

## 2009 AAM ANNUAL MEETING & MUSEUMEXPO™

Conference: April 30 - May 4 \* Pennsylvania Convention Center



### *The Museum Experiment*

With each generation, museum professionals in the United States seek to redefine the word "museum" and determine anew our responsibilities to the society we serve. While we continue to ask the same questions as our predecessors – What should the museum be? How should it best do its work? Whom should it serve? – the answers change, sometimes subtly, sometimes overtly, with each generation.

Museums are unfinished, ever-changing. We continue to learn along with our visitors, our communities and society. Museums are a grand and continuous experiment in educating, engaging and inspiring people of every age and background.

Through experimentation, innovation and risk-taking museums continue to refine the core values that are key to success — being relevant, responsive and real.

**Relevant**, first of all, to our many publics, finding ways to encourage all visitors to connect with our collections and programs, working toward an inclusiveness where all visitors can find their own and other stories in our institutions.

**Responsive** to the changing needs and realities of our communities by being active and generous partners in civic life. Earning and re-earning the public trust.

**Real**, as in authentic. A museum's greatest asset, one that the public tells us they value most highly, is authenticity. Museums promote meaningful public engagement with real objects and/or primary experiences enlightened by scholarship and interpretation.

The museum experiment is one of continuous adaptation. In Philadelphia, we invite proposals that demonstrate the core beliefs and values of our museums and their ability to remain relevant, responsive and real. Proposals can address, but are not limited to, break-through ideas and innovative practices and strategies in:

- Engaging the public in the museum experience
- Advancing the understanding of collections care and heritage preservation
- Promoting learning in museums
- Creating resource efficiencies
- Knowing, understanding and applying best practices in museum operations
- Managing information to support scholarship and knowledge
- Embracing diversity of participation, thought and action
- Examining world cultures to promote understanding and tolerance