

6/21/35

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Brooklyn Museum
Training of Personnel
35278

It was, on motion,

RESOLVED that the sum of Forty-four thousand dollars (\$44,000), or
RF 35116 as much thereof as may be necessary, be, and it is hereby,
appropriated to the BROOKLYN MUSEUM for the TRAINING OF
PERSONNEL in the use of new techniques in the visual pre-
sentation of museum objects during a two-year period be-
ginning September 1, 1935, payments in either year not to
exceed \$22,000.

BROOKLYN
MUSEUM -
TRAINING
OF MUSEUM
PERSONNEL

The following were the considerations presented:

Relation to Program: Humanities: The proposed grant constitutes a first development of program directed towards the training of museum personnel for discovering and demonstrating new methods of visual presentation.

Previous Action: None.

Finances: The proposed grant would enable the Brooklyn Museum to offer appointments to six younger persons with training in museum work during each of the two years covered by the grant. These appointments would carry stipends averaging \$2,000. In addition to the annual total of \$12,000 required for this purpose, the grant would provide \$10,000 each year towards the expenses of materials needed for the experimentation which the workers appointed will undertake. To a considerable extent the regular equipment of the Museum can be drawn on for this purpose. Moreover, the Museum's regular budget includes provision for the cost of special exhibitions, printing, labor, guards, and shop work. But it will be necessary to try out certain new forms of cases, new methods of arrangement, and new means of lighting to control attention. Provision to cover the cost of materials needed for such purposes is therefore regarded as essential to the project.

Future Implications: Mr. Youtz, the director of the Museum, believes that a demonstration of the full possibilities which training of this kind offers will require a test over a four-year period. He recognizes, however, the desirability of initiating the project on a limited scale during a shorter period.

If its success becomes evident during the two-year period covered by the proposed grant, the Foundation is likely to be asked to finance it during another period of equal length.

BROOKLYN
MUSEUM -
TRAINING
OF MUSEUM
PERSONNEL
(Continued)

General Description and Comment: The Brooklyn Museum was mentioned in the report on program in the Humanities submitted to the Trustees at their April meeting as an institution carrying on significant experimentation in museum techniques and educational activities that make it worthy of special consideration. Mr. Youtz recognizes that art museums in this country, although usually maintained by municipal support and public donations, have rarely fulfilled their obligation of serving the public at large. The policy of the Brooklyn Museum, especially since Mr. Youtz became its director, has been largely shaped by the needs of its public. As a result, the Museum is well suited to serve as a center for experimentation. Moreover, the reorganization now under way, involving the substantial alteration with Temporary Emergency Relief Administration funds of the Museum building, offers an opportunity for experimentation of this kind that is in some ways unique. These alterations will provide an entrance hall on the ground floor with 5,400 square feet of space especially designed for changing exhibitions which will orient the visitor by controlling his first impressions. This and other galleries and special rooms throughout the Museum will be available for experimental uses.

The need for such training as the proposed grant would provide is being generally recognized by persons concerned with the training of museum workers. Graduates of university departments specializing in this field are well equipped to fulfill their scholarly obligations. But university training has hardly provided direct contacts with the practical problems of museum administration, especially as they relate to discovering and meeting public needs.

The younger workers appointed under the grant will be assigned successively to different departments of the Brooklyn Museum so that in the course of their tenure they may become acquainted with the operation of most of the important activities of a socially oriented museum. At various times during the year an informal seminar will be held for their benefit, where problems arising from their experimental work and the theory of modern museum practice will be discussed. Educators, museum leaders, and specialists, as well as members of the Museum staff, will be invited to contribute. In addition, there will be frequent individual conferences. Appointees will be made responsible for planning, assembling, installing, cataloguing, labeling, and publicizing a series of temporary exhibitions, explaining them to visitors, and subsequently for evaluating their success. As far as is practical, curators of the different departments will cooperate in giving appointees experience in arranging and improving the more permanent exhibitions.

6/21/35

35280

Candidates will be chosen for appointment whose prospects for future work insure their finding positions where the experience they acquire may have effect. Mr. Youtz has reason to believe that such persons can be found who would wish to avail themselves of this opportunity while on leave of absence from posts they already hold on museum staffs; others will be suggested by university graduate schools able to give them recommendations which will insure their subsequent appointment to similar positions.

The workers appointed, and members of the Museum staff responsible for their guidance, will submit reports on the project's development for publication in Museum News, the periodical publication of the American Association of Museums. The Association's director and certain members of its Council will be asked to serve as advisers. The proposed grant would thus provide both for the training of personnel, and for a series of demonstrations of new techniques of visual presentation which will gain the attention of museum workers throughout the country.

BROOKLYN
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(Continued)