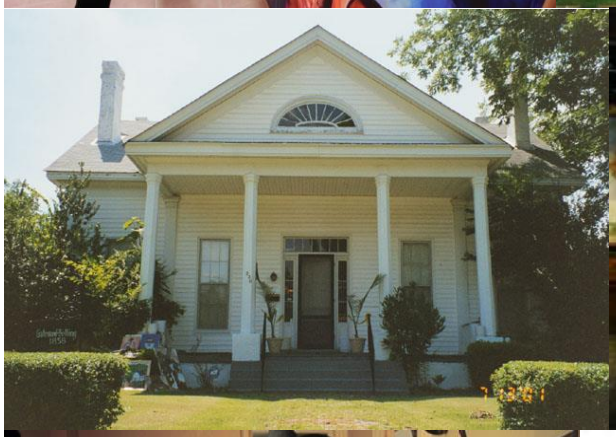
Assessment of the Field:
African American Cultural Organizations



Research report prepared for:
the Association of African American Museums

Assessment of the Field:
African American Cultural Organizations
(with collections)

Commissioned by

Association of African American Museums (AAAM)
(www.blackmuseums.org)

CONTENTS

Executive Summary **1**

A. Overview of African American Cultural Organizations . **5**
1. Organizational structure
2. Geographic distribution
3. Growth of new African American organizations
4. Facilities
5. Staffing
6. Finances
7. Use of technology

B. Service to the Public **18**
1. Open to the public
2. Visitation
3. Public programs

C. Collections **24**
1. Size of collections
2. Permanent exhibitions
3. Collections policies
4. Temporary exhibits
5. Types of collections

D. Looking Forward **34**
1. Institutional needs
2. Institutional associations

E. Appendix 1. African American Cultural Organizations . **38**
that participated in the survey

prepared by
Jeff Hayward, Ph.D. & Brian Werner, Ph.D.
People, Places & Design Research
Northampton, Massachusetts

September, 2008

Acknowledgements

The Association of African American Museums gratefully acknowledges the following for their invaluable support for this historic project, without which the project would not have been a success:

Institute of Museum and Library Services:
Anne-Imelda M. Radice, Ph.D., Director,
IMLS staff: Schroeder Cherry, Ed.D., Chris Reich and Twinet Kimbrough

Project Technical Consultant:
Deborah Mack, Ph.D. /The Museum Group

Members of the IMLS/AAAM National Museum Survey Advisory Committee:
Ms. Terry Davis /American Association for State and Local History
Larry Earl, Jr. /Houston Museum of African American Culture
Jeffrey Harris /National Trust for Historic Preservation (retired)
Ms. Charmaine Jefferson /California African American Museum
Lewis Myers /The Freelon Group
Ms. Bernadette Phifer /George Washington Carver Museum & Cultural Center
Lawrence J. Pijeaux, Jr., Ed.D. /Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

Project Administrative Team:
William Billingsley, Executive Director, AAAM
Linda Buckwalter, Admin. Assistant /National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center
Shirl Spicer, Project Manager /Maryland-National Capital Parks & Planning Commission

Technical Team, who provided the development and support for the online membership database and museum survey:
BlueGlow MediaWorks
WALK-ON Executive Management

The data and interpretations in this report are the products of research by People, Places & Design Research on behalf of AAAM and IMLS. The survey data are based on information provided by African American cultural organizations, but interpretation is solely the responsibility of the authors of this report and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Association of African American Museums or the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

---

cover photos: Sites shown, from upper left, reading left to right, starting at the top row:

Tangipahoa African American Heritage Center; Alexandria Black History Museum;
Ida B. Wells-Barnett Museum; The African American Museum in Philadelphia;
Black American West Museum; The Anacostia Community Museum

Executive Summary

This research was commissioned by the Association of African American Museums and IMLS to study the current status of African American museums and other cultural organizations with collections. This report presents an analysis of the field, including an overview of African American organizations, their service to the public, their collections and their greatest needs.

Identifying appropriate organizations: Like the broader museum community, most African American cultural organizations are small, local organizations. Therefore, simply identifying existing institutions is challenging. We started with five lists of museums – historic sites and other cultural organizations provided by members of the AAAM board. Repeated efforts were also made to identify additional sites (e.g. through the knowledge of AAAM members and at regional meetings and conferences).

The list of organizations was then reviewed and listings removed for organizations that do not meet the criteria established in the IMLS grant: those that are no longer open, those that do not present collections to the public (e.g. strictly performing arts organizations, genealogical societies without collections or archives, historic landmark houses that are not open to the public), those that are for-profit galleries which only offer objects for sale, and organizations for which African American content is not the primary emphasis of the organization's mission (e.g., the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum is included in the survey, but the National Museum of American History is not; an organization's mission needed to be at least 50% focused on African American history or culture to qualify).

Research method: After an initial pretest of this national survey, organizations were contacted by phone (some were unreachable) or e-mail, alerting them to the arrival of the survey and giving them the option of completing the survey on the web or in a mailed, print version. After the surveys and instructions were conveyed, numerous follow-up reminders were given to recipients. By the end of data collection, 159 organizations returned surveys (some were more complete than others) and 70 did not return surveys despite eight or more contacts through discussions, phone messages and e-mails. Organizations with incomplete information were contacted to try to fill in missing data.

The resulting data and analysis of the field are presented in this report. In addition, the data have yielded two other products: a printed directory of African American cultural organizations and an on-line data base for AAAM members.

Highlights of the Findings

This overview summarizes the principal dimensions of the field of African American cultural organizations.

<u>Growth of African American organizations</u>
Although some of today's African American cultural organizations began as early as the 19th Century, the period of 1980 to 2008 saw the most rapid growth in the number of

organizations. The South is the region with the largest number of organizations and continues to be the most frequent source of continued growth in recent years.

Size of organizations

Like most American museums (especially history museums), African American museums tend to be smaller organizations in terms of staffing, operating budget and visitation. Half have facilities under 5000 square feet, three or fewer full-time employees and annual operating budgets under $200,000. There are, of course, notable exceptions: Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, DuSable Museum of African American History, National Afro American Museum and Cultural Center, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and others.

Sources of income

Most organizations rely on a wide range of income sources, especially donations, grants and parent organizations (donations are particularly important to smaller African American organizations). Earned income (from admissions, memberships, sales from gift shops and publications) is a modest source of financial resources for this field. Few organizations have endowments that provide a major portion of income from interest.

Service to the public

About half of African American cultural organizations are free to the public and admission to the others averages about $5 for adult visitors. Most are open to the public Tuesday through Saturday with the smallest organizations open limited hours or seasonally. Slightly more than half of the organizations attract fewer than 10,000 visitors per year and few of them report more than 100,000 visitors annually. Most visitors are free general public or school groups, but about one-fifth are paid general public.

Public programs

African American cultural organizations offer a wide variety of programs to the public; larger organizations offer the greatest variety. The most frequently presented programs are on-site programs for children or adults, school programs, and community outreach including programs at schools.

Collections/ permanent exhibitions

The size of collections varies among organizations, from fewer than 500 items to well over 5000 items. The contents of the collections and themes of the permanent exhibitions are generally about African American history (local/regional history and famous individuals) and African American art. The most common specific themes are slavery, schools, the Civil War and civil rights. Although organizations whose mission is primarily African history and art were excluded from this research, many organizations include some African collections.

Types of collections

The most common types of collections are photographs, historic artifacts, printed materials and art, but many African American organizations also present film, oral histories and furnishings.

Temporary exhibits
African American cultural organizations produce many temporary exhibitions about the African American experience, on subjects such as arts, history, textiles and famous individuals. Most organizations are interested in hosting traveling exhibitions and are willing to share items from their own collections. About half rent or receive temporary exhibitions, but only about one-fifth have any budget for them.

Use of current technology
The large majority of African American organizations have access to the internet and most have their own web site and a computer database inventory of their collections.

Institutional affiliations
Most of the organizations surveyed are members of a professional association of some sort (often AAAM or regional associations) and some are AAM members. Most of those who are not currently AAAM members expressed interest in membership.

Greatest needs
All organizations surveyed indicated a need for some type of organizational or professional support. The greatest needs expressed by these organizations primarily involve fundraising, grant writing and staff. In addition, smaller organizations need help with collections care. Guidance for national or local publicity is also a relatively common need.

Implications for understanding the field

Based on the data presented in this assessment, we believe that there are implications for a national perspective on African American cultural organizations (museums, libraries, and other collecting organizations). The following five thoughts emerged from our experience in communicating with, and analyzing information from, those organizations. While founded in data, these conclusions extrapolate from the specific facts and figures to present a sense of how the field has progressed and how it is currently operating.

1. **The field of African American cultural organizations is a young and expanding cultural community with growing needs.** Most organizations represented in this sample have been initiated in the last few decades (the 1970s was the first decade of substantial growth); new organizations have been founded in each decade in the late 20th Century and the trend continues into the 21st Century.

2. **This field is under-capitalized.** All museums and libraries, as educational non-profits, need some kind of subsidy or donations or other fundraising to meet operating expenses each year. However, African American cultural organizations are especially under-capitalized; most are very small, face significant financial challenges, and many lack the basic resources to pursue normal fundraising (e.g., if you have only two paid staff, you don't have a Development department to create and implement fundraising strategies).

3. **These organizations persevere with dedicated people, who are multi-tasking in the extreme, and almost all of the organizations are seriously understaffed.** Being under-

capitalized, many organizations struggle to pay for everything, but they would not exist without the efforts of the few paid staff at the helm. And while some organizations attract volunteers to supplement the staffing, even the supervision of volunteers takes staff time.

4. **These organizations are working hard on preservation and infrastructure.** Many African American organizations were prompted into existence by a passion to save a piece of history (e.g., the house of a prominent local figure) or to collect and present African American stories and artifacts. However, the buildings that these organizations occupy have typically needed considerable work, and preservation-infrastructure activities are essential for long-term viability. That emphasis and need inevitably competes with other needs pertaining to collections management, programming, fundraising, marketing, professional development, and the normal administration of organizations.

5. **African American cultural organizations are not attracting audiences to the extent that seems warranted by the dedicated efforts and commitment involved in starting and maintaining such organizations.** It may be that preservation and infrastructure needs have to come first in the priorities of organizations, especially ones emphasizing history or a historical site, but considering all factors (including being under-capitalized and understaffed, without necessary resources for audience development – including marketing, publicity, high profile web sites, community outreach, creative program development), the visitor attendance at many organizations is quite modest. In other words, the attendance potential seems greater than is realized, and this could be a useful area of analysis, guidance and innovation as the field continues to grow and mature.

A. Overview of African American Cultural Organizations

This section presents an overview of the growth and characteristics of African American cultural organizations.

The principal findings are:

- After slight increases in the number of African American cultural organizations during the 1950s and 1960s, the pace at which they were founded accelerated greatly in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The current decade continues to witness new organizations with more being planned for the near future.

- The South is the hub of growth of African American cultural organizations. More have been founded in the South than the other regions of the United States during each of the last several decades and more continue to be built there during the first years of the 21st Century. In contrast, the rate of growth in the Northeast was greater during the 1970s and 1980s than during the ensuing twenty years. Growth in the Midwest and West was greatest in the last 20 years.

- The size of facilities ranges from small (half are under 5000 square feet in size) to large (16% are over 40,000 square feet in size). Over half have some sort of landmark status and the large majority are ADA handicapped accessible. Slightly over half have gift shops or stores.

- In terms of staff, the size of organizations varies greatly, from relying entirely on volunteers to dozens of full-time employees. However, most African American cultural organizations have three or fewer full-time employees and a similar number of part-time employees.

- African American cultural organizations also have a wide range of financial resources. Many survive on operating budgets under $100,000 while others have operating budgets over $1 million. Most organizations rely on multiple other sources of income: primarily donations, grants and parent organizations.

- Like other cultural organizations, African American cultural organizations are users of modern technology. The large majority have access to the internet and have their own web site. In addition, most have a computer database inventory of their collections and in this survey expressed interest in being part of a technology network.

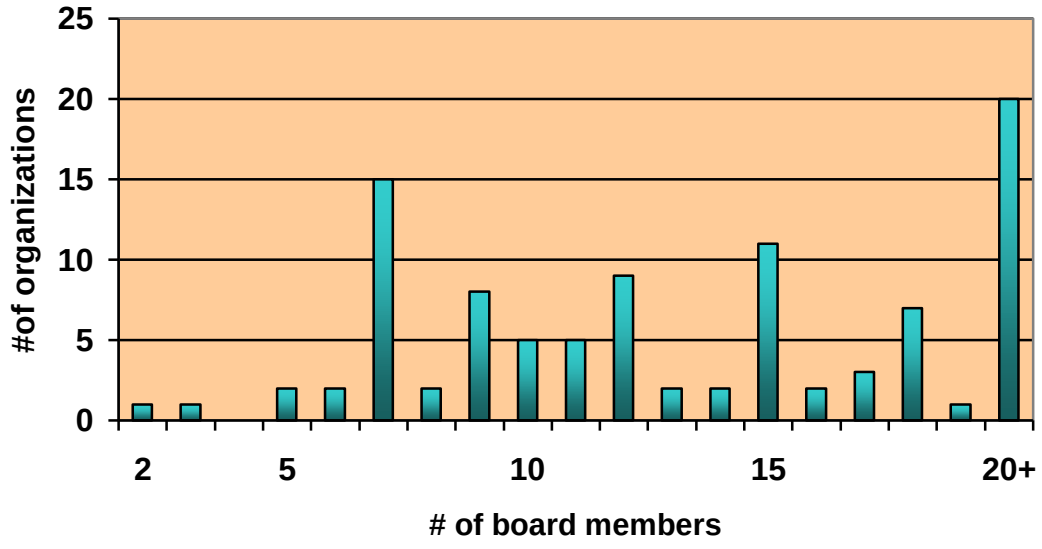
A1. Organizational structure

Most of the African American organizations included in this research are private non-profits, while several are operated by a federal, state or local government agency. Most are history museums or historic sites (most of which also have collections and interpretation). A small number are for-profit entities that also present collections to the public. Most have governing boards of seven or more members, meeting quarterly or monthly.

governance structure		**type of organization**	
non-profit	69%	history museum	58%
state	11%	historic site	22%
municipal	10%	arts center/ gallery	6%
federal	5%	library/archive	4%
private	4%	combination/ other	10%
other	1%		

governing boards

has governing board	80%
does not have a governing board	20%



# of Board meetings annually

1-3	12%
4-6	42%
7-9	4%
10-12	40%
13+	2%

A2. Geographic distribution

The South has many more African American organizations than any other region of the United States, with about half of all such organizations. The greater number of organizations in the South has been consistent throughout the time periods represented in the table below. The table also demonstrates that the growth of African American organizations has increased in the South and the Midwest/West. A smaller proportion of organizations was created in the Northeast during the last twenty years.

The data demonstrate few other regional differences among African American organizations, but those in the Northwest appear to be somewhat larger than those in other regions.

54%	**South** (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, WV, VA)
20%	**Midwest** (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)
18%	**Northeast** (CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)
8%	**West** (AZ, CA, CO, ID, OR, MT, NM, NV, UT, WA, WY)

		South (n=107)	Northeast (n=36)	Midwest West (n=61)
year opened [1]				
before 1970	**	12%	25%	10%
(actual #)		(13)	(9)	(6)
1970-1989		29%	44%	31%
(actual #)		(31)	(16)	(19)
1990-2008		59%	31%	59%
(actual #)		(63)	(11)	(36)
		100%	100%	100%
		(107)	(35)	(61)

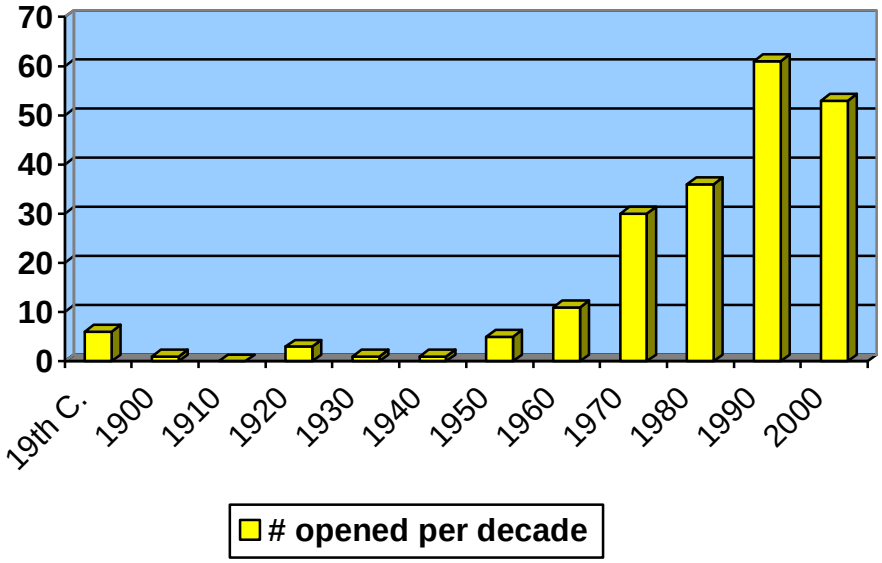
		South (n=82)	Northeast (n=26)	Midwest/ West (n=45)
number of staff/volunteers				
small staff (0-5)	++	43%	19%	40%
medium staff (6-20)		33%	35%	38%
large staff (21+)		24%	46%	22%

[1] The table showing region and when the institutions opened represents many institutions that did not complete a survey but their year of opening is available on the web.

A3. Growth of new African American organizations

Although a few of today's African American cultural organizations opened their doors in the 19th Century, the rate of increase accelerated from the 1960s to the 1990s.[2] Several major African American organizations (National Slavery Museum, National Museum of African American History and Culture, and others) are currently in development and other, smaller organizations may open in the near future.

The longer existing organizations tend to be larger (have more staff) than those that opened more recently. It's unclear whether this is a difference in the original scope of the organizations or a product of the growth of individual organizations. The table on the following page suggests that similar types of facilities were built regardless of historical era.



		opened 1960-79 (n=28)	opened 1980-99 (n=72)	opened 2000-08 (n=40)
number of staff/volunteers				
0-5	**	21%	39%	49%
6-20		32%	37%	38%
21+		46%	24%	13%

Statistics compare columns of figures
** = indicates statistically significant differences (p<.05) between the columns of figures
++ = denotes a trend (p<.10) that is not quite statistically significant by the usual standards but may have some intuitive value.

[2] Some African American institutions must have closed during this era, but identifying them is not in the scope of this research. Because so many museums and other cultural institutions are very small, even identifying all that exist is not entirely possible.

A3. Growth of new African American organizations (continued)

	opened 1960-79 (n=28)	opened 1980-99 (n=72)	opened 2000-08 (n=40)
type of facility			
separate building	14%	18%	24%
house/ house + sep. building	36%	35%	34%
shared building	36%	35%	32%
other type	14%	12%	10%

A4. Facilities

The physical structures of the African American organizations range from very small houses to large (over 80,000 square feet) museum buildings. About half are relatively small: less than 5000 square feet. They are located in several types of buildings: houses, separate buildings and shared buildings. Slightly over half of the facilities have landmark status.

size of facilities (physical space in square feet)

50-2000	26%
2001-5000	26%
5001-10,000	13%
10,001-20,000	8%
20,001-40,000	10%
40,001-80,000	9%
Over 80,000	7%

type of building

house	39%
shared building	33%
separate building	18%
other type of building	11%

share building with

public building, school	(9)
other museum	(8)
performing arts/ cultural center	(5)
business/ foundation	(5)
residence	(2)

landmark status

national[3]	39%
state	7%
local	10%
none	43%

[3] The facilities with national landmark status may also have state and/or local landmark status.

A4. Facilities (continued)

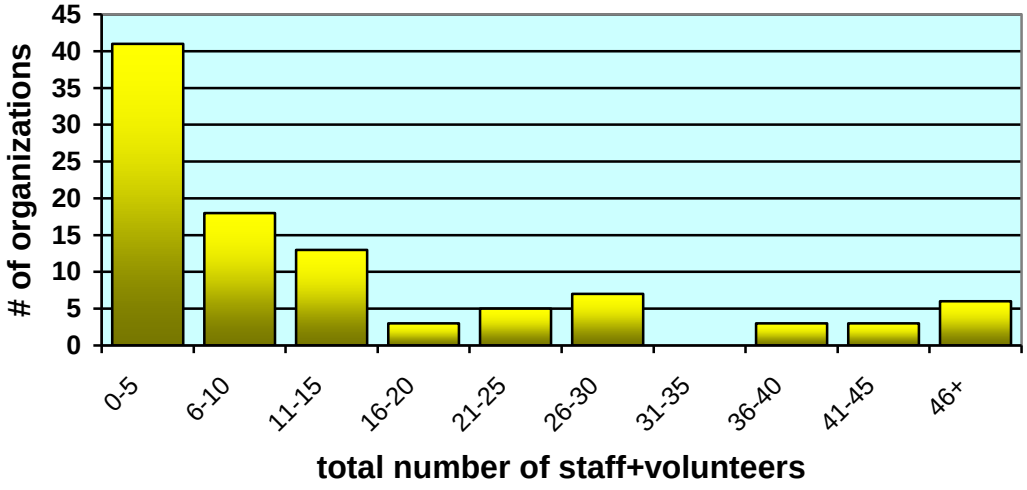
	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
ADA handicapped accessible					
yes	86%	**	75%	86%	100%
no	14%		25%	14%	0%

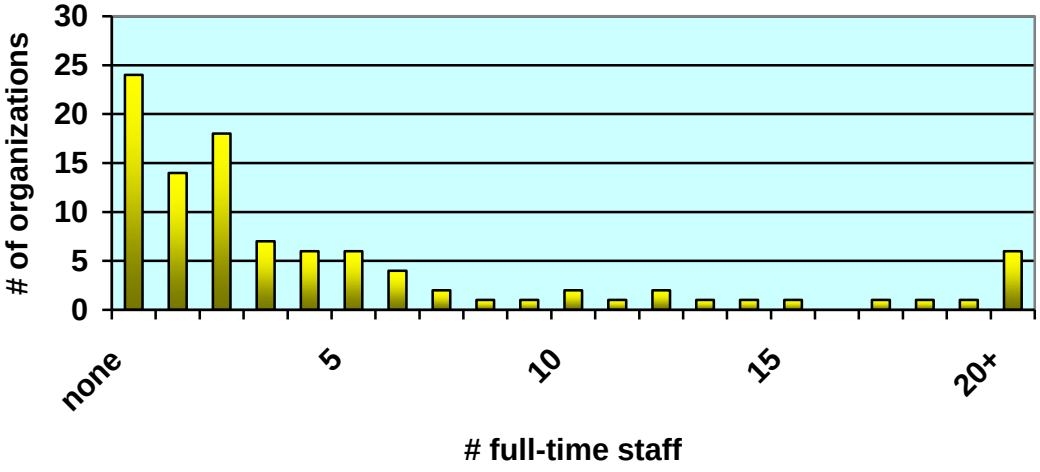
	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
have a gift shop/store					
yes	60%	**	46%	67%	69%
no	40%		54%	33%	31%

A5. Staffing

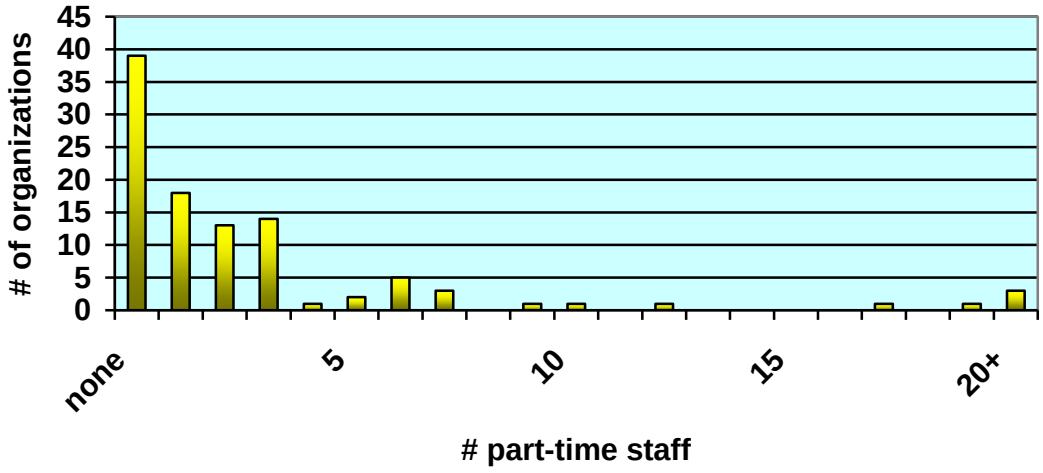
In terms of staff and volunteers, most African American organizations are relatively small, with fewer than ten people to operate them. A small number of organizations have very large numbers of staff/volunteers, with over 45 people. Most African American organizations have a small number (1-5) of full-time employees; some have no full-time employees at all and depend on part-time employees and volunteers. Like full-time staffing, part-time staffing tends to include five or fewer people. Although not all organizations involve volunteers, there is a wide range in the number of volunteers utilized at various organizations.

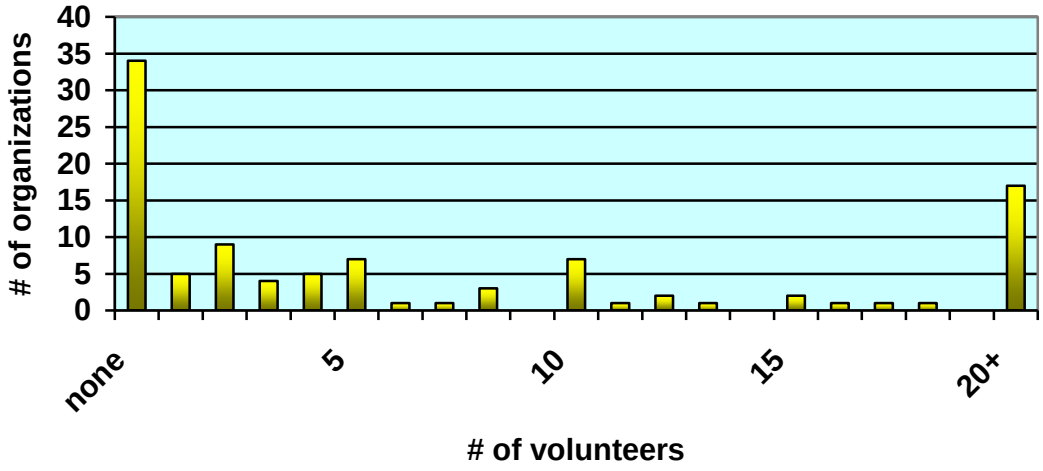
Organizations responding to the survey indicated a wide range of staffing needs, including administrative support, curator, development, grant writer, collections management, docents, education and program staff.





A5. Staffing (continued)





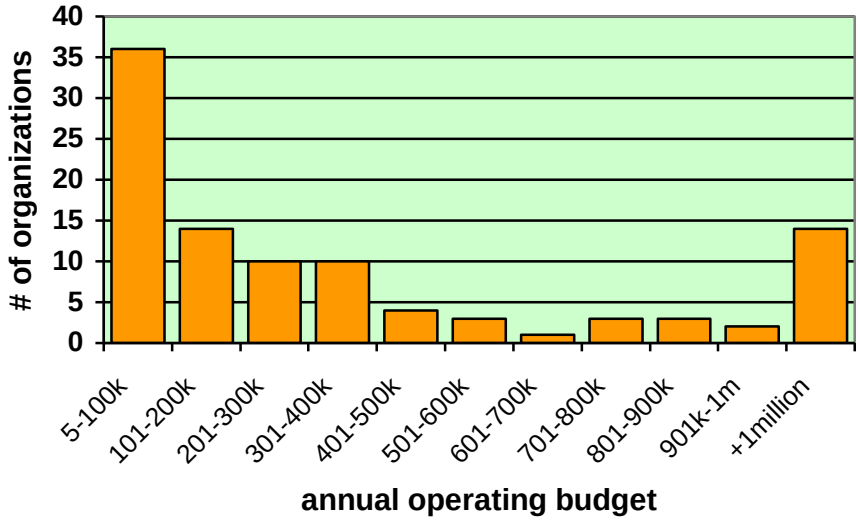
Perceptions of staff needed

31%	administrative support
25%	curator
25%	development/ fundraising/ grant writer
20%	archivists/ collections management
19%	docents/ volunteers/ guides
18%	education and program staff
14%	director
11%	marketing/ public relations
8%	internet technology/ web design
14%	other

A6. Finances

The financial situation for African American organizations varies widely, but most have annual operating budgets under $400,000 per year and about one-third have operating budgets under $100,000. A few, however, have annual operating budgets over $1 million. Only a few African American organizations have endowments at all, but a few have substantial endowments.

A chart and tables on the next page illustrate that donations, grants and parent organizations are the greatest sources of income for African American organizations, while admission, memberships, gift shops, endowments and facility rental are lesser sources of income. Donations are the largest source of income for smaller organizations — much more important than they are to medium-sized and larger organizations. Membership income is a major portion of income for medium-sized and larger institutions.

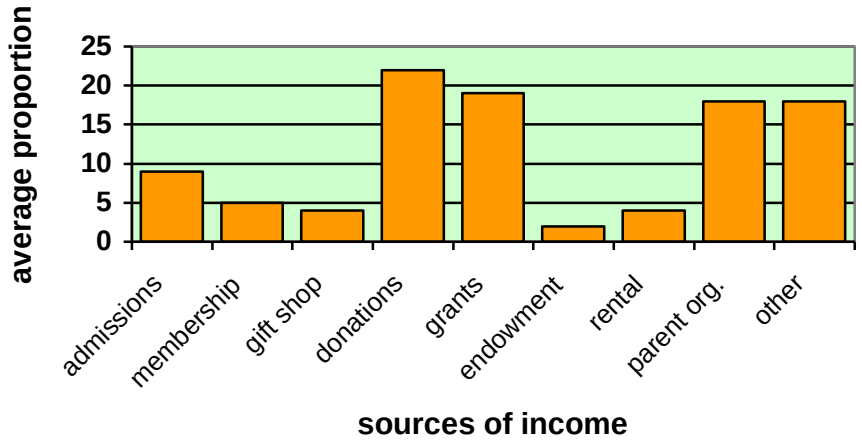


endowment

none	83%
up to $99,000	5%
$100-499,000	6%
$500,000+	6%

more than annual operating budget	5%
less than annual operating budget	12%

A6. **Finance** (continued)



other sources of income[4]

12%	other government funds (not grants or from parent organizations)
7%	interest income (not from endowment)
6%	events
3%	publications/ book sales
8%	other (e.g. support group, special programs, etc.)

		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
membership				
major source (26% +)	**	0%	12%	10%
moderate source (11-15%)		2%	15%	10%
minor source (0-10%)		98%	73%	79%
donations				
major source (26% +)	**	46%	15%	28%
moderate source (11-15%)		14%	37%	14%
minor source (0-10%)		41%	49%	59%

[4] This list represents the proportion of institutions that report any income from these "other" sources.

A7. Use of technology

The large majority of African American organizations (especially medium-sized and larger institutions) have access to modern technological tools: internet access, a web site and a computer database of their collections. About half have digitized some of their collections, but few present virtual collections on their web sites. Almost all are interested in being part of a technology network.

Internet access

yes	92%
no	8%

			small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
	total				
web site					
yes	91%	**	86%	89%	100%
no	9%		14%	11%	0%

maintains an inventory of collections

yes	84%
(on a computer database: 75%)	
(in a paper catalogue: 67%)	
no	16%

The most frequently used database is PastPerfect, but some use Access, ReDiscovery and Excel.

		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
maintains an inventory of collections				
yes	**	72%	90%	91%
no		28%	10%	9%

has digitized any of collections

yes	58%
no	42%

A7. Use of technology (continued)

presents virtual exhibits on web site

yes	26%
no	74%

interested in being part of a technology network

yes	89%
no	11%

B. Service to the Public

This section examines the ways in which African American cultural organizations serve the public.

The principal findings are:

- As illustrated in Section A6 of this report, admission charges are not among the most important sources of income; in fact, only about half of African American cultural organizations charge admission at all. Among those who do charge, adult admission averages about $5.

- Most African American organizations offer memberships (even if some don't regularly charge admission). Aside from presenting their collections, many also rent their facilities and host private functions and hold special events.

- Visitation at most African American cultural organizations tends to be fewer than 10,000 visitors per year, with one-tenth of the organizations reporting over 100,000 visitors annually. Most of these visitors are free general public or school groups, but about one-fifth are paid general public visitors.

- African American cultural organizations offer a wide variety of public programs: on-site school and adult programs, community outreach, on-site children's programs and programs at schools. Larger organizations offer a wider variety of programs than smaller organizations.

B1. Open to the public

All of the organizations presented in this research are open to the public, but the cost and availability vary. Half of the African American organizations do not charge admission; some of those that do charge adults, but admit children and seniors without charge. Somewhat more than half offer memberships, but memberships are more common at larger institutions.

Like many other non-profit cultural organizations, African American organizations are most often open Tuesday through Saturday and many are closed Sunday and Monday. Along with presenting collections, many organizations also rent their facilities and host private events and hold their own special events and lectures.

charge an admission fee

yes	47%
no	53%

average admission fee (for organizations that charge an admissions fee)

adults	$5.21	
seniors	$3.95	(32% are free for seniors)
children	$3.08	(26% are free for children)

	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
offer memberships					
yes	61%	**	56%	55%	78%
no	39%		44%	45%	22%

regularly scheduled days open to the public

Monday	46%
Tuesday	83%
Wednesday	87%
Thursday	93%
Friday	89%
Saturday	77%
Sunday	34%

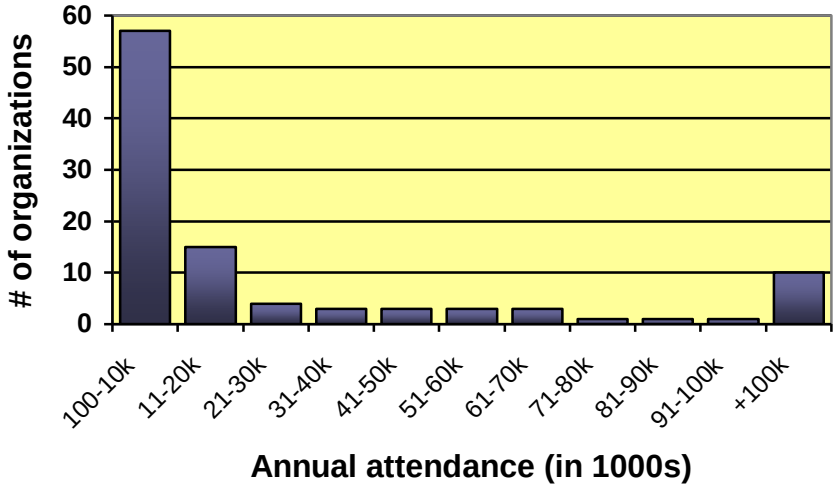
B1. Open to the public (continued)

other fee-based services

50%	facilities rental
34%	host private functions
24%	special events
20%	conferences/ lectures
14%	traveling exhibits
4%	performances
7%	other (e.g. copy service, historical drives, book signings)

B2. Visitation

About half of the African American organizations studied here report fewer than 10,000 visitors per year, while a few report over 100,000 annually. These visitors are primarily free or paid general public and school groups. The paid general public visitors are a much more significant segment of the audience for medium and larger museums than for smaller organizations.



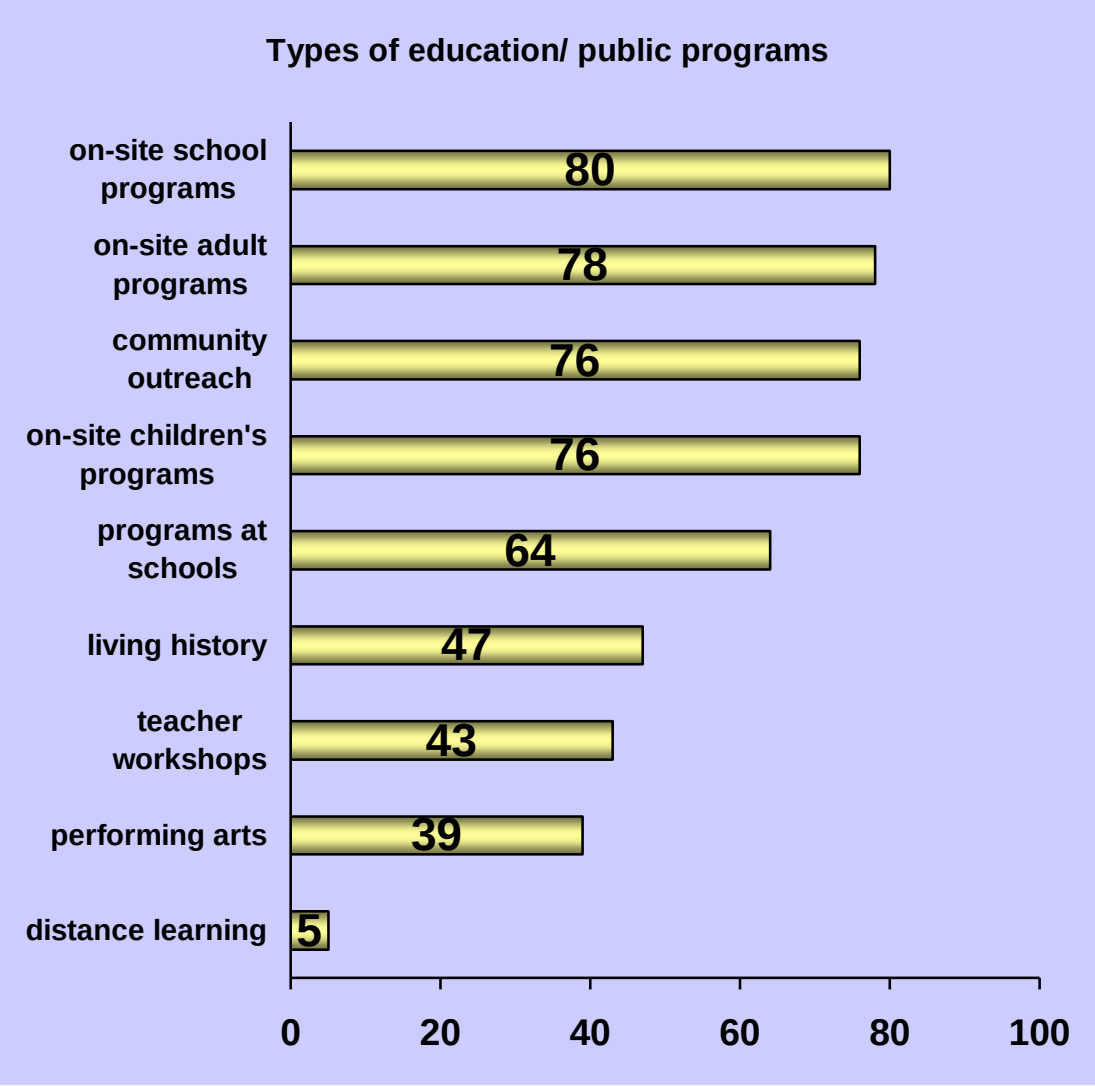
types of visitors

	average proportion
free general public	33%
school group visitors	31%
paid general public	20%
facilities rental visitors	12%
all other visitors	4%

		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
Paid general public				
major segment (26% +)	**	24%	54%	62%
moderate segment (11-15%)		44%	23%	21%
minor segment (0-10%)		32%	23%	17%

B3. Public programs

African American organizations produce a variety of public programs. Most produce on-site school, adult and children's programs as well as community outreach programs and programs at schools.



B3. **Public programs** (continued)

Larger organizations are able to provide a wider variety of programs, especially on-site school and children's programs, community outreach, teacher workshops and performing arts.

		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
Public programs				
on-site school programs	**	70%	77%	90%
on-site adult programs		72%	77%	91%
community outreach	**	70%	70%	94%
on-site children's programs	**	61%	79%	94%
programs at schools		59%	60%	78%
living history		52%	36%	56%
teacher workshops	**	33%	32%	78%
performing arts	**	28%	34%	63%
distance learning		2%	4%	6%

C. Collections

This section examines the collections held by African American cultural organizations.

The principal findings are:

- The size of collections ranges from relatively small (about one-third have fewer than 500 items) to very large (about one-fourth have over 5000 items). Most organizations display less than half of their collections during any particular year.

- The contents of the permanent exhibitions are primarily about African American history, but some are about African American art or African art and history. Organizations presenting African American history are most likely to present local/regional history and the stories of famous individuals. The most frequent specific topics are slavery (including abolition and the Underground Railroad), schools, the Civil War and civil rights.

- The most common types of collections are photographs, historic artifacts, printed materials and art, but many African American organizations also present film, oral histories and furnishings.

- One of the greatest needs for African American cultural organizations is collections care. Slightly over half of the organizations have a formal collections policy and about one-fourth have a conservator or conservation program.

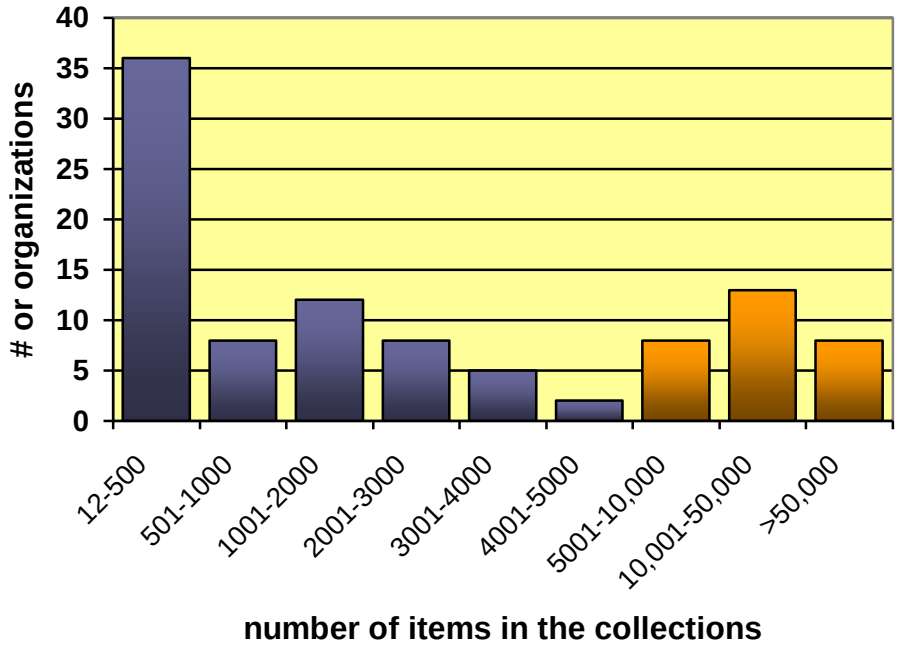
- African American cultural organizations produce many temporary exhibits about the African American experience (arts, history, textiles and famous individuals) and most have an interest in traveling exhibits and are willing to lend items from their own collections. About half currently rent or receive temporary exhibits, but only about one-fifth have any budget for them.

C1. Size of collections

All of the organizations represented in this study make collections available to the public, but they vary quite a bit in the size and content of their collections. A few have no permanent collections, but present temporary or rotating collections. About one-third of the organizations have fewer than 500 items in their collections, while a similar proportion of organizations have over 5000 items. Most organizations (60%) show half or less of their collections during any particular year.

collections for the public

yes	94%
no	6%



proportion of collections displayed	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
1-25%	44%	**	27%	49%	59%
26-50%	16%		22%	7%	19%
51-75%	13%		12%	15%	13%
76-100%	27%		39%	29%	9%

C2. Permanent exhibitions

African American organizations present diverse permanent exhibitions representing many topics and themes. The most frequently presented general themes are local African American history and famous individuals. The most frequently presented specific topics are slavery (including abolition and the Underground Railroad), education, Civil War, civil rights and the African Diaspora.

Most organizations offer guided tours, but very few offer audio tours.

topics and themes of the permanent exhibitions

36%	local/state/regional African American history
27%	famous individuals
21%	African art & history
20%	slavery/abolition/underground railroad
19%	national African American history
18%	African American art & music
17%	schools/ education
13%	Civil War/ military
12%	civil rights
10%	African Diaspora
5%	churches & religious history
5%	other

audio tours

yes	10%
no	90%

guided tours

yes	93%
no	10%

C3. Collections policies

Presenting and maintaining collections is a challenge for any institution, but even more so for small organizations. A little more than half of the organizations surveyed for this research have a formal collections policy (mostly medium and large organizations) and far fewer have a conservator or conservation policy. About one-third of these organizations produce publications about their collections.

formal/written collections policy	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
yes	60%	**	41%	71%	74%
no	40%		59%	29%	26%

conservator/conservation program	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
yes	27%	++	18%	29%	39%
no	73%		82%	71%	61%

publications about collections

yes	34%
no	66%

C4. Temporary exhibits

Although there is substantial interest in temporary exhibitions, few organizations have an annual budget to rent them and larger organizations are more likely to have the resources to produce or present them. The large majority of organizations expressed interest in a formal network of traveling exhibitions, but only about ten African American organizations have a budget for temporary exhibitions that exceeds $10,000.

About half of the organizations (even more of the larger institutions) currently rent or receive temporary exhibitions.

Interest in a formal network for traveling exhibits

yes	81%
no	19%

budget for temporary exhibits	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
yes	25%	**	13%	20%	44%
no	75%		87%	80%	56%

size of budget for temporary exhibits[5]

$1-$10,000	(11)	(number of organizations)
$10,001-$50,000	(6)	
$50,001 +	(4)	

rent or receive temporary exhibits	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
yes, have annual budget	22%	**	13%	18%	45%
yes, but no annual budget	31%		30%	34%	32%
no	47%		57%	48%	23%

[5] Expenditures for temporary exhibits range from free to $150,000.

C4. Temporary exhibits (continued)

About one-third of African American organizations produce temporary exhibits; larger institutions are much more likely to produce them than smaller organizations. Most organizations (especially larger institutions) are willing to lend items to other museums or for traveling exhibits. About two-thirds of the organizations surveyed indicated that they have climate-controlled space for temporary exhibits.

Starting on the next page is a list of temporary exhibits that African American organizations have presented on art, the African American experience and other topics.

	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)		medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
produce temporary exhibits						
yes	36%		25%	**	30%	64%
no	64%		75%		70%	36%

	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
willing to lend items to museums/traveling exhibits					
yes	78%	**	68%	76%	91%
no	22%		32%	24%	9%

Climate-controlled space for temporary exhibits

yes	68%
no	32%

C4. Temporary exhibits (continued)

Titles, topics and themes of temporary exhibits

Art/music
Looking Both Ways: Art of the Contemporary African Diaspora
Photography - Palmer Memorial Institute Visual arts
Lois Mailou Jones 1927 – 1937 Interactive
Between Two Worlds: The Alitash Kebede Collection
Latin Jazz
The Art of Whitfield Lovell
Textured Lives: Collages of Phoebe Beasley
Origin & the Landscape: Prints and Drawings by Lou Stovall
Romantic Expressionism in the Art of Louis Delsarte
Images of America: African American Voices & Selections from the collection of Mr. & Mrs. Darrell Walker
Contradiction and Harmony (abstract art by Jerald Ieans)
In Concert (photos of performances by Annette Brown)
Journeys (Richard Ward: mixed media artwork)
regional artists, Charles Chesnutt, DuBois, James Weldon Johnson
James Ransone, Soul Cinema
African Diaspora art
Julian Dimock Photography
private collections: Black American art
Leo Twiggs, Jonathan Green Smithsonian
Opening Doors, art work from local college and artists
Symbiosis, Dr. Paul Jones (collector), Charlotte Riley Webb, and James Brown
African American artists living in the San Francisco Greater Bay Area region
Faith Ringgold Retrospective
P.H. Polk exhibit
Something to Look Forward To
Were You There When They Crucified My Lord
Daughters of the House of Life: Robin Holder and Betty Blayton
Our Flesh of Flames: Theodore Harris

Quilts/textiles
PATTERNS: Traditional West African Textiles
The Art of Gee's Bend Quilts
African American Original Art & Quilts
Kinte Clothe
Quilt making in Orlando
African American Fiber and Visual Artists
Ghanian Kente cloth
Wrapped in the Feeling: The Story Coat Exhibition
Quilt Sensation
Wrapped in Pride

C4. Temporary exhibits (continued)

Titles, topics and themes of the temporary exhibits (continued)

The African American experience
Slavery: Inhuman History featuring: New York Historical Society's Slavery in New York Panel Exhibition
19th Century African American Life
100 Years of Service: The AKA Story Sculptural - Books in Black: A New Page
From morning to night: Domestic service in the Gilded South
The 25 year anniversary of Women in the fire service in Los Angeles
In Motion
Yellow Fever (from the National Park Service)
Dunbar High School (Little Rock, AR) exhibit
Wattstax: I Am Somebody
African Presence in Mexico
The Whole World's Watching: Peace and Social Justice Movements of the 1960s - 1970s
National Pastime: The Negro Baseball Leagues
African American Creative Genius: A Sample of Inventions with Impact
381 Days: The Montgomery Bus Boycott Story
African American U.S. Marshals
Buffalo Soldiers exhibitions
Seats of Social Justice
I am Man: 1968 Sanitation Workers Strike in Memphis
Brown vs. Board of Education
Iowa in Ghana
Evolving Images of African Americans, art exhibits (Harlem Renaissance)
Negro Baseball League exhibit
Saturday night/Sunday morning
Civil Rights (Montgomery bus boycott)
Rosewood Massacre
African Diaspora
Selma to Montgomery March

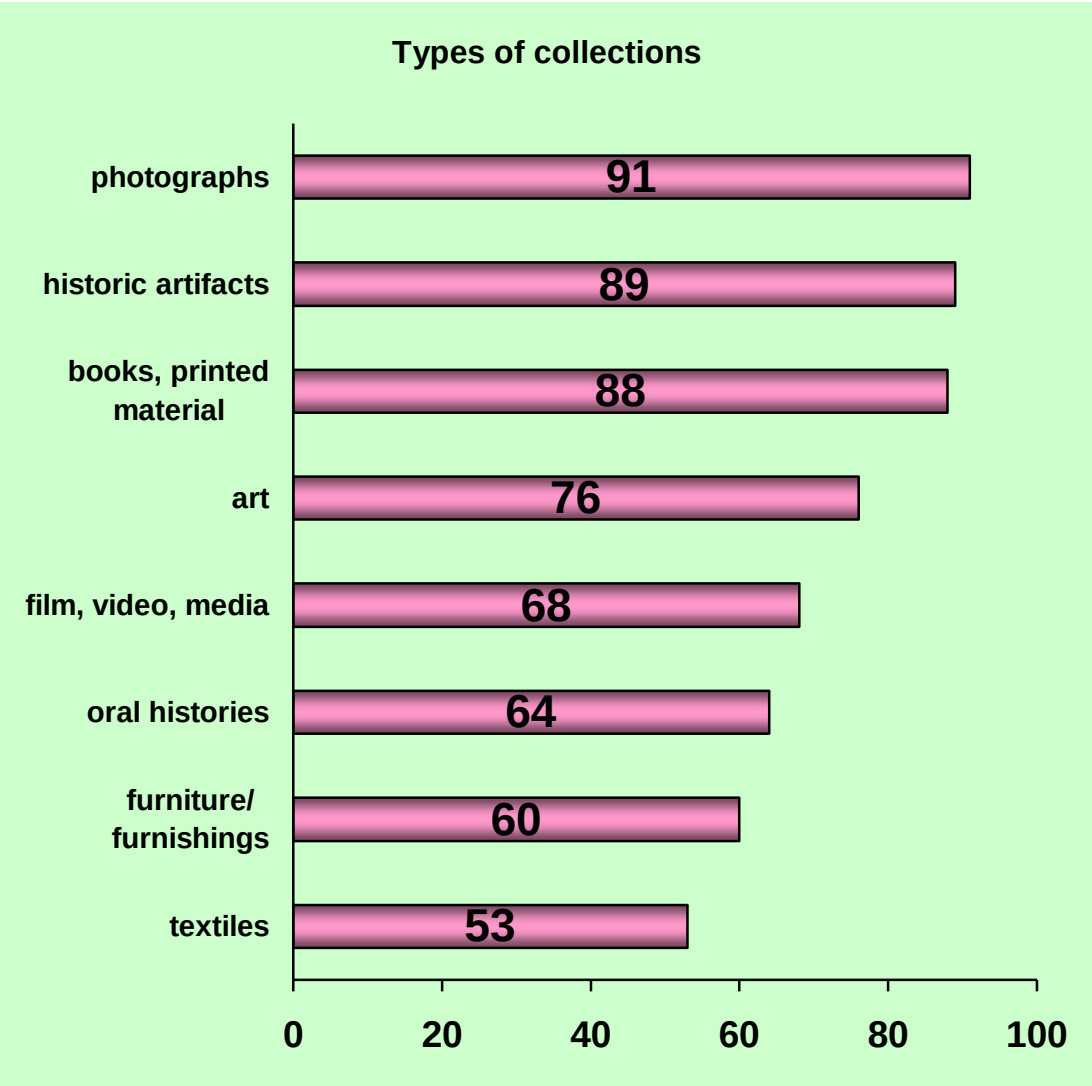
Life stories of historic individuals
Carrie Mae Weems - The Louisiana Project
Azucar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz
Life and times of Prudence Crandall
African American achievers and their achievements
Priscilla's Journey

Other exhibits
Lasting Foundations: The Art of Architecture in Africa
African currency
Rare Apache Lifeways
Global Shoes

C5. Types of collections

The types of collections held by African American organizations are diverse, with photographs, historic artifacts and printed materials being the most frequent types of collections. Even the less frequently mentioned collections (art, film, oral history, furniture and textiles) are held by half or more of these organizations.

The table on the next page illustrates that organizations with larger operating budgets are able to provide a broader range of types of collections, whereas smaller organizations are often limited to a narrower set of type of collections.



C5. Types of collections (continued)

	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
variety in types of collections					
1-3	45%	**	66%	47%	11%
4-5	36%		17%	42%	58%
6-8	19%		17%	11%	31%

D. Looking Forward

This section examines the institutional needs and associations of African American cultural organizations.

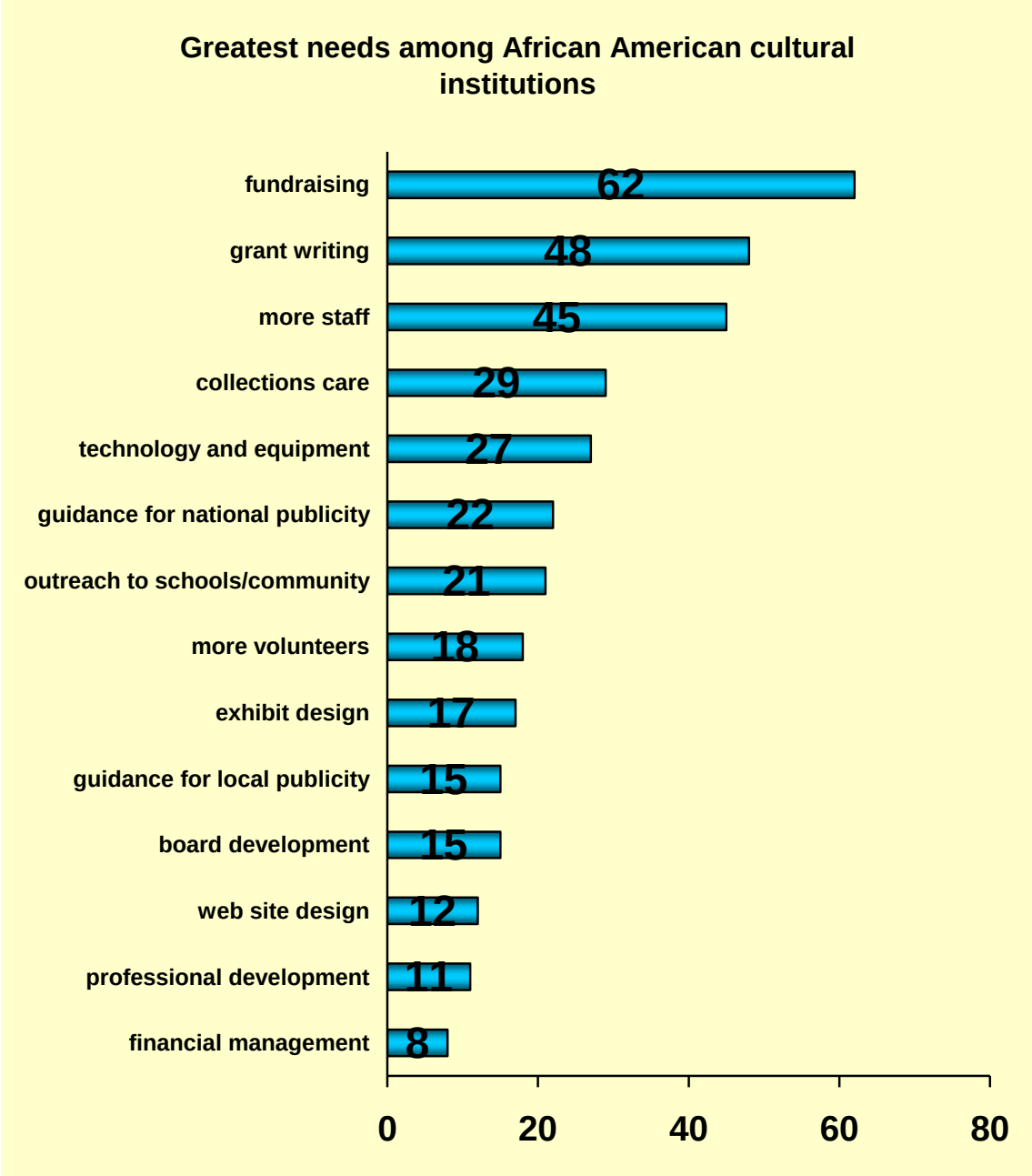
The principal findings are:

- Fundraising, grant writing and additional staff are the greatest needs perceived by African American cultural organizations. Collections care (especially among smaller organizations), guidance about publicity, and technology are also needed by some organizations. Web design, professional development and financial management are "greatest needs" for a few organizations.

- Most of the organizations surveyed for this research have at least some institutional affiliations: half are AAAM members and about one-third are AAM members. Many are members of regional or local associations.

D1. Institutional needs

Survey respondents were asked to identify their greatest needs from a list of possibilities. Fundraising, grant writing and more staff lead the list of the greatest needs among African American organizations. Collections care (especially among smaller organizations), technology, national publicity and outreach to schools and community are also widely perceived needs. The pattern of needs expressed is almost identical when comparing small, medium and larger institutions, with one exception: smaller organizations have a greater need for collections care.



D1. Institutional needs (continued)

	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
Greatest needs					
collections care	28%	**	43%	17%	22%

greatest needs

Small organizations

Fundraising
More staff
Collections care
Grant writing

Medium-sized organizations

Fundraising
Grant writing
More staff

large organizations

Fundraising
Grant writing
More staff

D2. Institutional associations

Most of the organizations included in this research have some institutional affiliations. About half are members of AAAM and about one-third are AAM members (especially larger institutions). Most of the non-AAAM members expressed interest in joining. They also have affiliations with a variety of state, regional and local associations.

members of AAAM

yes	50%
no, but interested	40%
no, not interested	10%

	total		small staff (0-5) (n=49)	medium staff (6-20) (n=42)	large staff (21+) (n=33)
members of AAM					
yes	37%	**	21%	38%	59%
no	63%		79%	62%	41%

other institutional associations

29%	state museum associations
12%	regional museum associations
11%	American Association for State & Local History
6%	Association for the Study of African American Life & History
6%	arts associations
6%	library & archive associations
4%	local museum associations
3%	other African American associations
2%	National Trust for Historic Preservation
7%	other museum associations
39%	no answer/ none

E. Appendix

A list of organizations that participated in this survey.

E. Appendix

African American Organizations responding to this national survey

40 Acres Art Gallery (Sacramento, CA)
A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum (Chicago, IL)
African American Art & Culture Complex (San Francisco, CA)
African American Atelier (Greensboro, NC)
African American Civil War Museum (Washington, DC)
African American Cultural Society (Palm Coast, FL)
African American Firefighter Museum (Los Angeles, CA)
African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa (Cedar Rapids, IA)
African American Historical Society (Fort Wayne, IN)
African American Museum & Library at Oakland (Oakland, CA)
African American Museum in Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)
African Burial Ground National Monument (New York, NY)
African-American Research Library & Cultural Center (Fort Lauderdale, FL)
Alexandria Black History Museum (Alexandria, VA)
American Jazz Museum (Kansas City, MO)
Amistad Center for Art & Culture (Hartford, CT)
Amistad Research Center (New Orleans, LA)
Anacostia Community Museum (Washington, DC)
Archives of African American Music and Culture (Bloomington, IN)
Armour J. Blackburn University Center Gallery, Howard University (Washington, DC)
Art Tatum African American Resource Center (Toledo, OH)
Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History (Atlanta, GA)
August Wilson Center for African American Culture (Pittsburgh, PA)
Avery Research Center for African American History & Culture (Charleston, SC)
B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center (East Indianola, MS)
Banneker-Douglass Museum (Annapolis, MD)
Beulah Rucker Museum (Atlanta, GA)
Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (Birmingham, AL)
Black American West Museum (Denver, CO)
Black Archives History and Research Foundation of South Florida (Miami, FL)
Black Archives of Mid-America in Kansas City (Kansas City, MO)
Black World History Museum (St. Louis, MO)
Booker T. Washington Birthplace (Hardy, VA)
Brazos Valley African American Museum (Bryan, TX)
Bronzeville Children's Museum (Evergreen Park, IL)
Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center (Kansas City, MO)
Buffalo Soldiers National Museum (Houston, TX)
California African American Museum (Los Angeles, CA)
Carrie Meek-James N. Eaton Sr. Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum (Tallahassee, FL)
Central-Carver Legacy Museum (Gadsden, AL)
Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History (Detroit, MI)

E. Appendix

African American Organizations responding to this national survey (continued)

Charlotte Hawkins Brown State Historic Site (Sedalia, NC)
Chattanooga Afro-American Museum (Chattanooga, TN)
Clark Atlanta University Art Galleries (Atlanta, GA)
Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park (Earlimart, CA)
Community Folk Art Center (Syracuse, NY)
Coweta County African American Heritage Museum and Research Center (Newnan, GA)
Cultural Heritage Museum (Kinston, NC)
Delta Arts Center (Winston-Salem, NC)
Delta Cultural Center (Helena, AR)
Diaspora Cultural Institute Inc. (Dayton, OH)
Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University (Winston-Salem, NC)
DuSable Museum of African American History (Chicago, IL)
Eartha M.M. White Historical Museum (Jacksonville, FL)
Evansville African American Museum (Evansville, IN)
Family Heritage House Museum (Bradenton, FL)
Fort Davis National Historic Site (Fort Davis, TX)
Fort Des Moines Museum & Education Center (Des Moines, IA)
Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (Washington, DC)
Freetown Village Living History Museum (Indianapolis, IN)
George Washington Carver Museum (Dothan, AL)
George Washington Carver Museum (Austin, TX)
George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center (Phoenix, AZ)
Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum (Gum Springs (Alexandria), VA)
Hammonds House Museum and Resource center of African American Art (Atlanta, GA)
Hampton University Museum and Archives (Hampton, VA)
Harriet Tubman African American Museum (Macon, GA)
Historic Stagville State Historic Site (Durham, NC)
Historic Virginia Key Beach Park & Museum (Miami, FL)
Howard County Center of African American Culture, Inc. (Columbia, MD)
I.P. Stanback Museum and Planetarium (Orangeburg, SC)
Ida B. Wells Barnett Museum (Holly Springs, MS)
Idaho Black History Museum (Boise, ID)
Indianapolis Public Schools, Crispus Attucks Museum (Indianapolis, IN)
International Civil Rights Center & Museum (Greensboro, NC)
International Gospel Music Hall of Fame and Museum (Detroit, MI)
James A. Fields House (Newport News, VA)
James E. Lewis Museum of Art (Baltimore, MD)
Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University (Big Rapids, MI)
John E. Rogers African American Cultural Center (Hartford, CT)
John Gilmore Riley Center, Museum for African American History & Culture (Tallahassee, FL)

E. Appendix

African American Organizations responding to this national survey (continued)

John Jasper Memorial Room & Museum, Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church (Richmond, VA)
John P. Parker Historical Society (Ripley, OH)
Johnson House Historic Site (Philadelphia, PA)
Jonathan Green Art Collection& LLC (Naples, FL)
Kansas African American Museum (Wichita, KS)
Katherine Dunham Centers for Arts and Humanities (East St. Louis, IL)
Kentucky Center for African American Heritage (Louisville, KY)
King-Tisdell Cottage Foundation (Savannah, GA)
Ledonia S. Wright Cultural Center (Greenville, NC)
Legacy Museum of African American History (Lynchburg, VA)
Leora Brown School (Corydon, IN)
Lewis H. Latimer House (Queens, NY)
Lillie Carroll Jackson Museum (Baltimore, MD)
Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History (Augusta, GA)
Madame Walker Theatre Center (Indianapolis, IN)
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site (Atlanta, GA)
Mattye Reed African Heritage Center (Greensboro, NC)
Miles College Special Collections Afro American Center (Fairfield, AL)
Morgan County African American Museum (Madison, GA)
Mosaic Templars Cultural Center (Little Rock, AR)
Muhammad Ali Center (Louisville, KY)
Murphy-Collins African American Museum (Tuscaloosa, AL)
Museum of African American History (Boston, MA)
Museum of African American Music (Newark, NJ)
Museum of African American Technology (MAAT) Science Village (Oakland, CA)
Museum of Black Inventors (St. Louis, MO)
Museum of the African Diaspora (San Francisco, CA)
Muskegon County Museum of African American History (Muskegon Heights, MI)
National African-American Archives & Museum (Mobile, AL)
National Afro American Museum and Cultural Center (Wilberforce, OH)
National Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African American Culture (Montgomery, AL)
National Civil Rights Museum (Memphis, TN)
National Cowboys of Color Museum and Hall of Fame (Fort Worth, TX)
National Great Blacks in Wax Museum (Baltimore, MD)
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (Cincinnati, OH)
National Underground Railroad Museum (Maysville, KY)
National Voting Rights Museum (Selma, AL)
Negro Leagues Baseball Museum (Kansas City, MO)
Newsome House Museum and Cultural Center (Newport News, VA)
Noble Hill-Wheeler Memorial Center (Cassville, GA)

E. Appendix

African American Organizations responding to this national survey (continued)

Northeast Louisiana Delta African American Heritage Museum (Monroe, LA)
Northwest African American Museum (Seattle, WA)
Odell S. Williams Now And Then African-American Museum (Baton Rouge, LA)
Old Dillard Museum (Fort, Lauderdale, FL)
Old Slave Mart Museum (Charleston, SC)
Oliver Nestus Freeman Round House Museum (Wilson, NC)
Paul Laurence Dunbar House (Dayton, OH)
Penn Center (St. Helena Island, SC)
Pennsylvania Abolition Society (Philadelphia, PA)
Philadelphia Doll Museum (Philadelphia, PA)
Price Public Community Center & Swift Museum (Rogersville, TN)
Prudence Crandall Museum (Canterbury, CT)
Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture (Baltimore, MD)
Richard Allen Museum (Philadelphia, PA)
River Road African American Museum (Donaldsonville, LA)
Rossville Museums & Cultural Center (Piqua, OH)
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library (New York, NY)
Scott Joplin House State Historic Site (St. Louis, MO)
Seacoast African American Cultural Center (Portsmouth, NH)
Slave Relics Historical Museum & Culture Center (Walterboro, SC)
Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center (Jackson, MS)
St. Joseph's Historic Foundation at the Hayti Heritage Center (Durham, NC)
State Black Archives Research Center and Museum (Normal, AL)
Stephens African American Museum (Shreveport, LA)
Stiles African American Heritage Center, Inc. (Denver, CO)
Studio Museum in Harlem (New York, NY)
Troy University Rosa Parks Museum (Montgomery, AL)
Tuskegee Heritage Museum (Tuskegee, AL)
Tuskegee Human & Civil Rights Multicultural Center (Tuskegee, AL)
Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site (Tuskegee, AL)
Uncle Remus Museum (Eatonton, GA)
Underground Railroad Museum (Flushing, OH)
W.C. Handy Home and Museum (Florence, AL)
Weeksville Heritage Center (Brooklyn, NY)
Wells' Built Museum of African American History and Culture (Orlando, FL)
Willow Hill Heritage and Renaissance Center (Portal, GA)
YMI Cultural Center (Asheville, NC)