Question Bridge: Black Males is a platform for black men of all ages and backgrounds to ask and candidly respond to questions that are rarely discussed in public. The Question Bridge campaign aims to represent and redefine black male identity in America.

To connect with a wide audience, the Question Bridge project takes on many forms: an art installation, educational curriculum, community engagement program, and interactive digital experience. In providing a stage for these deeply personal conversations, Question Bridge invites audiences and participants to uncover many profound truths about what it means to be a black man in America today.

Question Bridge powerfully exposes the incredible diversity of thought, character, and identity within the black American male demographic, disrupting traditional generalizations. The vulnerability and generosity of participants produces complex and authentic images of black men rarely seen in American media.
PROJECT ORIGINS
Question Bridge began in 1996, when artist Chris Johnson was looking for a way to use media to generate a meaningful conversation around class and generational divisions within San Diego’s African American community. Mediated through the lens of a video camera, ten members of the black community were given a format to openly express their deeply felt beliefs and values through candid question and answer exchanges. None of the questions or answers were prompted. A decade later, Hank Willis Thomas approached Johnson about collaborating to establish a similar project focused on Black men.

VIDEO ART INSTALLATION
Artists Chris Johnson, Hank Willis Thomas, Kamal Sinclair, and Bayeté Ross Smith collected more than 1,600 question and answer videos from over 150 men across the country between 2008-2011. They shaped the content into an insightful, provocative and entertaining five-channel video installation. It has been exhibited at over 30 museums, festivals, and institutions.

INTERACTIVE WEBSITE & MOBILE APP
The interactive platform was built to expand the dialogue sparked by the art installation. Now, new participants can contribute questions and answers, creating a living archive for black male voices in America. Using a mobile app and website, the platform connects with a wide variety of participants, and provides a place for healing dialogue and identity mapping. The user content builds an identity map, and can be filtered and viewed by location or timeframe. A Beta launch is scheduled for Spring 2014.

EDUCATION CURRICULUM
Designed for high school students, the free Question Bridge curriculum focuses on themes of broad identity, conflict resolution, and inclusion. The curriculum is online, and teaching artists can be hired to facilitate trainings.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Inspired by a question and answer cycle in the project, “Why Didn’t You Leave Us a Blueprint?” Blueprint Roundtables are designed to facilitate inter-generational dialogue and identify actionable pathways to socio-economic development of black men and boys. The program launched in 2012, and has spread to over 15 communities across the country. The dialogue aims to create a local conversation about key issues, that is national in scope.