

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON
Special Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency
Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom
MINUTES

The Special Meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston (“BPL”) held on June 18, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom.

All present at the meeting included: Chair, Dr. Ray Liu, Vice Chair Evelyn Arana and Trustees: Navjeet Bal, Joe Berman, Jim Canales, Cheryl Cronin, John Hailer, Jeff Hawkins, Julie Kim (joined late), Jonathan Lavine, Jose Masso III, Porsha Olayiwola, and Christian Westra. Jeff Hawkins, Senator Mike Rush, and Lynn Perry Wooten were absent.

BPL President David Leonard, Clerk of the Board Pamela Carver, Chief Dion Irish, Chief Jose Masso, and Mohammed Missouri from the City of Boston, BPL staff, and members of the public were also present.

Vice Chair Evelyn Arana presided over the meeting for Dr. Liu who had laryngitis. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. She acknowledged the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) welcome statement. The Clerk conducted a roll call, confirming a quorum, and reminded all that the meeting was being recorded for administrative purposes. The public were provided with instructions on how to sign up for public comment.

The first matter of business was the approval of the annual meeting minutes from May 20, 2025. No comments or edits were made, and the board voted to approve them.

Mr. Leonard briefly reviewed the draft BPL Naming Policy for Buildings. There were no questions or concerns. A motion was duly made, seconded, and approved as presented.

VOTED: "that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the revised Naming Policy as presented and discussed."

Ms. Beth Prindle was asked to briefly review the Central Library Services, Operations, and User Experience Study request for proposals.

VOTED: "that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a one-time contract, not to exceed Four Hundred-Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$450,000.00) with PAM LLC, 76 Cornwall Bridge Road, Sharon, CT 06069 for the purpose of the Central Library Services, Operations, and User Experience Study RFP."

Ms. Arana introduced the main topic for the meeting, which was to vote on the renaming of the Roxbury Branch.

The presentation was led by Dion Irish, Chief of Operations for the City of Boston, on behalf of Mayor Wu. The Mayor’s request was to rename the Roxbury Branch to “Shaw-Roxbury Branch” in honor of the late Sarah-Ann Shaw.

Mr. Irish gave some background on Ms. Sarah-Ann Shaw. Ms. Shaw was a long-term City resident, a trailblazer for African American women, and an advocate for education and cultural diversity. Shaw was a library champion who served on the library’s Fellowes Athenaeum Trust committee and a member of the Roxbury Branch Friends group.

The Board discussed the proposal and invited members of the public to give comments on this topic prior to their vote. The Trustees and community members expressed both strong support and opposition, focusing on Sarah-Ann Shaw’s legacy versus concerns about process, transparency, and inclusivity. There were other suggestions made

which included naming a room or wall after Shaw or adopting a combined name such as Shaw-Nubian Branch. Several speakers voiced disappointment with the perceived lack of outreach to everyday users of the branch.

Public comments included Congresswoman Pressley's staff member who read her letter of support.

Tania Anderson had several questions regarding the process. She noted she didn't know about this meeting. She helped initiate a resolution to pass Nubian Library. She is not sure why the City is not considering renaming the branch after both proposals, to "Shaw-Nubian Library".

Sadiki Kambon was upset about the process. He stated the Nubian Name encompasses all in community and not just one individual. He suggested to honor Sarah-Ann on the "Heroes wall" in the Branch.

Jose Lopez, speaking on behalf of his entire family. He enthusiastically supported the Shaw proposal and believed in the power of education.

Klare Shaw spoke of her mother's contribution to the community and love of the library. She understands this proposal is not without controversy but thanked all for considering honoring her mother just the same.

Toy Burton considers herself a daughter of Roxbury. She believes libraries are sacred. Renaming after Ms. Shaw would send a powerful message to children who walk through the door that is not just about one woman but reflects the possibility for all black girls.

Marilyn Flowers Marion was in support of the proposal. Lesa Muhammed was opposed to the proposal.

Akunnah Eneh, Roxbury staff member, was disappointed by the process. She felt that the inclusivity was taken out. She thought more community members wanted a voice in this decision. She thought the patrons of the branch and staff should have been consulted on this matter.

Elizabeth Dawan Abdullah, known as Oakley, suggested offering a compromise of the two renaming proposals. She wasn't sure why it was an either/or and suggested it be Shaw-Nubian Branch.

Tracy Wiggins, 36-year Roxbury staff member, was disappointed with the process. She noted there were three groups with renaming proposals but not one group has spoken to staff or regular library users. She was not in support of renaming it. In favor of naming something after Ms. Shaw but suggesting leaving the name Roxbury. The people with proposals only talk inclusively to their groups and not to the community as a whole and noted that most do not even use the branch.

Cheryl Brown-Greene had known Shaw since childhood. Heard everyone's comments but wanted to talk about why this proposal was not presented to community first.

Elissa Cadillac, member of community and AFSCME. Had known Shaw for 32 years. She was dedicated to learning and education. She thought Shaw would be appalled by this process and the proposal being rushed through like this. The strategic plan was just approved and being transparent was a priority. She was not in favor of the renaming of the branch but rather in favor of naming a room or space named after her instead.

Renee Gaillard, comments are not about the name but about the process. Echo about the disappointment of the process. Does need to be a more formal process to offer more opinions of all ages of their library. Does need to be more inclusive in the process. None of the teens who come every day were aware of this proposal and their ability to voice their opinions.

Allen Knight, Roxbury Branch librarian recommended to table this vote to allow better community process. He questioned why this proposal was fast tracked without more involvement.

Norman Stembridge, lifelong resident of Roxbury and Dorchester was in favor of the proposal. He noted that Ms. Shaw was the first Black news anchor and participated in many community events; she would represent the city well. He expressed that no process is perfect.

Elizabeth T. Nagarajah, President of the Roxbury Branch Friends group noted she joined the Friends because of Ms. Shaw's invitation. She said Shaw was wonderful but does not want to negate those in the community. She wanted to go on record that the Friends were split on this proposal. She agreed that this proposal felt rushed and was upset that many of the outside groups do not come into the library to use the services or attend programs but are worried more about the name.

Several Trustees spoke of their support of the proposal as well.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted to approve.

VOTED: "that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the proposal to rename the Roxbury Branch the "Shaw-Roxbury Branch."

Dr. Ray Liu called for New Business. Ms. Tokarczyk explained the emergency procurement for the Mattapan Façade Repair. The funds were for additional unsafe exterior repair work beyond the original specifications was presented. A motion was made, seconded, and voted to approve.

VOTED: "that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the contract with Ace Restoration Company Inc. of 155 Mill Street, Natick, MA 01760 for the amount not to exceed One Hundred Twenty-Four Thousand Three Hundred Twenty-Nine Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$124,329.50) to repair the internal structure of the front facade of the Mattapan Branch Library."

Ms. Arana called for general public comments.

Elissa Cadillic of AFSCME1526 noted that there was no mention of the Mattapan façade at the Health and Safety meeting. She noted a few broken doors that were still in need of repair at Central and that she filed a grievance as a result.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Carver
Clerk of the Board

REVOLUTION!

**250 YEARS OF ART+
ACTIVISM IN BOSTON**

McKim Exhibition Hall, Central Library in Copley Square

October 23, 2025 – April 21, 2026

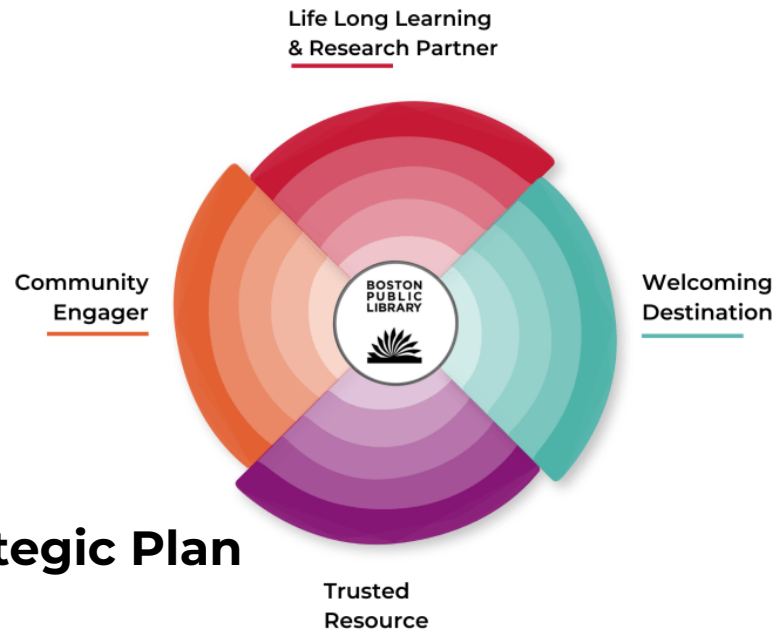


Why now?

BOSTON
250



Bridge to McKim Funding



BPL Strategic Plan



REVOLUTIONARY ART
ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE



More than a year in the making, ***Revolution!*** features **more than 100 artworks and documentary materials** from the BPL's renowned **Special Collections**

Exhibition curated by the Arts Department and supported by multiple teams across the library

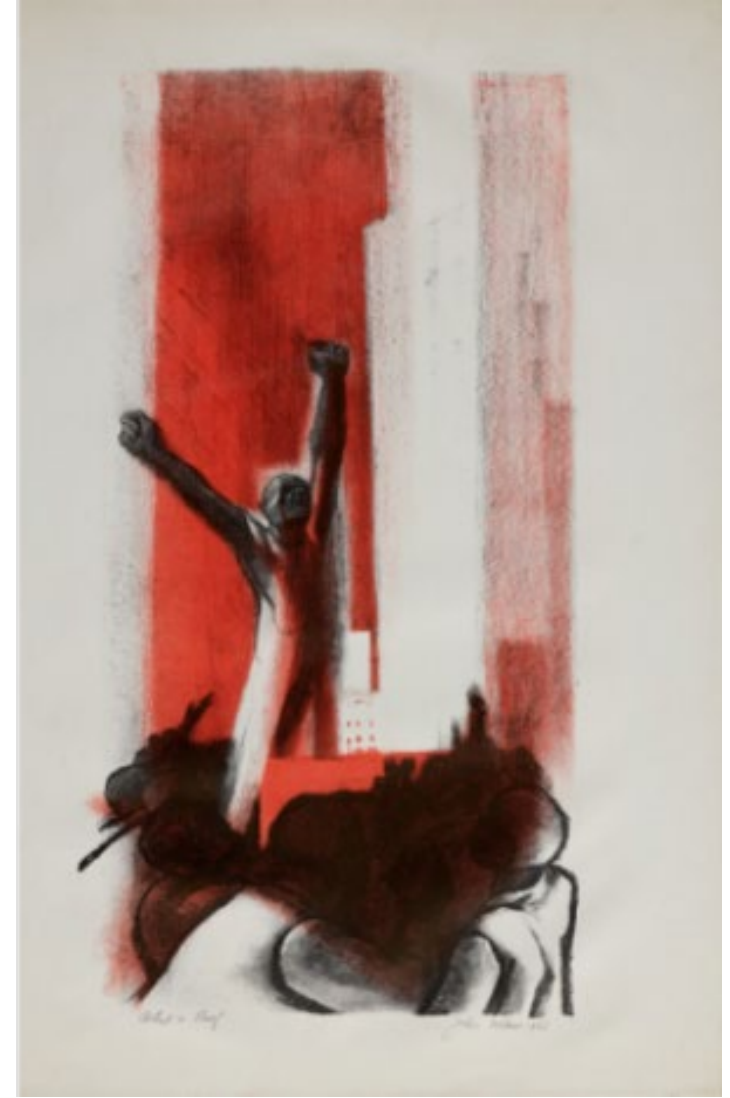
Reflecting upon the accepted narrative



Revolution is a continuum.



People work together to enact change.

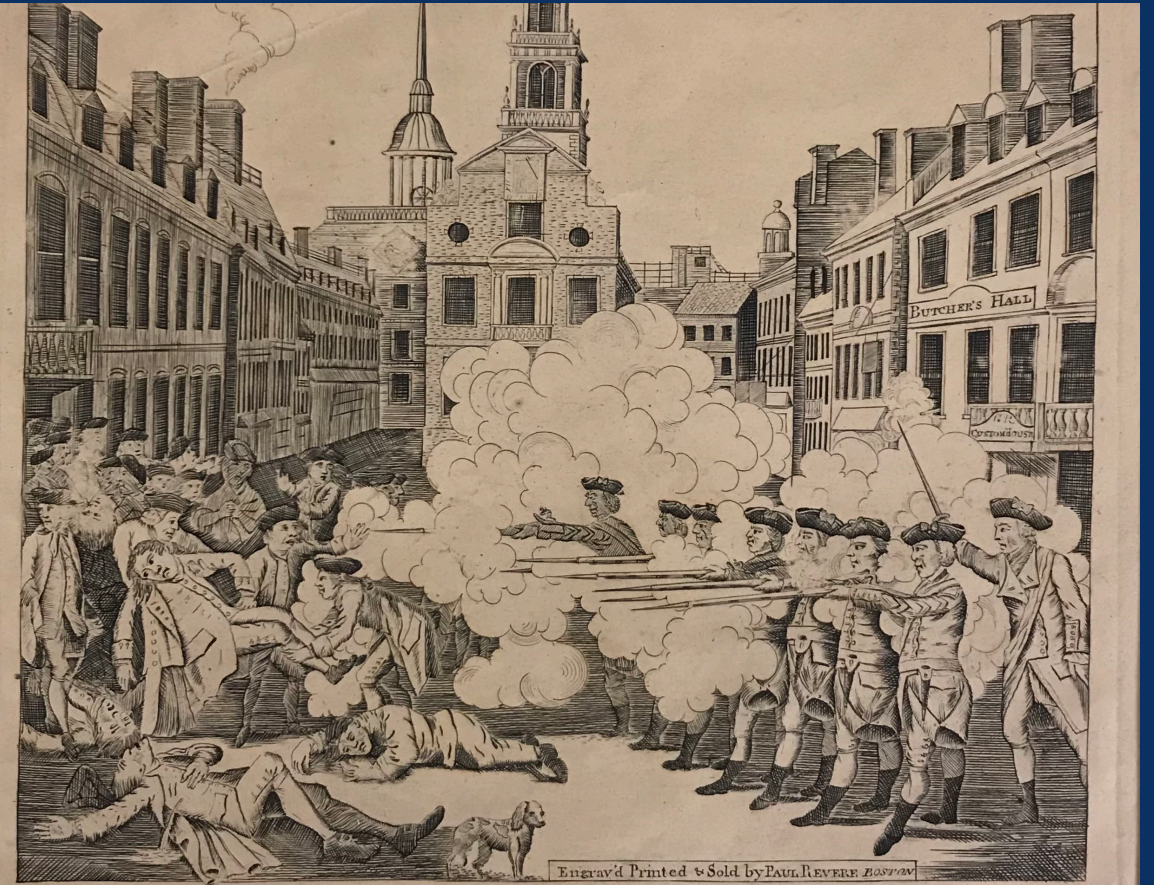


Who and what are missing?

Artists Past and Present in Conversation



Boston Massacre Reboot, Bob Tomolillo, 2020



The Bloody Massacre Perpetrated in King Street, W. Champney, 1856



Artist Michael Thorpe's quilt in progress

Washington at Dorchester Heights, Emanuel Leutze, 1852



Conservation Work

The Trail Itself... A Bicentennial Footnote

Something about lines, words and marks painted on streets and sidewalks has always drawn my attention. I made these photographs as a sort of personal project to preserve my daily interactions with the Freedom Trail (I was working in the neighborhood in 1976).

They are, of course, in every way as unrelated to the events of the revolution we "commemorate" as the ashtrays, mugs, banners, hate plates, coins and other souvenirs. But on the other hand these pictures are a kind of reversed anthropology - each fragment of the sacred ground they walked on - altered by our contemporary cultural needs.

The lines are all fading away now - intersecting the crosswalks, curbs and traffic lines with less and less clarity. And I wonder what this ground will look like in 2076 - and the ashtrays, mugs, banners, hate plates, coins and souvenirs.

Daniel Ranalli
December 1977

10/10 "D. Ranalli" 77

Right Hemisphere Publications • 1977

BOSTON FREEDOM

TRAIL

The Trail Itself... A

A Limited Edition Folio Of
Ten Original Photographs

POUCH

Bicentennial Footnote

Daniel Ranalli

Boston Freedom Trail Pouch
The Trail Itself... A Bicentennial Footnote

The photographs were printed directly from the Polaroid SX-70 originals, under the photographer's direction, by the Polaroid Corporation of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Each portfolio contains ten photographs in an embossed fiber pouch secured with a red Woolworth's ribbon.

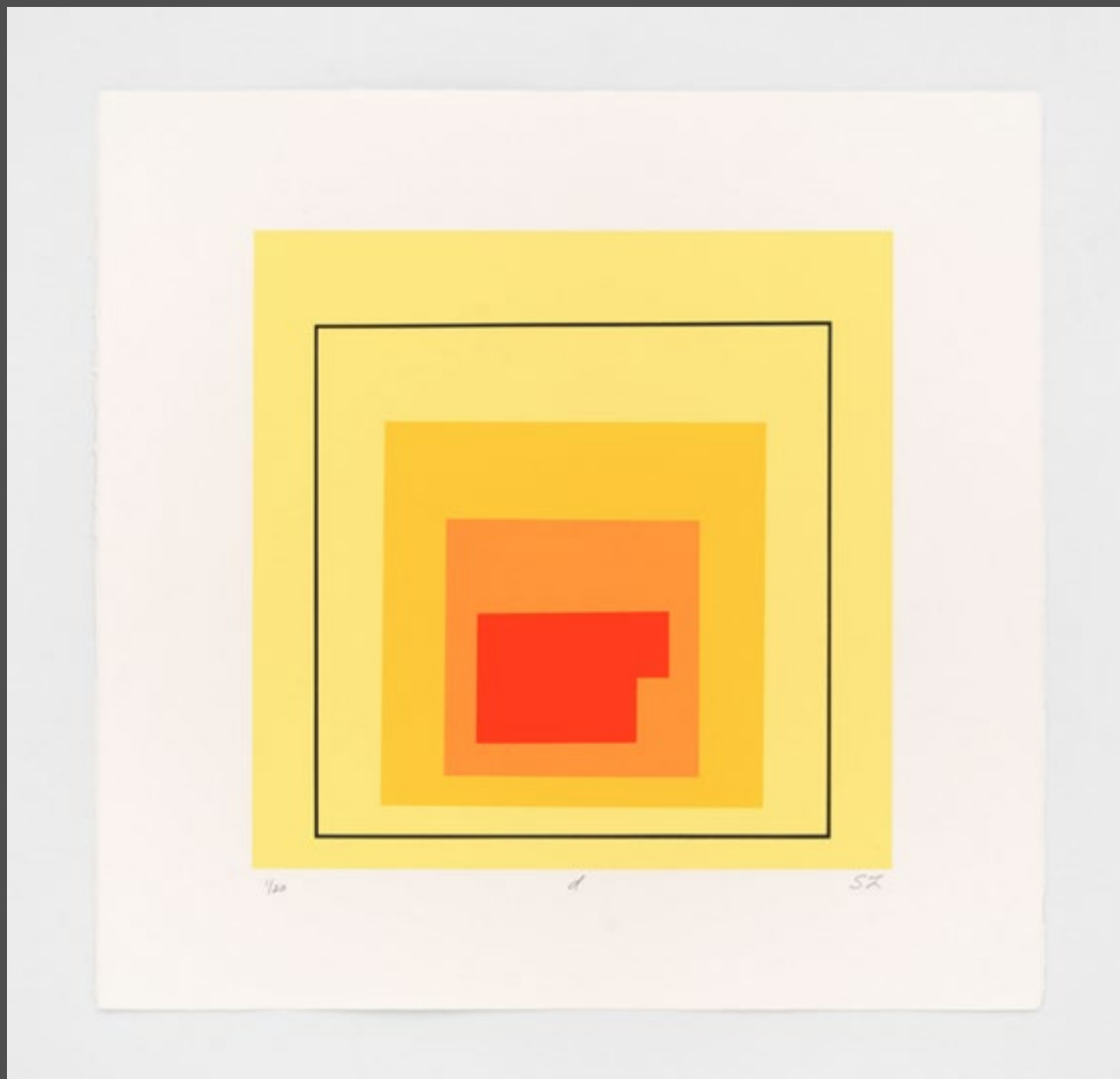
The edition is limited to 100 signed copies.

The Prints:

1. Trail with Spill and Pigeons
2. State House Steps
3. Trail, Curb, Legs
4. Trail, Steps, Foot
5. Trail with Chevrolet Truck
6. Trail over Bricks
7. New Trail, Old Trail De-Capitolized
8. Steps, New Trail, Old Trail, Legs
9. Freedom Trail with Bones
10. Trail, State House, Flags - July 4, 1976



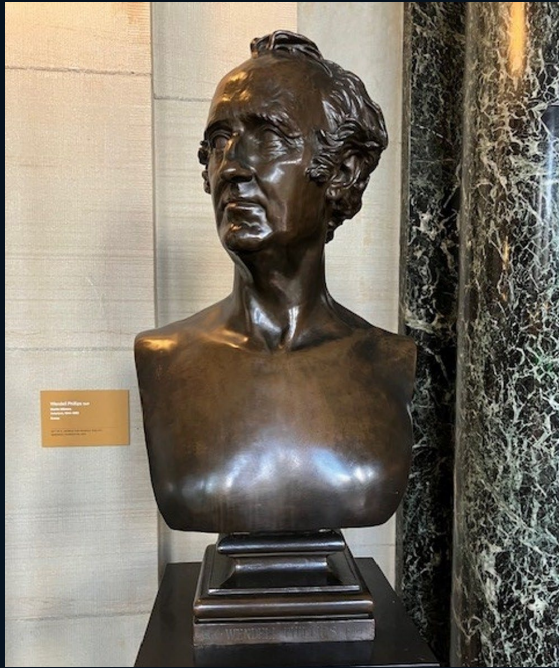
Boston Freedom Trail Pouch, Daniel Ranalli, 1977



Homage to the Auction Block, Steve Locke, 2022



Rejoicings at Faneuil Hall, 19th c.



Wendell Phillips
Martin Milmore, 1884



Harriet Tubman
Fern Cunningham, 1999



Lucy Stone
Anne Whitney, 1892



Alice Stone Blackwell
Frances L. Rich, 1960

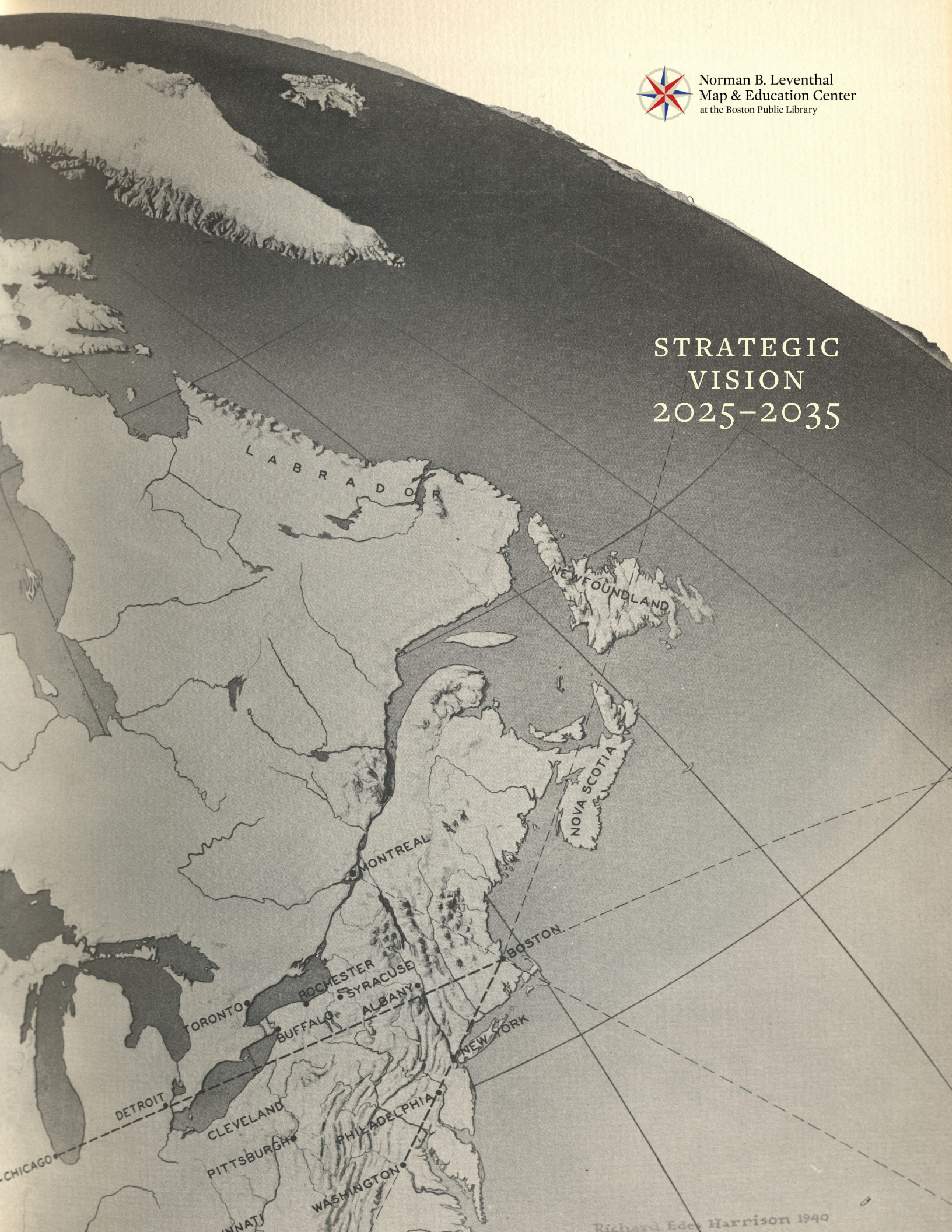
Opening to the public October 23rd ! bpl.org/revolution





Norman B. Leventhal
Map & Education Center
at the Boston Public Library

STRATEGIC VISION 2025-2035



Background to this work

For the last several months, the Executive Committee of the Leventhal Map & Education Center (LMEC), as requested by its Board of Directors, has developed a Strategic Plan to guide the Center's direction for the next decade.

To inform this work, the Executive Committee has met several times to review:

- the Center's history and founding values;
- the Boston Public Library (BPL, or the Library)'s strategic plan;
- the results of interviews with the staff and Board leadership of the BPL conducted by TDC (our strategic planning consultant), with the aim of gathering their views of the Center and their hopes for the future relationship;
- the results of interviews with the staff and Board leadership of the BPL Fund to gather their perspective on fundraising and the future of their relationship with the Center; and,
- ideas for the Center's future from the perspective of the LMEC staff.

The Executive Committee also met twice with the full Board of Directors of the LMEC to garner their views in response to the strategic issues facing the Center.



The strategic vision document

This **STRATEGIC VISION** reflects the Executive Committee's aspirations for the Leventhal Center's future. It establishes a framework for collaboration and development of further plans in the months and years to come with our partners at the BPL and beyond. The Committee members and the LMEC leadership believe that the resonances between our vision for the Center and the four strategic "roles" described in the BPL's strategic plan offer a promising opportunity for a deeper partnership beneficial to both the Center and the BPL. We see a future where the strengths and capacities which the Center has cultivated over the past two decades are extended and reimagined, broadening the Center's work beyond a narrow focus on antiquarian map collections to perform a civic function that augments the strengths of the Library and remains grounded in the core principles of curiosity, learning, and geographic inquiry that have always been essential to the Center's founding mission.

This document was adopted by the Board of Directors on June 25, 2025.



The mission

Adopted in 2020

The Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center at the Boston Public Library inspires curiosity and learning and fosters geographic perspectives on the relationships between people and places, through free and accessible collections and resources, critical interpretation and research, and K-12 and public education.

The vision

As we look into the future, we envision an expanded identity and impact that both draw on our diverse collections focused on maps, geography, and place-based history to explore the world through local, national, and global perspectives—and to engage with civic questions that connect past, present, and future. We provisionally refer to this new identity as the NORMAN B. LEVENTHAL INSTITUTE, recognizing that this name will be further refined as our vision takes shape. The new Institute will harness an array of assets and build upon the LMEC's history of innovation to engage a broad range of audiences, focused on the connections between people and places across time and the patterns of space and place that tie communities together.

Expanding upon our innovative digital strengths, the Institute will engage global audiences while retaining a focus on Boston and New England. Key topic areas will include geography, social studies, place-based civics, and city planning, drawing on the full scope of the BPL's collections and Boston's role as a city with both international significance and a unique local story. Given the BPL's unique location within the ecosystem of Boston institutions, our partnership will create many opportunities for engagement and lifelong learning. It will also establish a dynamic relationship between the interrelated civic functions carried out by the Library and the Institute.



Three core audiences

We envision this work more deeply benefiting three core audiences, many of which we already engage today. They consist of:

- **IN-PERSON VISITORS TO THE CENTRAL LIBRARY**, driven by an interest in the places and stories of Boston and its region. Both highly engaged members of the Boston community, as well as newcomers and tourists, will benefit from new and expanded ways of exploring the unique geography of the city and its connections to historical events in the community and places around the world.
- **K-12 STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS**, as well as curriculum developers and educational researchers as we expand our education program offerings as well as the digital and other materials designed to support them.
- **SCHOLARS, RESEARCHERS, POLICYMAKERS, AND MAP ENTHUSIASTS** who will continue to find deeper pathways into map and geography collections, digital resources, and specialist content.



To serve these three audiences, we imagine an Institute consisting of three connected yet focused hubs, each with its own equally important purpose. For now, we have described each of these areas as a “center.” As our planning unfolds, each hub will become more fully defined.

A Center for Civic Discovery

This center will fill an institutional niche that is currently missing in Boston—that of a city museum—in an innovative and experimental manner. While not a museum *per se*, this center will focus on historical, present, and future issues for Boston and the region, grounding its civic inquiry topics in a geographical approach. This center will draw broadly from our own and the Library’s remarkable collections for exhibitions, interpretation and public exploration. We envision a vibrant physical space in the McKim Building driven by engaging visual storytelling and hands-on investigation that takes advantage of the site’s visibility to tourists and the public. This center’s work and expected impact is intended to integrate and align with the key roles highlighted in the BPL’s new strategic plan of being a welcoming destination and community engager and supporting research and life-long learning.



A Center for Learning

This center will promote innovative, inclusive and geographically grounded teaching practices through research, resource development, and K-12 student and educator engagement. A nationally relevant set of teacher resources that leverage local geographies of Boston will be created as a case study for teaching about geography and history with maps and other place-based collections, spanning disciplines from the humanities to the sciences. The center will be positioned to serve as a gateway for K-12 school groups visiting the Central Library and the development of civic education resources at branch libraries. We will continue to focus on and expand our special commitment to supporting the Boston Public Schools. In doing so, we will support the BPL’s life-long learning and research partner roles, as well as broaden community engagement.



A Center for the Study of Maps & Geography

Inheriting the founding mission of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, this center will focus on original study in map and geography collections through fellowships, publications, and digital tool-building expanding upon its and the BPL’s role as a trusted resource and research partner. It will serve as the Institute’s division which is most oriented towards researchers and specialists who will continue to find deeper pathways into map and geography collections, digital resources, and specialist content. We also envision a continuing program of selective collection development in collaboration with the Library.



Funding and governance

To achieve this vision, the Executive Committee recognizes that its partnership with the BPL will require evolution, and we look forward to working together over the coming 6–9 months to consider the next critical steps to implement this vision. While maintaining its independent 501(c)3 status, the reimagined Norman B. Leventhal Institute will support the goals of the BPL’s Strategic Plan, as noted above, in key areas such as K-12 education, life-long learning, research and the activation of redesigned spaces in the McKim Building. We will leverage our strengths and innovative talents to the benefit of both institutions, the City, and especially its people.

We expect that the Institute’s budget to increase over the next five years, driven by the need for additional staff capacity as we step into new programmatic roles. Short and medium-term improvements to the existing space at the Central Library will also be required to house both programmatic and back-of the-house activities. As we rebalance priorities in the process of implementing this vision, we expect and welcome revisiting the balance of shared responsibilities for managing BPL-owned collections.

We further recognize that shared fundraising will be needed, as well as greater clarity about the types of support that the BPL Fund and the Institute can and will raise independently and collaboratively. The upcoming Central Library McKim building project, we believe, offers an opportune moment to collaborate on a shared vision.

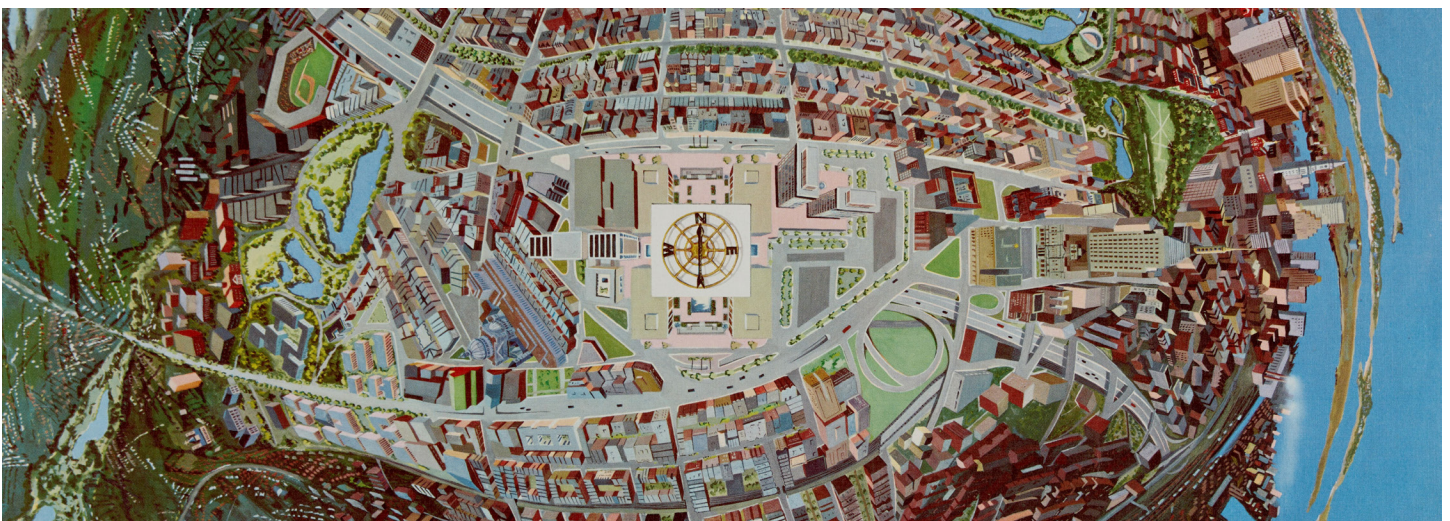


Image credits

Cover: Richard Edes Harrison, in *Metropolis in Maps: Graphic References for the Boston Area* (Harvard University Bureau for Research in Municipal Government, 1946). Leventhal Center G1234.B6 H35 1946

Page 1: City of Boston Board of Survey *Plan 1, Plan of the Fenway area, Boston* (ca. 1890s), Leventhal Center G3764.B6:2F4G46 1890 .B6x

Page 2: A. F. Poole, *Twentieth Century Boston* (F.D. Nichols Company, 1905). Leventhal Center G3764.B6A3 1905 .P6

Page 3, Top: Amanda Ugorji and Sophie Weston Chien’s *Soft City* on display at the Leventhal Center in 2022. Photo by Emily Bowe

Page 3, Bottom: Experiential Learning & Programs Educator Kiana Harriel speaks with a group of students at the Leventhal Center in 2024. Photo by Michael J. Clarke

Page 4: Panoramic view of Boston centered on the Prudential Tower (ca. 1968). Leventhal Center G3764.B6A35 1964 .P36



Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund

26FY Grants

Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund 26FY Grant

Prepared by Deandra Williams (BPL's Programs Supervisor)

The FATF supports supplemental programming at the Shaw-Roxbury Branch in Nubian Square

- The Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund Committee (FATC) reviewed 34 applications from 33 applicants.
- 17 grants were awarded to 16 applicants. They approved grants with reductions totaled **\$110,801.50**.
 - This figure include the Shaw-Roxbury branch program budget of \$6,400.
 - The branch librarian submitted program proposals to support the Roxbury area community and residents.
- Total FATF 26FY budget (including 25FY carryover) is **114,333.00**.

Categories

Audience: Intergenerational= 10 Adults= 2 Seniors=1 Youth= 4

Instruction

- Community Guide to Using AI (Rooted in Black Traditions of Innovation)
- Sewing 101 Bootcamp
- Portraits of Spirituals
- The Chess and Crafts Project
- Piano Lessons for kids

Art & Culture

- Boston Public Quartet
- The Latino Pioneers in Boston Project #2
- Roxbury Concert Series
- Makanda Concert Project
- Body Language: Through the Lines
- Drumming across the African Diaspora
- MassQing Workshops
- Roxbury Makes Comics

Community Engagement

- The Greater Roxbury Book Fair
- Black Education Experiences in Boston- Conference

Health & Wellness

- Take Back the Kitchen
- Chair Yoga

Name	Individual or Organization	Program Title	Program Description	Final Approved Budget
Betsy Hinkle	Organization	Boston Public Quartet	Four educational concerts exploring diverse musical history and compositional styles, focusing respectively on Women Composers, Black Composers, Immigrant Composers, and LGBTQ+ Composers	5000
Blanca E. Bonilla	Individual	The Latino Pioneers in Boston Project #2	Multimedia presentation celebrating Latino heritage in Boston through film, art, and print	8000
Carlos Vargas	Individual	Roxbury Concert Series	Multidisciplinary performances through music	3,250
Carlos Vargas	Individual	Roxbury Piano Program	High-quality music education program serving students ages 5 to 14	8000
Castle of Our Skins	Organization	Portraits of Spirituals	Four interactive and intergenerational literacy-based workshops that dives into the rich history and cultural significance of Black History.	8000
Cliff Notez	Individual	Body Language: Through the Lines	A three-day, community-centered dance series a that connects Black social dance traditions across generations.	8000
Cornell Coley	Individual	Drumming across the African Diaspora	Six interactive cross-cultural workshops with facilitated drumming that illustrate cultural contexts and social development of Brazil, Carribean countries, West Africa and the USA.	4976
Daniel Callahan	Individual	MassQing Workshops	A series of four Indigenous art technique workshops that uses paint and the human face to create MassQs-revealing one's identity instead of concealing.	8000
David Hirschberg	Haley House	Take Back the Kitchen	Saturday workshop series that offers healthy eating cooking classes and empowering community engagement	3,937.50
The Greatest Minds	Organization	Black Education Experiences in Boston - A Multigenerational Conference for Black Bostonians from Kindergarten To College	A three-day conference that offers workshops, panels, and networking. The conference location will take place throughout the Nubian Square area, including the Shaw-Roxbury Library Branch.	5000
Gina Gagliano	The American City Coalition (TACC)	The Greater Roxbury Book Fair	The fair connects the community to books, authors, and artists.	5000
Horace Bowens	Individual	The Chess & Crafts Project	Teaches chess through art and allow students to design games.	3150
Joel Mackall	Individual	Community Guide to Using AI (Rooted in Black Traditions of Innovation)	Teaches and traces the lineage of innovation from African learning systems to modern digital creativity while learning AI fundamentals	5888
John Kordalewski	Organization	Makanda Project Concert	Two Saturday evening concerts in the community room in Spring 2026, featuring the Makanda Project 13 piece jazz ensemble	8000
Leslie R. English	Indiividual	Sewing 101 Bootcamp	An all-day Saturday Sewing workshops that teaches the sewing basics	8000
Michelle Coleman	Individual	Intro to Chakra and Chair Yoga	A workshop series that introduces students to the chakras system and chair yoga	6200
S.Matt Read	Organization	Roxbury Makes Comics	A comics-making intensive for youth ages 10 to 16 which focuses on core comics curriculum during April 2026 school vacation	6000
Shaw-Roxbury Branch Allocation				6,400
Total				110801.5