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**Spelman College Names New Center for Innovation & the Arts in Honor of Mary Schmidt Campbell, Ph.D., President of Spelman College**

*Designed by Studio Gang, the new $86M Center will combine Spelman’s arts, innovation and entrepreneurship disciplines, and create a “front porch” to the College for the Westside Community.*

Atlanta, GA – Spelman College announced today that it will name the new 84,000-square-foot Center for Innovation & the Arts in honor of Mary Schmidt Campbell, Ph.D., the 10th president of the College.

A new “front porch” for Spelman College, the Center for Innovation & the Arts (CI&A), will be a home to Spelman’s thriving arts programs in dance, documentary filmmaking, photography, theater and performance, music, the Atlanta University Center Art History and Curatorial Studies Collective, and expanded space for the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art.

At the hub of the new Center will be the College’s cutting-edge Innovation Lab. Recently named the Arthur Blank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the Lab is open to all the College' liberal arts disciplines.

For the past six years the technology rich Lab has been home to award winning, cross disciplinary creative projects and an incubator of exciting new entrepreneurial ventures.

The Arthur Blank Innovation & Entrepreneurship Lab will also be home to the co-curricular activities of the Center for Black Entrepreneurship.

The first new academic facility at Spelman in nearly 25 years, the CI&A will also be the first building located outside of the Spelman gates and will serve as what the College is calling its "front porch," opening its arms out to the Atlanta University Center's Westside community.

“The rapid convergence of art, technology, and entrepreneurship, with the liberal arts and sciences are beginning to yield new solutions to old challenges," said Mary Schmidt Campbell, Ph.D., president of Spelman College. "This new facility will be a dynamic state-of-the-art learning environment that encourages disciplinary mastery in the arts and helps spur investments and foster growth in the local economy. The space will also open up opportunities for the community to experience arts and innovation on our campus."

The concept for the Center for Innovation & the Arts began before Dr. Campbell’s tenure as president when she was asked to consult the College on how to create integration among campus art programs.

After coming out of retirement to take on the role of president in 2015, Dr. Campbell announced the formation of an ARTS@Spelman steering committee, led by Ayoka Chenzira, Ph.D., division chair for the Arts.

Shortly after, the College announced five new artistic major and minor courses of study, including documentary filmmaking, art history and curatorial studies and hired new faculty to lead arts programs.

Internationally renowned architecture practice Studio Gang was selected for their collaborative design approach and alignment with the College’s vision.

“The design grew out of the desire to support collaboration, innovation, and the creative process—giving Spelman women inspiring, state-of-the-art spaces to experiment and develop their work on the upper floors, and establishing a welcoming, active ground floor where they can share their creations with the wider community,” said Studio Gang Founding Partner Jeanne Gang. “Architecturally, the center resonates with the historic campus through its earthy color, while visually creating a lightness through the use of lattice-like sunshades that protect from overheating while simultaneously expressing its lighter carbon footprint that is in line with the College's environmental leadership.”

With an expected completion date of 2024, the fully funded $86 million development will become home to cutting-edge collaborative programs including The Arthur M. Blank Innovation Lab, Center for Black Entrepreneurship, The Spelman Museum of Art.

Read more about the Center and view architectural renderings at Spelman.edu/CIA **.**

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**Spelman Programs Housed in the Center for Innovation & the Arts**

[**Arthur M. Blank Innovation Lab**](https://www.spelman.edu/about-us/innovation-lab)

The hub of the new building will be the Arthur M. Blank Innovation Lab, co-directed by Jerry Volcy, Ph.D., and Phillip Thompson.

Formerly known as the Spelman Innovation Lab, the space is a campus-wide resource for entrepreneurial ideation, unconventional research, experimental pedagogy and exploratory play. In addition to cutting-edge technology tools, the Lab will work closely with the Center for Black Entrepreneurship (CBE), and the entrepreneurship minor in Spelman's Department of Economics to provide a host of rich co-curricular activities.

Popular programs, like Spelpreneur, will live in the dynamic Lab where budding entrepreneurs and innovators across multiple disciplines will work together to create new ideas to solve old problems.

[**Center for Black Entrepreneurship**](https://www.spelman.edu/about-us/news-and-events/news-releases/2021/02/22/bank-of-america-supports-creation-of-new-center-for-black-entrepreneurship-at-spelman-college-and-morehouse-college)

Powered by a two-year $10 million anchor grant from Bank of America and developed by the Black Economic Alliance Foundation, Spelman College, and Morehouse College, the Center for Black Entrepreneurship, is the first-ever academic center of its kind to produce, train, and support a new generation of Black entrepreneurial talent.

* [**AUC Art History and Curatorial Studies Collective**](https://aucartcollective.org/)

Future curators, art historians, museum professionals and artists all come together through the Atlanta University Center Art History + Curatorial Studies Collective. Housed within the Department of Art & Visual Culture at Spelman College, this innovative program aims to shape the future of the art world and position the [Atlanta University Center](https://aucenter.edu/) as the leading incubator of African American professionals in these fields.

* [**IMB Center for Quantum Computing**](https://research.ibm.com/blog/spelman-college-joins-hbcu-quantum-center)

According to a 2021 Pew Research Center report, Black workers only make up 9% of all STEM jobs in the U.S. — a number that has remained flat since 2016. In an effort to shift STEM statistics among African American women, Spelman College recently joined the IBM-HBCU Quantum Center’s Southeast region. With Spelman’s membership, the center now includes 24 HBCUs across the U.S., and six schools in the Southeast region. The Center for Quantum Computing will focus on quantum hardware, education, and fundamental research.

* [**Institute for the Study of Gender Identity and Social Justice**](https://www.spelman.edu/about-us/news-and-events/news-releases/2018/10/02/spelman-awarded-grants-to-establish-gender-and-sexuality-studies-institute-address-sexual-violence-on-campus)

With the Mellon Foundation grant, the new institute will provide intensive faculty training and summer curriculum workshops on ways to incorporate gender and sexuality studies across disciplines. The goal of the institute, which will be managed through the Spelman Women’s Research and Resource Center, is to expose students and faculty to scholarships that challenge the way they see and know the world.

* [**The Spelman College Museum of Fine Art**](https://museum.spelman.edu/)

A vital resource for the Spelman community and beyond since it opened in 1996, The Spelman College Museum of Fine Art plays a significant role in encouraging the intellectual growth and development of students. Working collaboratively with departments including Art & Visual Culture, Anthropology and Sociology, the African Diaspora and the World Program, Women’s Studies, English, and many others, the Museum heightens pedagogical learning, integrates object-based learning into the academic curriculum, and fosters a lifelong and interdisciplinary engagement with visual art.

The Museum has a growing reputation for presenting projects that are bold, daring, and mission-focused and expands art offerings in Atlanta, the region, and beyond. While the Museum is a site for teaching and learning, it is open to the public and welcomes audiences beyond the Spelman community