

## Teacher Advisory Committee FAQs

*Questions posed by members of the Museum-Ed discussion group. Answers provided by representatives of the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Contemporary Art Museum Houston*

SAINT LOUIS ART MUSEUM

Contemporary  
Arts Museum  
Houston

### What is the intention of your advisory council?

*Saint Louis Art Museum (SLAM):* The primary goal is to get a better sense of populations that they are working with, and the dynamics in city and county and schools, in order to inform SLAM programming. In addition, SLAM hopes to build a larger and stronger network of teachers to ask questions of and to share information on behalf of the museum, especially in counties that don't visit the museum as often. Finally, SLAM hopes that this program will help them reach a more diverse audience. Although these were the stated goals, staff find that the advisory committee is most valuable for generating ideas and expanding their work, as well as for engaging teachers in shared dialogue and co-creation.

*Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (CAMH):* The primary goal is to build a bridge between the museum and the classroom – the program is focused on building relationships.

### Do the teachers advise on tours, exhibitions, larger collaborations, policies, programs?

*SLAM:* Teachers advised or are advising on:

- This educator resource - <https://www.slam.org/teachers-students/educator-resource/>
- Rewriting aspects of a 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> grade multi-visit field trip program
- Pre-visit materials
- Considering students and providing new perspectives on gallery spaces and exhibits

*CAMH:* Teachers have shared feedback that led the museum to change the way they do things. For example, the museum now has a greater awareness of when teachers plan, and so they share the full exhibit schedule for the year in the summer, and let teachers know which exhibits may not be a good fit for students / school visits.

CAMH has also found that teachers do not really give useful advice until after staff has formed a strong connection with them.

**Are there any school district administrators on your committee?**

*SLAM:* No, not at this time. This may change for future committees.

*CAMH:* No, but two visual arts administrative specialists from the school district advise the museum on this program and are invited to every meeting.

**Do you have teachers from a single or from several districts? Do you have teachers from public, private, and charter schools? Do you include out-of-school teachers in the group? For example other educators from non-profit organizations (ie. other museums, arts organizations, etc.)**

*SLAM:* Only classroom teachers are invited to participate at this time, but this may change for future cohorts.

*CAMH:* Only classroom teachers from the Houston Independent School District are invited to participate at this time, but since this is a group led by the teachers, this may change for future cohorts.

**Do you focus on individual divisions (i.e., Elementary, Middle, High), or group them together?**

*SLAM and CAMH:* Both museums group teachers together, and try to get a fairly even spread between these three levels, as well as between new and experienced teachers.

**Do your teachers have set projects or does their work vary?**

*SLAM:* No, the work varies. Most projects take place during meetings, but some review or idea sharing takes place in between meetings

*CAMH:* Yes – they create and share lesson plans, and they plan an exhibition together.

**What expectations do you have of your teachers? Are they required to attend a certain number of meetings? Are there requirements for engagement/input/collaboration?**

*SLAM:* They are required to come to every meeting, but if they miss, they are not kicked off the committee. They are only paid for meetings they attend.

*CAMH:* They are expected to be present, give feedback, be an ambassador to students and colleagues. They only get paid for meetings they attend.

**Do you compensate teachers for participation? If so, how? What additional extrinsic benefits do you give your teachers? (membership, discounts, etc.)**

*SLAM:* Teachers are paid \$200 per meeting. Other compensation includes meals, a family level membership, and swag such as a sketchbook.

*CAMH:* Teachers are paid \$100 per meeting (\$500 for the year if they make it to every meeting); other compensation includes food at each meeting, museum memberships, catalogues (selected for each teacher to align with their individual interests), and swag such as t-shirts, notebooks, and stickers.

**How many teachers are on your advisory group?**

*SLAM:* 12

*CAMH:* 15

**How do you recruit teachers?**

*SLAM:* The application is posted on the website with information and application questions. Information about the committee is sent out to Superintendents, curriculum coordinators, former advisory group members, all teachers who bring students to the museum or attend teacher workshops, and local organizations that work with teachers.

*CAMH:* Museum staff present at art teacher professional development held by the district; information is given through the district to all teachers. Google form.

**How long do teachers serve on the advisory group?**

*SLAM:* Teachers serve a one year term with the possibility to renew for a second term.

*CAMH:* One year. If they want to continue working with the museum for a second year, they move to doing a collaborative project with a museum teaching artist / classroom project. The museum is in the process of developing an option for continuing the relationship for a third year.

**Do you publicly recognize participating teachers after completing a project? How?**

*SLAM:* When teachers help with a resource, they are listed in the resource as advisors. They are also listed on the Teacher and Student Programs web page.

*CAMH:* Teachers are recognized at the opening or closing event of the exhibition they create, and their names are shared on the museum website and Instagram. In addition, the Teacher Advisory Group web page lists all teacher names, as does digital signage in the museum, which also includes a photo of the group.

Last year they were able to offer a presentation about this program at SXSWedu, and include a teacher as part of the presentation, and the museum paid for the conference for the teacher as well as museum staff.

**How often do you meet? Do you meet in person or virtually or a combination of both?**

*SLAM:* Meetings are in person. The museum attempted to schedule meetings using a doodle poll, but that proved very difficult. One meeting was held on a Wednesday afternoon; most have been on Tuesday evenings 4:30-7:30. There are a total of four meetings during the year.

*CAMH:* Meetings are in person on Wednesdays, 5-7pm, five times during the year.

**How is your time with the council structured? How often do you meet, and for how long?**

*SLAM:* There are four meetings throughout the year:

- 1: Get to know everyone
- 2 and 3: these meetings address specific content that advice is needed on
- 4: A celebration and reflection

Every meeting includes time in the galleries, art making, conversation, food, questions or time to reflect on some shared experience or idea, and time for museum staff to share upcoming programs. During meetings, tables are covered with paper, providing an additional way for teachers to share ideas.

*CAMH:* There are five meetings during the year:

- 1: Get to know the teachers; they share their experience coming to a museum or bringing students to a museum.
- 2: Teachers bring and share a lesson plan they have created around art from the museum, to share with other teachers in the group.
- 3: Museum staff ask for advice / feedback
- 4: Exhibition planning
- 5: Celebration / recap / reflection

**If your state requires annual teacher PD, do you give credit for the time spent on your council? Either in addition to or in lieu of compensation?**

*SLAM and CAMH:* No

*Note: At the Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum we did offer teacher credit, and we were able to do this through the Regional Office of Education.*

**Do you evaluate the teacher experience? What techniques do you use?**

*SLAM:* Teachers are asked to write a reflection after the first meeting, and after some of the other meetings. An anonymous questionnaire is used for a summative evaluation.

*CAMH:* An end of year google feedback form is sent to teachers. This form can be submitted with names or anonymously. It includes questions about how the museum can continue to support teachers.

**Are internal (museum) educators or other staff included in the group? Can part-time/freelance museum educators, docents, volunteers, etc. get to participate in order to co-learn and co-create with the teachers?**

*SLAM:* Two full-time Learning and Engagement staff members attend each meeting. The Director of Education attended one meeting, when they had a specific question to ask of teachers. Docents have asked to attend, but museum staff have not yet invited them to join. Additional participants may be invited for future sessions.

*CAMH:* Two full-time staff members attend each meeting. Teachers who want a second year of partnership are paired with teaching artists. Additional museum staff is involved in the planning of the exhibition – for example, the install team helps with this and the Graphic Designer helps to design a pamphlet and signage.

*Note: For the Teacher Team I ran at the Noguchi Museum we did include museum educators – the group was half museum educators, half classroom teachers.*

**How much does your program cost?**

*SLAM:* The program costs around \$11,000; nearly \$10,000 of that is teacher stipends. The only additional direct cost is catering.

*CAMH:* The program costs nearly \$12,000 for one year. This includes honoraria, meals, the exhibition of teacher and student art, cultivation, and gifts such as catalogs, along with extras like a DJ at the exhibit opening. It does not include full-time staff salaries.