



## Paula Gangopadhyay Biography and Accomplishments

Paula Gangopadhyay is widely recognized across the cultural, government, and philanthropic sectors for her innovative leadership and transformative impact on museums and education. Over a career spanning more than three decades, she has championed innovation, access, lifelong learning, and community engagement, inspiring museums nationwide to reimagine their role in the communities they serve.

Gangopadhyay is among the few museum leaders to receive two distinguished federal appointments. President Barack Obama appointed her to serve on the Board of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) from 2012 to 2015. She later served as Deputy Director of the Office of Museum Services and Senior Advisor to the Director at IMLS from 2016-2021.

Her other recognitions include the Michael Faraday Science Communicator Award from the National Science Teachers Association, which is a distinguished award presented to an individual who has made extraordinary contributions to science communication, the Michigan Informal Science Educator Award, and the Edison Award for Innovation in Education.

Gangopadhyay began her career in Michigan in the early 1990s and gained recognition for her community mobilization work with the Commission for Lansing Schools Success, a mayoral public school reform initiative, and with her innovative literacy initiatives later at the Public Museum of Grand Rapids.

As Chief Learning Officer at The Henry Ford (2008-2015), Gangopadhyay became nationally recognized for inspiring young people to “think and act like innovators.” She earned commendation from policy advisors at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy for her Innovation 101 curriculum which juxtaposed current-day innovators with Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Rosa Parks, and the Wright Brothers. She received a special invitation to the Clinton Global Initiative and represented The Henry Ford to make a national commitment to inspire innovative thinking in the K-12 sector.

She made significant contributions to the museum field during her five-year term at the Institute of Museum and Library (IMLS), the primary source of federal funding for the museum sector which represents approximately 30,000 museums. During her tenure, she helped launch two new IMLS grant programs, *Museums Empowered* and *Inspire Grants for Small Museums*, which are continuing to help museums. During her time at IMLS, AAM’s

Museum Assessment Program (MAP) was strengthened and the Museums for All access program for EBT card holders, in collaboration with the Association of Children's Museums (ACM), was expanded to demonstrate exponential growth. During the pandemic, Gangopadhyay strongly championed the cause for museums and even encouraged the six regional museum associations to come together for the first time and create a common digital platform to provide technology training and tools for museum professionals. As Senior Advisor to the Director of IMLS, she also laid the groundwork for the museum sector's first national survey of museum data through a comprehensive needs assessment and gap analysis.

Gangopadhyay currently serves as CEO of Pittock Mansion, where her "Pittock 2.0" vision is transforming the Portland icon and historic house museum into a vibrant, relevant, and dynamic cultural destination.

Gangopadhyay has delivered keynote addresses at numerous national and international conferences, including those hosted by Pearson Education, the Ontario Museum Association, and the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries. She collaborated with AAM's Center for the Future of Museums to host the organization's first symposium exploring the role of museums in education. She was also invited by the Government of India to lead a workshop on teaching innovation for staff representing 60 science centers within the National Council of Science Museums.

She holds a master's degree in history from Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore, India, a certificate in archival, museum, and editing studies from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA and an Education Policy Fellowship from the Institute for Educational Leadership.

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