



THE  
PROVIDENCE  
ATHENÆUM

## PRESS RELEASE

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### THE PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM RECEIVES \$346,782 TO REPLACE HISTORIC ROOFS

**PROVIDENCE, RI-** The Providence Athenæum has been awarded \$224,820 from the Champlin Foundation and a State Preservation Grant of \$121,962 from the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission to replace the roofs over its historic building.

The main building of the Athenæum was designed by renowned Philadelphia architect William Strickland in the Greek Revival style, and construction concluded in 1838. In 1914, the library completed its first addition, which was designed by historic preservationist and chair of the RISD architecture department Norman Isham and made room for the library's growing collection and demand for a children's library area. In 1979, a second award-winning addition, designed by renowned modern architect and interior designer Warren Platner, was constructed to house the Philbrick Rare Book Room and the new Sayles Gorham Children's Library. In 2016, with the support of the Champlin Foundation and others, the Athenæum replaced the roof over the Platner Wing. These recent grants will enable the institution to replace the roofs over the 1838 and 1914 sections of the building.

"The Providence Athenæum is thrilled to receive this significant funding from the Champlin Foundation and the State Preservation Grant program for our roof replacement project. Because of these grants, the Athenæum can continue to provide a warm, dry welcome through the next generation, allowing all to enjoy our historic building and its world-class collections and programs," said Executive Director Matt Burriesci.

One of the oldest libraries in the country, the Athenæum has been a home for literature, conversation, and the humanities for almost two centuries. It is one of few surviving membership libraries and is even rarer among these institutions for remaining in its original building. The Athenæum produces more than 200 public programs a year, and it is home to significant special collections. Water penetration has been a chronic concern for both the preservation of this remarkable building and the conservation of the historic collection it houses. These funds will enable a long-term solution, and will protect the Athenæum's building and collections for decades to come.

The Athenæum plans to complete work on the projects by fall of 2018, and hopes to cause minimal disruption to its patrons during the construction phase.

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About the Providence Athenæum: *The Providence Athenæum is an independent, member-supported library and cultural center located on Providence's historic Benefit Street. Over its nearly 200 years of existence, the library has welcomed illustrious writers, spirited thinkers, and energetic community members through its doors to engage in reading, conversation, and debate. At its heart, the Athenæum encourages a love of reading and learning to all. Learn more at [provath.org](http://provath.org).*