

CHICAGO CULTURAL ALLIANCE

MEETING THE MOMENT



DOCUMENTING THE MOMENT

*Framing Our Challenges and Charting a
Path Forward*

*Presented by : Laura Herrera, Chief Marketing Officer,
Griffin Museum of Science and Industry*

AGENDA

01 Welcome & Session Goals

02 Framing the Landscape

03 The Power of Narrative

04 From Moment to Movement

05 Tools for Defining Your Moment



SPONSORS



THE CHICAGO
COMMUNITY TRUST®

EQUITY • OPPORTUNITY • PROSPERITY

The Chicago Community Trust

MacArthur
Foundation

MacArthur Foundation



CHICAGO
CULTURAL
ALLIANCE



INTRODUCTIONS

Laura Herrera

Chief Marketing & Revenue Officer,
Griffin Museum of Science and Industry

Laura Herrera is a cultural leader, strategist, and entrepreneur with two decades of experience advancing mission-driven organizations. As Chief Marketing and Revenue Officer at the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, she leads integrated strategies to grow audiences, revenue, and brand impact while positioning the museum for its 2033 centennial vision.



SESSION OVERVIEW



Documenting the Moment: Framing Our Challenges and Charting a Path Forward

Workshop Goals:

- Identify key external pressures that most impact your organization
- Leverage storytelling tools with minimal resources
- Begin building a values-based messaging toolkit today
- Align your internal stakeholders using simple narrative tools

PRESSURES WE'RE FACING



- Policy and compliance uncertainty
- Funding cuts, reporting burdens, donor shifts
- Community trust and political division
- Internal burnout and role creep
- Staff and boards under pressure to 'do more with less'



WHAT IS 'THE MOMENT'?



- What feels urgent, different, or defining about right now in your community or institution?
- Why is it important to document and build narrative around it?
- *Feel free to share in the chat*

WHAT CAN NARRATIVE DO?

- Clarifies your why—for funders, board, and community
- Reduces duplication and disconnection—teams aligned in language and mission
- Re-energizes staff by reconnecting with purpose
- Builds a case for relevance, not just need



NARRATIVE POWER



- Narrative ≠ Spin
- It is the bridge between the real pressures you face and the solutions you propose
- It helps us:
 - Build trust
 - Shape funding proposals
 - Reframe challenges as calls to action

The power of storytelling is exactly this: to bridge the gaps where everything else has crumbled.

Paulo Coelho

“ quotezfactory”

ALIGNING NARRATIVE WITH ACTION



- Where is your organization aligned--or misaligned?

INTERNAL REFLECTION

- How would your staff or board define 'the moment' for your organization?
 - Discussion prompts
 - What challenges feel most urgent?
 - How are we uniquely positioned to respond?
 - What values do we want to lead with?



MOMENT TO MOVEMENT



AAPI Victory Alliance re-centered its advocacy strategy post-2020.

- Rebranding and Expanded Advocacy
- Federal and State-Level Political Engagement
- Increased Civic Power & Issue Focus
- Strategic Partnerships



MOMENT TO MOVEMENT



El Museo del Barrio aligned its narrative to deepen community trust

- From Preservation to Active Reframing
- Intentional Narrative Through Curation
- Strategic Shift in Programming Language



BUILDING ALIGNMENT



- With internal staff and board
- With stakeholders/supporters
- With the external public

GLOSSARY/STYLE GUIDE



- Create shared language for your organization that reflects your values
- Examples:
 - 'Underserved' → 'Underinvested'
 - 'Diverse audiences' → 'The communities we serve'

A NARRATIVE AUDIT

- Checklist Categories:
 - Website & social media
 - Grant language
 - Program descriptions
 - Board decks
 - Internal messaging



WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW



- Practical applications
 - Use narrative in your next grant proposal intro
 - Add prompts to your next board meeting
 - Audit your program titles for clarity and alignment
 - Update your external communications language to reflect your narrative and create consistency across channels

RESOURCES

- Framing Worksheet
- Staff & Board Discussion Prompts
- Narrative Audit Checklist
- Language & Tone Style Guide Toolkit



WRAP-UP & REFLECTION

- What's one word to describe your moment?
- Key Takeaways:
 - Narrative power
 - Internal alignment
 - Shared language



Q&A



NEXT SESSION

JANUARY 22 | THE 4 R'S OF FUNDRAISING

[CHICAGOCULTURALALLIANCE.ORG/MEETING-THE-MOMENT/](https://chicagoculturalalliance.org/meeting-the-moment/)



THANK YOU !

