 - Through social media, build awareness of art-making experiences that are social and promote well-being. **2024**

III. Create Innovative Partnerships

- A) Create partnership of trust, open dialogue, and accountability with our communities, and embrace partnership as a central imperative of our DEAI goals. As a result, partnership is embedded throughout all of these goals and plans, including in how the Walters will activate the collections, expand accessibility to the museum, strengthen local businesses, and partner with staff and volunteers.
- Reimagined Education & Public Programs department as the Learning & Community Engagement department to foreground the importance of community engagement and reciprocal partnerships. **2022**
 - Built new relationships with local artists to bring awareness to their work in public programs through paid engagements and provide opportunities for businesses to sell their products and services. **2022–ongoing**

- Reframed Manager of Public Programs position to be Manager of Public Programs and College Initiatives in order to think strategically about partnerships to engage college students across the institution's work. **2022**
 - Launched Community Voices initiative to highlight community members' ideas and work in the exhibitions through videos and community labels. **2023-ongoing**
 - Hired local businesses and vendors for exhibition openings, press and Supporter events, and fundraisers, inviting their thought partnership and centering their expertise and perspective to bring stories to life and build connections between art and our communities. **2023-ongoing**
 - Reignited partnership with UMBC, including increasing class visits and establishing channels of communication to facilitate future collaborations. **2023**
- B) Continue to develop reciprocal partnerships with school districts, local artists, community leaders, accessibility partners, and organizations, in alignment with the Strategic Plan and in support of these DEAI goals
- Sustained relationships with the ARC of Baltimore, Enoch Pratt Free Library (including reigniting collaboration with Operation Warm), and Peabody Institute. **ongoing**
 - Engaging local accessibility professionals (e.g., Museum Senses and Make Studio) in docent training. **2021-24**
 - Collaborated with NoMüNoMü, an arts collaborative, during Bromo Art Walk. **2022**
 - Collaborated with the Mayor's Office on the Field Trip Fridays initiative to engage Baltimore city youth during the summer. **2023-24**
 - Established ongoing partnerships with schools in the Mount Vernon neighborhood: Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women and Baltimore School for the Arts **2022-ongoing**
 - Developed Midtown Cultural Cohort Tour in partnership with the Maryland Center for History and Culture and Enoch Pratt Free Library. **2024-ongoing**
 - Collaborated with the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts on Project Artscape to showcase Baltimore-based fashion designers. **2024**
- C) Develop new models with our strategic partners to promote workforce development in Baltimore and Maryland and to support ladders of opportunity to museum careers.
- Continue collaboration with UMBC's SCIART program, which introduces undergraduate students to careers and research at the intersection of art and science. Programs during the time period of these goals include: virtual session in summer 2021; in-person SCIART sessions in June 2023 and 2024 with more interactive format that included demonstrations, tours, career conversations, and lunch. **ongoing**
 - Committed to continuing fellowship positions to provide learning and skill-building opportunities for emerging professionals. **ongoing**
 - Launched programs to increase awareness of the field of historic restoration to Baltimore City trade schools. **2022**

- Increased contract opportunities for college students to gain experience performing music and as teaching artists in Sketching Sessions. **2023-ongoing**
- Launched a robust set of teen programs to engage teens in multiple ways, from drop-in programs to skill-building and career development programs. **2023-ongoing**
- Established career panels for college courses interested in learning about the variety of museum roles. **2023-ongoing**
- Invest in Propel (see section 4C), a venture capital fund that invests in companies that commit to establishing headquarters in Baltimore.

IV. Strengthen Accountability and Sustainability

- A) Create institutional alignment around the museum's vision and commitment to DEAI. The museum will align on Walters Art Museum definitions of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. The museum will also create a DEAI statement for the museum and provide ongoing professional development for staff on anti-bias, anti-racism, racial justice, and equity within the museum field generally and at the Walters specifically.
- Started annual review process to assess progress on DEAI goals created by all Board Committees. **2021-ongoing**
 - Authored DEAI definitions for the Walters. **2021**
 - Impact Inclusion provided leadership and all staff training. **2021-23**
 - Joint meetings between DEAI Staff Advisory Committee and Board DEAI Committee established on an annual basis. **2023-ongoing**
 - Implemented annual KultureCity sensory inclusive training. **2023**
 - DEAI Staff Advisory Committee shared a reading list of DEAI articles, essays, and books with all staff, which will be reviewed on an annual basis. **2024**
- B) Create action steps and accountability for the museum to achieve the DEAI goals. In order to move from the commitments reflected in this document to action and impact, specific action steps and milestones were developed and reviewed by the Joint Staff & Board DEAI Working Group and shared with the staff and Board. Annually, the Board of Trustees will review progress against the goals, and an update will be provided publicly on the website.
- Developed multi-year action steps in alignment with the budgeting process that can be monitored for effectiveness in all aspects of the museum's work. Evaluated resources (budget, staff capacity, and expertise) required to implement DEAI goals. **2022**
 - Established a cross-departmental and diagonal DEAI Staff Advisory Committee. **2022**
 - Prioritized fundraising for accessibility initiatives, including working with external consultants to improve accessibility in exhibition design and capital work on bathrooms. **2021-23**
- C) Continue the Walters' commitment to investing in minority- and women-owned funds.
- Continued best practice protocols for multiple-bid projects to include the hiring of minority contractors and/or subcontractors. **ongoing**

- Launched an impact investing program that leverages the endowment portfolio to fund tangible improvements in Baltimore communities, including Empower fund, Rebuild Metro, and Propel, in addition to generating returns for our endowment portfolio. **2021-ongoing**
 - Offered opportunity for employees to invest retirement funds in minority- and women-owned funds. **2021-ongoing**
- D) Support and strengthen local businesses economically by expanding relationships with new vendors, with a focus on female-owned, Black-owned, and Baltimore City businesses.
- Increased support of local businesses by including them in a variety of public programs (e.g., coffee and hot chocolate vendors for Monument Lighting), selling their products in the store (e.g., jewelry by Christine Duckworth), and launching retail events highlighting Baltimore vendors. **2022-ongoing**
 - Intentionally purchase supplies for programs from local vendors. **2022-ongoing**
 - Strengthened collaborations between the Learning and Community Engagement department and the Retail department to sell merchandise of community partners in the store. **2023-ongoing**
 - Increased women- and BIPOC-catering contracts; deployed an RFP process to select a new gala caterer. **2023-ongoing**
 - Identify local businesses for development events, such as a partnership with local business Black Acres Coffee for customized give-aways at *Ethiopia at the Crossroads* preview event. **2023-ongoing**
- E) Create more staff awareness of the Walters' fundraising strategies and the overall state of philanthropy. The museum will also continue to review and revise fundraising communications and grants to ensure the use of inclusive language and fundraising strategies.
- Presented about the state of philanthropy to the DEAI/Development Committees. **2023**
 - Presented at an All Staff Meeting about the work of the Development department. **2023**
- F) Underpin all of the museum's efforts with ongoing review of data, metrics, and results in order to promote understanding and accountability.
- Metrics team provides quarterly reports of metrics across the institution. **ongoing**
 - Launched Research Roundup, a monthly report to staff of recent visitor research findings aimed at sharing impact of work across teams and inviting questions and feedback. **2023**
 - Metrics team developed institutional metrics in collaboration with external consultant, and Leadership Team discussed and refined them. **2024**

V. Build and Support a Dynamic Team

A) Support a Walters team culture based on clarity, inclusivity, and accountability. Throughout the Walters' staff discussions on DEAI priorities, strengthening our culture was a focus. The museum commits in the both immediate and longer term to the following: strengthening open and clear internal communication; increasing visibility into goals and progress at every level of the institution; creating clarity around the museum's decisions and decision-making processes; empowering team members across the institution to provide input by providing spaces for listening, feedback, and dialogue; and promoting cross-departmental collaboration through team-based projects and workflow.

- Refined and continued Morning Meeting briefings for all front of house staff members, supervisors, and leadership to align on daily operations and policy implementation. **2021-ongoing**
- Launched staff newsletter to strengthen cross-departmental communication. **2021-ongoing**
- Strengthened and increased opportunities for staff discussion and input, including Morning Meeting, Scheduling Team, Program Working Group (formerly Adult Program Task Force), Metrics Task Force, Accessibility Task Force, All Staff Exhibition Meetings, Research Roundup (see section 4F), and Exhibition Development Meetings. **2021-ongoing**
- Updated and distributed Employee Whistleblower Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy to all staff. **2022**
- Established skip-level meetings. **2022**
- Revised Employee Handbook. **2022**
- Relaunched the Staff Engagement Committee. **2022-ongoing**
- Launched Coffee Connect for staff relationship-building. **2023-ongoing**
- Institution-wide goals process resulting in goals shared with all staff. **2023-ongoing**
- Established routine department tours and curator tours of galleries. **2023-ongoing**

B) Create and share a new compensation strategy that is understood by staff and promotes pay equity. Over the next two years (FY22-23), the museum will develop and share a new compensation strategy that addresses full- and part-time staff. The museum also commits to taking immediate action to provide increased transparency into wages, including posting salary ranges on all job postings, effective immediately, and providing staff sessions on the museum's current compensation strategy (including direct and indirect compensation, and how that compares to the market).

- Implemented Alternative Work Arrangement policy. **2021-ongoing**
- Implemented new compensation strategy; increased hourly wage to a minimum rate of \$17/hour. **2022-ongoing**
- Posted salaries on all new job listings. **2022-ongoing**

C) Develop new professional development, leadership development, and mentorship programs to establish career advancement opportunities. The museum recognizes that this support, including training, must be ongoing in order to promote skill building and include new team members.

- Transitioned part-time Museum Educators to full-time Gallery Experience Associate positions, integrating professional development into the job description for future career growth. **2022**
- Developed a gallery teaching training for teaching staff in Learning & Community Engagement department. **2022–ongoing**

D) Continue to diversify the staff and support diverse staff and perspectives through policies and procedures that ensure success in hiring, onboarding, retaining, and promoting museum professionals at all levels and in all areas of the museum.

- Developed a robust orientation for new hires. **2023–ongoing**

E) In alignment with the museum field, evaluate the museum's internship, fellowship, and volunteer models in order to develop a long-term sustainable and equitable staffing model and promote new ladders of opportunity in all areas of the museum.

- Launched a new paid internship program for college students. **2024–ongoing**
- Secured funding for the development and launch of internships and fellowships. **2024**