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**Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture
Partners with Caribbean and African American Museum Associations to Host
2017 Conference**

“Breaking Boundaries: Transcending Geographies, Disciplines and Identities”

WASHINGTON, DC (November 17, 2016)—The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) has partnered with the Museums Association of the Caribbean (MAC) and the Association of African American Museums (AAAM) to host the 28th Annual MAC General Meeting and Conference in Miami, FL. The conference will be hosted in the U.S. for the first time in the history of MAC. The centrality of Miami as the gateway to the World and accessibility to the Caribbean, posits it as the ideal location for the conference. Miami’s culturally rich landscape will provide a beautiful backdrop for participants from a myriad of locations across the western hemisphere, to engage in multi-disciplinary discussions.

The conference theme, *Breaking Boundaries: Transcending Geographies, Disciplines and Identities*, encapsulates the spirit of the conference and will explore the transcendent power of cultural institutions to connect people and ideas. The three organizations are inspired by the richness of the collective museum cohorts coming together, and look forward to discovering organizational intersections and ingenuity. The conference welcomes professionals from museums, archives, libraries, cultural centers and academia; October 23-26, 2017 at the Newport Beachside Hotel and Resort.

Sherene James-Williamson, MAC President, says she is “excited and energized by our newest partnership and hosts of the 2017 MAC conference. The multicultural environment that is being generated and the potential opportunities that are afforded MAC due to the shared heritage are tremendous. This will afford MAC an opportunity to reach its audience and to continue to learn from all our partners and stakeholders.”

The partnership with MAC will be the first Caribbean based collaboration for the Association of African American Museums. AAAM President, Brian J. Carter, says he is “thrilled to bring both constituencies together to extend the learning and technical exchange.”



The Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP) at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American Museums is the organizing body for the collaboration. OSP serves as an outward facing entity responsible for leveraging NMAAHC research, programmatic initiatives and other museum professional resources to benefit African American, African Diaspora museums and related cultural institutions. Associate Director, Office of Strategic Partnerships, Deborah L. Mack, says she “believes it is important to leverage the resources of her office, to create opportunities supportive of the growth of institutions and the development of museum professionals.”

About Museums Association of the Caribbean (MAC)

Established in 1987, MAC works to strengthen links among Caribbean museums, their staff and associates, so that they may foster and promote an appreciation and understanding of their common heritage through education and the development of professional standards of practices. The association serves as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas through meetings, publications and museum exchanges. MAC’s main objectives are to develop common policies relative to the role of museums and duties of curatorial staff, to act as an advisory board for governments and institutions regarding museum development and to develop relationships with international and other regional museum-related organizations.

About Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

The National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) is the 19th museum of the Smithsonian Institution, and its mission is to provide for the collections, study, and establishment of programs and exhibitions relating to African American life, history, art, and culture. NMAAHC’s Office of Strategic Partnerships furthers this mission by cultivating relationships within the Smithsonian, nationally and internationally with museum service, research and member organizations serving cohorts of institutions; establishing strategic alliances to promote capacity building, organizational sustainability, professional development and institutional best practices.

About Association of African American Museums

Established in 1978, the Association of African American Museums (AAAM) is a nonprofit museum service organization established to support African American museums—nationally and internationally and the professionals who protect, preserve and interpret African American art, history and culture. Established as the single representative and principal voice of the African American museum movement, the Association seeks to strengthen and advocate for the interests of institutions and individuals committed to the Preservation of African-derived cultures.