

FY2026 Blaffer Art Museum, One Time Request, Student Program Enhancement

The Blaffer is both an incubator and intersection between students and cultural professionals in Houston and provides opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and the application of professional creative skills. In FY26, the Blaffer will continue to prioritize student engagement and success by weaving students into specially designed museum operations and programming. The FY26 One-Time allocation furthers our ability to activate the College of the Arts Vision Element #2, to develop the next generation of artists, leaders and professionals.

To continue and maintain the trajectory from FY2025, Blaffer respectfully requests \$37,000 to sustain this increased commitment to students, and to support the following:

Student Programs (First Friday, Blaffer Art & Design)	\$4,000	
Graduate Assistant	\$6,000	
Visitor Services Personal (PT student staff)	\$6,800	
Asst. Curator of Education (PT staff)	\$14,000	
Internship Support (undergraduate Edu dept.)	\$4,000	
Administrative (6%)	\$2,200	
Total	\$37,000	

These funds will support:

- Student Programs: First Fridays and Blaffer Art and Design (B.A.D.). First Fridays, in partnership with the Blaffer Art Museum Student Association (BAMSA), is an initiative to raise the profile of the arts to the student population with free guided tours, lunch, and creative activities such as art-making and workshops. B.A.D. is a successful and innovative program that benefits students who create, display, and sell their original designs. B.A.D. creates an ongoing partnership with UH Graphic Design and Industrial Design faculty and students and is positioned as a permanent part of the Museum program. Presented in a prominent, custom-made display in the Museum lobby, B.A.D. sells student-designed objects to the Museum audience. All funds made from sales go back into the program, but SFAC is still an essential support.
- The Assistant Curator of Education position is a part-time staff member with a particular focus on UH student relations. Just beginning this year, the position will coordinate collaborations with campus units such the Student Center, UH Libraries, Residential Life and Admissions, and will manage, expand, and publicize programs like First Fridays, Convergence Research, and the student orientations which are designed for students. This position will work with student groups. A long-term goal is to work with Residence Life to offer regular art-making activities in residential halls, and follow-up field trips and guided tours at the Blaffer.
- The Instructional Assistant for the Exhibitions and Visitor Services department will learn first-hand about museum operations. The position, offered to a student interested in a museum career, will provide experience in coordinating logistical details of complex museum exhibitions while also working in close collaboration with museum staff and artists. The position may also coordinate day-to-day visitor relations, and work on archival projects.

- The Blaffer relies on UH students for our Visitor Services staff, who play a crucial role in both customer service and security. Students learn how to interact with museum visitors and are also given the opportunity to learn about the artwork to provide informed information to guests. These students are often work-study and SFAC funding will allow us to retain important continuity
- Additional funding will support two paid summer or semester-long Internships for the Education and Curatorial Departments. Provided for the first time in FY24, these SFAC funded internships will continue to provide undergraduate students the opportunity to gain academic credit and be compensated for their work. Interns learn about the museum field while gaining experience and knowledge of professional practices, learning from museum staff to research and help develop public and educational programs and assist in outreach initiatives.
- The additional requested amount will cover 6% administrative costs.