

***Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* FAQs**

WHO CAN HOST THE EXHIBIT?

The Museum on Main Street program is focused on small towns and rural areas. Prospective Indiana host organizations should be located in communities of 15,000 or fewer people. Tax-exempt organizations including libraries, museums, historical societies, local governments and civic organizations can apply to host the exhibit.

ARE THERE ANY MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO HOST THE EXHIBIT?

The host organization must be able to provide a secure, climate-controlled space that can also accommodate an exhibit occupying a 650 to 700 square feet. The space also needs multiple electrical outlets and 8-foot-tall ceilings to accommodate video monitors, touchscreens and other A/V that are part of the exhibit. On your application, you will be asked to upload two photographs and a floor plan (hand-drawn is fine) of your intended venue.

It's okay if your local exhibit does not fit in the same venue/room as the traveling exhibit.

The host organization must be open for a minimum of 30 hours per week for the duration of the exhibit, including hours on the weekend. It's okay if your organization offers special or extended hours only while the exhibit is in town.

We recommend that your venue be ADA compliant (we'll make an exception for historic buildings) and have ramps, which makes it easier to unload and load the exhibit as well as makes the space more welcoming to all visitors.

Please see our *Voices and Votes* [webpage](#) for floor plans and more.

IN ADDITION TO THE EXHIBIT, WHAT DOES INDIANA HUMANITIES PROVIDE?

Host organizations will receive a \$2,000 grant to cover costs associated with the development of the local exhibit component, including design, permissions, and fabrication. These funds can also be used for programs and promotional efforts related to the exhibit. Host organizations will also receive a starter kit of printed collateral and other materials to help you promote the exhibit.

Indiana Humanities will host an in-person training for up to two members of your local project team in Indianapolis on April 25, 2025. This training is required. Additionally, an in-person installation workshop will occur just before the exhibit tour begins, in March 2026. The project director is required to attend both trainings (additional project team members are recommended but not required to attend).

In between these two in-person trainings, your local project team will also be attending monthly virtual convenings providing support in programming, exhibition development, fundraising, communications, and more.

Indiana Humanities will provide communications support, including a media kit with template press release, sample social media posts, program logos and images, and tips.

While Indiana Humanities will be providing materials for host sites, exhibit hosts also have access to a wide array of exhibition resources developed by the Smithsonian, including program guides, curriculum guides, sample timelines and checklists and much more.

DOES IT COST ANYTHING?

No, but hosts agree to cover costs to support the exhibit's run in their community beyond what is covered by the grant. All other program costs, including the exhibit, program guides, planning workshop and travel, and collateral, are covered by Indiana Humanities and the Smithsonian.

Depending on your ambition, there may be additional costs beyond the \$2,000 that we provide. You are welcome to seek additional grants, sponsorships and donations to cover these expenses.

WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS TO HOSTING THE EXHIBIT?

Over the years, communities both here in Indiana and across the country who have participated in the Museum on Main Street program are nearly universal in their praise for this experience. The program helps small organizations bring high-quality exhibitions to underserved rural areas. Staff and volunteers in the local community learn how to create exhibits, develop dynamic public programs and improve their communications skills. The goal of this opportunity is to build relationships that last far beyond the duration of the exhibit, including with new audiences, new volunteers, and new funders.

WHAT KIND OF COMMITMENTS ARE EXPECTED FROM THE HOST ORGANIZATION AND HOST COMMUNITY?

The host organization agrees to send at least one member of their project team to an in-person training on April 25, 2025. Please hold this day on your calendar; failure to attend the training will revoke the award. The project director is required to attend the full meeting; additional project team members are encouraged, but not required to attend.

There will be a second statewide training in the week of March 22, 2026. The project director is required to attend the full training; additional project team members are encouraged, but not required to attend.

Upon the exhibit's arrival in your community, the host organization is expected to hold a grand opening/ribbon cutting and invite public officials, media, legislators and others.

The host organization also agrees to develop and produce a component of the exhibit that relates the broader themes of *Voices and Votes* to the local community. We'll help you refine your story, give you tips on how to select objects and write exhibit labels, and provide design support, but the responsibility of creating this piece of the exhibit falls on the host community.

Additionally, the host organization will offer at least three public programs leading up and/or during the exhibit. These can include talks, book discussions, film screenings and discussions, scan-a-thons (also known as local history "drives"), or other events that generate interest and help Hoosiers explore the big ideas in the exhibit.

The host organization agrees to cover any costs to complete the local exhibit and required programs not covered by the \$2,000 grant from Indiana Humanities. Hosts are encouraged to seek sponsorships for costs not covered by Indiana Humanities for publicity, programs, the local exhibit or other aspects of the program.

The host organization agrees to collect attendance numbers, complete a final evaluation and budget, and share feedback and reflections with the Smithsonian and Indiana Humanities.

Overall, the Museum on Main Street program is a big opportunity that requires a big community effort. This is not a project that only one or two dedicated community members can pull off. Indiana Humanities will provide funding, collateral, training and guidance, but we also know from previous years that the hard work of the local project team is what makes this program a success. We're looking for hosts who share our excitement and enthusiasm but also understand the commitment and hard work required from this multi-year experience.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN THE APPLICATION? WHAT WILL SET MY COMMUNITY APART?

Museum on Main Street is a transformative program that can help you, your organization, and your community engage new audiences and spark important conversations about the future of your town and state. But there's a lot of work involved to make the most of the opportunity. That's why we're looking for host organizations and project team members that demonstrate enthusiasm, commitment, and a healthy dose of imagination.

We'll be looking for buy-in from partners, whether it's a school, visitors bureau, history museum, local businesses, or the mayor's office, who will contribute to the program's success.

We'll be evaluating the quality and creativity of your ideas (for programs, for local exhibit content, for partnerships) as well as your ability to execute them. Show us if you have a track record of success when it comes to pulling off ambitious projects, or why you're poised to do so for the first time.

At Indiana Humanities, we encourage reflection and conversation. As such, successful applications will indicate not just the unique history of the community’s relationship to democracy, but why you wish for your community to reflect on ideas of civics today.

We’ll also take into consideration geographic diversity and a range of local stories that relate to the broader theme of *Voices and Votes*. No two communities are alike, so we hope a mix of stories and experiences are represented in our 2026-2027 tour of the exhibit.

WHAT ARE THE KEY DATES?

Thursday, October 3, 2024	Applications open
Friday, February 21, 2025	Applications due
Week of March 10, 2025	Interviews of finalists
By March 31, 2025	Applicants notified of Indiana Humanities decision
April 25, 2025	Required MOMS Training Workshop in Indianapolis
May 2025-February 2026	Monthly online Zoom trainings for host sites
Week of March 22, 2026	Tentative date for in-person project directors’ meeting (required); learning how to install exhibit
Tour Dates	
March 28 - May 10, 2026	Venue 1
May 16 - June 28, 2026	Venue 2
July 4 - August 16, 2026	Venue 3
August 22 - October 4, 2026	Venue 4
October 10 - November 22, 2026	Venue 5
November 28, 2026 - January 10, 2027	Venue 6

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