

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

(Cambridge, MA)

Museum Loan Network

Total Award: \$75,000 over 1 Year

Presidential Authority Grant

To support the Museum Loan Network, a program to facilitate loans between museums of works that had previously been in storage or inaccessible. A survey of the field revealed that many institutions, especially those with vast holdings, have relegated significant portions of their holdings to the basement, thus making these collections accessible to a limited number of scholars. The Museum Loan Network (MLN) has developed an extensive database of works for loan and a collaborative model for working that has helped museums involve communities in telling their stories. The MLN has implemented community-focused cataloging collaborations; it convenes leaders in the museum community to identify promising practices and it supports demonstration programs throughout the country. Through its efforts, great collections that might not have seen the light of day, are being exhibited in communities that value and can learn from them. In 2005, the MLN will develop its website so that it functions as an effective communications tool for disseminating results and outcomes; pilot a web-based toolkit that will be used by museums, community centers, libraries, schools and other possible partners; support 2 museum surveys that will encourage institutional engagement of community-focused practices and identify community knowledge bases; and convene national leaders and members of the museum community to discuss interdisciplinary and community collaborations.

Program Contribution Breakdown:

\$75,000 Arts and Culture Program: *Objective I, Strategy 3*