

CREATIVE BRIEF

CLIENT Stearns History Museum

CLIENT DESCRIPTION The Stearns History Museum engages people in the exploration of the county's diverse heritage by providing connections to the past, perspective on the present and inspiration for the future.

PROJECT Stearns History Museum Endowment Fund identity and pitch piece

PROJECT DESCRIPTION As the Stearns History Museum prepares to double the size of its space in the next five years and develops plans for the addition of a children's museum in the near future, the museum looks to build its endowment fund to support these two exciting developments as well as help secure its long-term future. To build the endowment fund, a number of needs arise, including the creation of an identity and brand guide, messaging, and a pitch piece.

Endowment funds are critical to the long-term financial health of the museum. They provide a reliable income source that allows the museum to acquire new collections, explore new initiatives, and support specific programs indefinitely. People can contribute to the endowment in several ways: cash; securities such as stocks, bonds and mutual funds; personal property such as land; planned giving that could include retirement plan assets; and through other means such as sponsor-level memberships to the museum.

AUDIENCE

Audiences most likely to contribute to the endowment fund are as following:

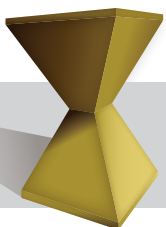
- 1) Retirement-age individuals with an investment in the community
- 2) Local/regional companies, corporations and farms that make consistent contributions to major community initiatives
- 3) "Upwardly mobile" younger families with children and annual household income levels over \$100,000

GOALS

- 1) To appeal to a broader audience, approachable and clear messaging is key. The term "endowment fund" is lofty-sounding and the museum seeks messaging that is approachable and immediately understandable to multiple audiences.
- 2) Much like the need for approachable messaging, the museum seeks an approachable brand for the endowment fund. Think "corporate fun."
- 3) Through messaging, strategy and design, ignite a conversation about the importance of helping to preserve our history here in Stearns County. Help others easily see that history is not an old book on a shelf — that we are creating history every day, that we need to learn from our past, and that history makes our present relevant and is our roadmap to the future.
- 4) Create a pitch piece to hand to potential donors that helps ignite a conversation about the museum's mission so that the recipient will be compelled to donate to the endowment fund. The piece should clearly communicate the purpose of the endowment fund as well as encapsulate the myriad methods of donating to the endowment fund.
- 5) All completed materials should help spark passion in the recipient about the importance of history and why they should help support the museum's mission of preserving our shared history in Stearns County.

DELIVERABLES AND SPECS

- > **Messaging:** Overall messaging that could include a tagline, various headlines, a position statement, and so on, for use in the pitch piece and beyond. Use your judgment to determine the best amount of messaging and course.
- > **Identity:** Overall identity that could include a logo but *should* include a color palette, font system and other elements as determined by your team to comprise a brand guide. Keep in mind that the museum will want to use the same fonts internally on any materials they create. The fonts should not only work on a PC but should also be available for free or for a small fee. If you are not already familiar, Google Fonts has a wide variety of free fonts.
- > **Brand guide:** Create a small but comprehensible brand guide of the elements you created and include descriptions of how they should and should not be used.
- > **Pitch piece:** This piece is the culmination of your efforts to create compelling messaging and identity elements. This piece can be printed professionally on a small budget (no more than \$3,000). The museum can print in house double-sided sheets for use as sell sheets and the like.



- › **Budget:** In your presentation, include a final approximate budget for printing, font costs, etc. Use your advisor and online resources to determine approximate printing costs.
- › **Presentation:** At the end of the competition, each team will be required to pitch their work to a panel of judges. The presentations must:
 - Be an electronic presentation in PDF or PowerPoint format. A projector, screen, laptop and speakers will be provided. Presentations will be collected at 7 p.m., no exceptions. Presentations will begin at 8 p.m.; a random drawing will determine team order.
 - Include a written explanation of the strategy and concept (300 words max) as well as representations of the executables, all in a printed, bound format.
 - Be no more than 8 minutes total. We will be strict about this time limit!
 - Allow for a 2-minute Q&A session with the judges.

PARAMETERS

- › As the community grows more diverse, the museum seeks to place diversity as a priority in its marketing materials.
- › The final pitch piece should be robust and durable but responsible with budget. The museum does not want to give the impression it spent a lot of money creating materials for its endowment fund.
- › The overall identity should be flexible and able to grow easily with time. In the next three years, the museum will need to create a campaign specifically to raise funds for the museum expansion and children's museum.
- › The materials should be clearly identifiable in some way as Stearns History Museum.
- › Use provided photos in some manner. Historical photos are available, as well as photos of the current museum. Download them all [here](#) (NOTE: This is a very large file; start downloading it early!)
The museum's logo is also available for download [here](#) but it is not required that you use it in its exact form. However, you are not to redesign the museum's default logo.
- › While the museum begins to raise funds for its major initiatives of an expansion and the addition of a children's museum, it also recognizes that it is up against other major community initiatives such as the development of an aquatic center. Some individuals or businesses in the community may already be donating significantly to these efforts, so the museum will need to differentiate itself from those endeavors whether through messaging, strategy and so on.
- › Design decisions lacking in rationale and strategy are not appropriate.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

STRATEGIC PLAN (2015-2018): [DOWNLOAD](#)

MUSEUM MISSION: The Stearns History Museum connects people to the power of history and culture by collecting, preserving and interpreting our historical and cultural resources.

MUSEUM VISION: The Stearns History Museum will be a place where citizens of Central Minnesota can honor their diverse history and recognize that the past is what built the present and is a road map to the future.

OTHER MATERIALS: See the provided folder of brochures, magazine, and forms. The museum also provided a pitch piece from another organization as an example of what they're looking for. If you'd like to see it, see Samantha Bohn, who will be available all day on site.

TOUR THE MUSEUM: The museum is generously providing free entry to Student Design Challenge participants the day of. We highly encourage you to use the opportunity to fully absorb the museum's impact and mission.

FRIENDLY TIPS

- › Determine the most time-efficient order of working on the deliverables. Working on the pitch piece will greatly inform the process of creating an identity and appropriate brand elements.
- › Do not forget salesmanship in your presentation. You will need to *sell* your creative to the judges. Back up your decisions with sound rationale, research and strategy.

