

The Newark Museum of Art, New Jersey's Largest Art Museum, Names Its Ninth Director & CEO

Newark, New Jersey (January 23, 2026) — The Board of Trustees of The Newark Museum of Art (NMOA) has appointed **Lisa Funderburke** as the museum's next **Director & Chief Executive Officer**, effective February 1, 2026. **Funderburke** brings more than two decades of executive leadership in arts and cultural organizations, along with a scientific background that uniquely positions her to steward NMOA—one of the first art institutions to integrate both science and art into the museum experience. She succeeds **Linda C. Harrison**, who served as Director & CEO for six years.

"Lisa brings to the museum unique breadth and depth of experience as a museum and arts leader" said **Peter Englot, Board Chair, The Newark Museum of Art**. *"Our search committee co-chairs Christine Gilfillan and Blenda Pinto and I are of one mind that Lisa's innovative approach and creative ideation are truly unmatched. She has infectious enthusiasm and energy, and we're confident in her ability to strengthen the museum's foundations, bringing equal parts visionary, strategic, and practical thinking to propel NMOA as New Jersey's greatest art museum and a best-in-class museum nationally. We are delighted to welcome Lisa to Newark and to lead NMOA."*

Funderburke is widely recognized for her research and scholarship on governance and strategy in service to the arts, in consultation with national and international mission-driven organizations and foundations. She comes to NMOA after nearly a decade as President + CEO of the Artist Communities Alliance (ACA), an international service organization supporting artists and artist residency programs in the United States and abroad. During her tenure, **Funderburke** championed fair and just treatment of artists and cultural workers, designing strategies and systems for residencies, foundations, and other nonprofits to improve team and program performance.

Prior to ACA, **Funderburke** served as Associate Director of the McColl Center for Art + Innovation in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she played a key role in organizational strategy, fundraising, and public programming at the intersection of contemporary art, community engagement, and ecology. In addition to her executive leadership, **Funderburke** has contributed to the arts through national board service with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Performing Arts Alliance, Orion Magazine, the Center for Cultural Innovation, and Grantmakers in the Arts' Individual Artist Committee. **Funderburke** holds a Bachelor of Science in Botany and a Master of Science in Biology from Howard University.

"Museums are most vital when they are responsive, collaborative, and deeply connected to the communities they serve," said **Funderburke**. *"Throughout my career, I have seen how cultural institutions function as essential civic infrastructure. I am excited to work with the Newark community and broader networks of artists and partners to position the museum as a leader in national and global conversations about art, science, and cultural exchange—stewarding the museum as a shared public space for learning, creativity, and dialogue."*

Founded in 1909, NMOA is renowned for its collections—particularly in Tibetan art—and for its longstanding commitment to public service, education, and civic life. The museum holds more than 300,000 objects spanning art, science, and cultural history, including the National Historic Landmark Ballantine House (1885) and the Dreyfuss Planetarium (1954), New Jersey's first planetarium. As Director & CEO, **Funderburke** will lead the institution at a pivotal moment, working to raise the organization's visibility, extend its reach, and deepen its commitment to Newark and beyond.

"Lisa Funderburke embodies the essence of each aspect of our city life that has made Newark recognized as the eighth most arts-vibrant large community in the nation," said **Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka**. *"Her artistic sensibilities, appreciation for analytical data, passion for the world around us, and belief in the transformative agency of people, make Lisa ideal to lead this museum, in this city, at this moment. We welcome her inspired vision and stewardship at the heart of a city pulsing with a long legacy of creative expression."*

About The Newark Museum of Art

The Newark Museum of Art welcomes everyone through inclusive experiences that spark curiosity and foster community. Founded in 1909 and located on a three-acre campus in the heart of Newark, NMOA was built on the radical belief that art is for everyone. From its earliest days, the museum assembled collections from Asia, Africa, and the Americas—regions often overlooked by other institutions at the time.

More than a century later, NMOA is New Jersey's largest fine art museum and holds the 12th-largest art collection in the nation. Visitor- and community-centered, the museum responds to the evolving needs and interests of its diverse audiences through exhibitions, programming, a research library, paid internships, and partnerships that connect local and global communities.