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Bloomberg Philanthropies Opens Applications to Expanded Digital Accelerator Program

Cultural organizations in the U.S. and U.K. can apply for funding to improve their essential digital infrastructure

Impacts of the program to date for 40 participating institutions include more than \$20 million in new revenue, over 1 million new audience members reached, and 4,000 new artists and partners engaged

January 10, 2024 - Today, Bloomberg Philanthropies announced that non-profit cultural organizations in the U.S. and U.K. can apply to join the expanded Digital Accelerator Program. This initiative helps cultural organizations strengthen technology and management practices to improve operations, generate revenue, fundraise, engage broader audiences, and expand programming. Nonprofit cultural organizations with annual budgets of \$500,000 (U.K.: £500,000) or more that have been in operation for at least three years can apply [here](#) before March 13, 2024. Up to 50 organizations will be accepted for this next round of the program.

“We launched the Digital Accelerator Program to help cultural groups use technology better, and over the past two years, the positive, sustainable impact we’ve made has been really encouraging,” said Patricia E. Harris, CEO of Bloomberg Philanthropies. “Participants in the program are successfully increasing their audiences and revenues, so now we’re expanding it – and meeting the growing demand from arts organizations seeking to strengthen their operations, reach new customers, and keep them coming back.”

Launched in July 2021 as an invitation-only pilot program, the Digital Accelerator Program is helping strengthen nearly 150 arts organizations in the U.S. and U.K. These organizations reach a broad spectrum of audiences, represent a range of creative endeavors, and have a deep commitment to serving communities. Bloomberg Philanthropies’ approach is unique in providing funding alongside management training and cohort-based learning, ensuring projects benefit from best-practices across the sector. The Digital Accelerator Program provides support for projects in four categories:

- Content Creation and Distribution
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)/Ticketing
- Digital Archives/Data Management
- Websites

The 40 institutions that were part of the first cohort – joining the Digital Accelerator Program in summer 2021 and completing the program during the summer of 2023 – have collectively raised an additional \$20 million in new revenue, reached over 1 million new audience members, and engaged more than 4,000 new artists and partners. Specific examples of impact include:

In the U.K.:

- [Serpentine](#) implemented a new ticketing system to deepen visitor relationships and optimize audience journeys. The system has reduced no-shows to ticketed events by **35% due to a reminder email strategy and saw nearly 6,000 new online donations made through ticket add-ons.**
- [Unicorn Theatre](#) was able to achieve over 100,000 views for its Unicorn Online children’s programming, with 37% of the views coming from outside of London thanks to new relationships with partner theatres across the country. It **has also generated £50,000 in digital licensing income** for artists and the theatre through deals with U.K., U.S., and Canadian organizations.

In the United States:

- [The Tenement Museum](#) implemented a new ticketing and a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to improve the visitor experience and added new fundraising and marketing capabilities to its website, including the ability to donate when purchasing tickets. **The program brought in more than 1,200 new donors and improved operating efficiency** – time spent processing member tickets decreased from 10 hours per week to 30 minutes a week.
- The [92NY](#), a community and cultural center in New York City, launched *Roundtable*, offering high-quality online courses from both 92NY and other cultural partners, which generated **over \$2.4 million in revenue.**

Digital Accelerator Program participants work with technology experts who provide individual strategic assessment and implementation support. In the U.K., these services are provided by Arts Council England and its Digital Culture Network, and in the U.S., by the Lapine Group.

The Digital Accelerator Program builds on Bloomberg Philanthropies history since 1999 of funding digital innovation at cultural organizations. In November 2019, Bloomberg Philanthropies launched [Bloomberg Connects](#), a free digital guide to cultural organizations around the world. The Digital Accelerator also leverages Bloomberg Philanthropies experience from the [Arts Innovation and Management](#) program, which worked to strengthen the management practices at small- and mid-size cultural organizations. Selected organizations for the latest round of the Digital Accelerator Program will be announced in the spring of 2024.

About Bloomberg Philanthropies:

Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 700 cities and 150 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a pro bono consultancy that works in cities around the world. In 2022, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$1.7 billion. For more information, please visit bloomberg.org, sign up for our [newsletter](#), or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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