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Heart of Brooklyn Awarded National Leadership Grant to Examine Cultural and Community Collaborations

Cultural Partnership Recognized by the Institute of Museum and Library Services

(Brooklyn, NY) - Heart of Brooklyn (HOB), a consortium of central Brooklyn's most esteemed cultural institutions – Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Public Library, Prospect Park and Prospect Park Zoo – will launch *Building Strong Community Networks*, a cultural research project, thanks to a National Leadership Grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). In partnership with the Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI) and the Center for the Study of Brooklyn (CSB) at Brooklyn College, HOB will examine factors that encourage or inhibit meaningful collaborations between cultural institutions and their communities.

National Leadership Grants support projects that will advance the ability of museums and libraries to preserve culture, heritage, and knowledge while enhancing learning. The work will invite experts representing libraries and museums from various communities across Brooklyn and the nation to share their insight. The planning activities will produce a report with realistic recommendations for successful collaborations. The report will be disseminated widely throughout the national, cultural, and non-profit sectors. This important research is also supported by a matching grant from the Brooklyn Community Foundation.

"Over the past decade, Heart of Brooklyn has demonstrated the value of collective planning and action in our community," said HOB Director Ellen F. Salpeter. "This project offers an opportunity to explore the deeply embedded links between community concerns and cultural organizations."

"National Leadership Collaborative Planning Grants provide opportunities to conduct research and develop the framework to support future projects that have the potential to generate new tools, research, models, services, practices, or alliances that will positively impact museums, libraries, and the communities they serve," said IMLS Acting Director Marsha L. Semmel.

"Brooklyn Community Foundation has been supporting Heart of Brooklyn's collaborative efforts on a local level since its inception, and is delighted to continue to do so through this national endeavor," said Marilyn Gelber, President of the Brooklyn Community Foundation. "This project

demonstrates that Brooklyn is once again at the forefront of cultural innovation and research for the benefit of the community.”

Heart of Brooklyn’s partners in the upcoming research offered their enthusiasm for the initiative’s potential. “This project will build on the important work being done nationally to demonstrate how cultural institutions are integral to livable cities,” said Beverly Sheppard, ILI President and CEO. Added CSB Director Gretchen Maneval, “It is our hope that inclusive engagement of both Brooklyn-based and national groups in this planning process will engender a sense of ownership of the cultural institutions in their communities.”

Learn more about Heart of Brooklyn on the web, at www.heartofbrooklyn.org.

Heart of Brooklyn (HOB) is a partnership of the leading cultural institutions located near Grand Army Plaza in central Brooklyn: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Children’s Museum, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Public Library, Prospect Park, and Prospect Park Zoo. Heart of Brooklyn encourages tourism and learning by making its world-class collections and historic treasures more visible and accessible. As an integral part of Brooklyn’s renaissance, Heart of Brooklyn is committed to strengthening the future of its neighborhoods. For more information, visit www.heartofbrooklyn.org.

Founded in 1986, the nonprofit **Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI)** helps museums, libraries and other free-choice learning institutions support their visitors’ quests for learning across their lifespan. Through research, evaluation, dialogue, and support, we strengthen individual and institutional capacity to create a society where free-choice learning opportunities are recognized, valued and supported. To learn more, visit www.ilinet.org.

Center for the Study of Brooklyn, based at Brooklyn College, is the first and only research center devoted exclusively to the study of public affairs and policy issues in the borough. The Center provides access to relevant data and conducts pioneering research. It is a catalyst for critical change via strategic planning and inclusive civic engagement.

Brooklyn Community Foundation (BCF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people in Brooklyn through grantmaking and by encouraging local giving and community service. The first and only one of its kind in Brooklyn, the Foundation was founded in 2009 to support the borough’s most effective nonprofits in five Fields of Interest: Art for All, Caring Neighbors, Community Development, Education and Youth Achievement, and Green Communities. Since 1998, operating as the Independence Community Foundation, the Foundation distributed over \$70 million in grants throughout New York Metro area, more than half of which was in Brooklyn. Learn more at: www.BrooklynCommunityFoundation.org; Follow on Twitter @DoGoodBklyn.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute’s mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit www.ims.gov.

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