



Voices and Votes: Democracy in America

Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Services Museum on Main Street Program

Voices and Votes: Democracy in America is adapted from the exhibition [American Democracy: A Great Leap of Faith](#) currently on display at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History. This traveling exhibition includes many of the same dynamic features: historical and contemporary photographs; educational and archival video; engaging multimedia interactives, and historical objects like campaign souvenirs, voter memorabilia, and protest material.

The [Voices and Votes](#) exhibition is now available to be installed for six weeks per site at twelve museums in New York State from March of 2024 through January of 2026. Although MANY will continue to raise funds to offset the cost of the exhibition travel, marketing, and public programs, by submitting this application, the museum commits to contributing \$4,000 to the project which includes the cost of shipping the exhibition to your site. These funds will not be due until the exhibition is delivered to your site.

Applications must be submitted to meves@nysmuseums.org as a PDF with the subject line: [Institution Name] “Voices and Votes” Application by **5 PM March 17, 2023**. Selected participants will be notified by early April.

Contact Information

Organization Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Physical Address *if different than mailing address*: _____

Website: _____

Primary Contact Person Name and Title: _____

Primary Contact Person Email: _____

Primary Contact Phone Number: _____

This should be a number that can be reachable during and after business hours when necessary.

Secondary Contact Person Name and Title: _____

Secondary Contact Person Email: _____

Secondary Contact Person Phone Number: _____

Section A | About Your Museum

Mission statement

Vision statement

Values *100 words or fewer*
Share the core principles that guide and direct your museum and its culture

Institutional Structure *100 words or fewer*
How is your museum organized, i.e. departments, reporting, etc.

Staff and Volunteers

| Number of full-time staff | Number of part-time staff | Number of regular volunteers |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | |

Hours and Attendance Numbers

| Number of days open annually | Annual general public visitation | Annual school group visitation |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | |

Section B | About Your Site

Voices and Votes consists of 6 free-standing kiosks. The exhibition is approximately 700 square feet and you will need a minimum ceiling height of 8 feet to install the exhibition. Your space does not need to be climate-controlled, but does need to be clean, cool (below 75 degrees F), and dry with limited direct sunlight.

Voices and Votes packs in 16 crates. The crates are all on wheels, roll easily and they are all designed to fit through a single doorway. When packed, the crates weigh between 150 and 350 pounds. You will need to store the crates while the exhibition is installed. Storage can be either on-site or off and must be approximately 200 square feet, cool, dry, and clean. Crates may be stacked once they are empty.

Please use the space below to describe the facility where the exhibition will be presented.

100 words or fewer

Describe the conditions of your exhibition space. Consider security, temperature/humidity, and light levels. *100 words or fewer*

This exhibition requires at least two people to install.

How many volunteers do you anticipate helping with the installation? _____

Is there a state-wide or regional anniversary or event with which you would like your exhibit to coincide?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please provide the date(s) and name of the anniversary/event and how it corresponds to *Voices and Votes*. *100 words or fewer*

Section C | Exhibition Requirements

Select your top 3 choices for hosting the exhibit.

Please write "1" for your first choice, "2" for your second choice, and "3" for your third choice.

We will do our best to accommodate your selection, but we cannot guarantee your choices.

Exhibition start/end dates may be flexible by +1/-1 days.

___ **Site 1** March 24, 2024 – May 3, 2024

___ **Site 7** February 21, 2025 – April 4, 2024

___ **Site 2** May 17, 2023 – June 28, 2024

___ **Site 8** April 18, 2025 – May 30, 2025

___ **Site 3** July 12, 2024 – August 23, 2024

___ **Site 9** June 3, 2025 – July 25, 2025

___ **Site 4** September 6, 2024 – October 18, 2024

___ **Site 10** August 8, 2025 – September 19, 2025

___ **Site 5** November 1, 2024 – December 13, 2024

___ **Site 11** October 3, 2025 – November 14, 2025

___ **Site 6** December 27, 2024 – February 7, 2025

___ **Site 12** November 28, 2025 – January 9, 2026

Site Requirements

Please **initial** each requirement to indicate your site's agreement to the following:

PHYSICAL

___ At least 700 square feet of secure exhibition space with at least 8-foot ceilings

___ At least 200 square feet of secure space for crate storage

___ ADA compliant exhibition space with public restrooms

___ At least 25 hours per week of public operating hours. *If you are a seasonal site, then this 25 hours per week requirement would only be applicable to the dates of the exhibition.*

STAFF AND RESOURCES

___ Two staff will travel to and attend the installation workshop *Will be held at the first site installation, March 2024*

___ Supervise/direct unpacking and installation of the exhibition

___ Supervise exhibition during at least 25 open hours a week

___ Supervise/direct de-installation and packing of the exhibition

___ Plan and implement an accompanying exhibition of materials from the museum's collection that tell the story of the museum's community's relationship with the formation and support of American democracy

___ Track staff and volunteer time and use of facilities and resources that are donated to the exhibition

___ Track visitor attendance to the exhibition

___ Complete project evaluation and report

___ I acknowledge that although MANY will continue to raise funds to offset the cost of the exhibition travel, marketing, and public programs, but by submitting the application, the museum commits to contributing \$4,000 to the project.

Section D I Programming, Projects, and Partnerships

Describe previous programs/projects that engaged your community. *250 words or fewer*

Describe existing partnerships with other arts, cultural, and educational institutions. *250 words or fewer*

Does your museum have previous experience working with school-based educators? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, please describe. *250 words or fewer*

| Number of 2022 in-person programs | Total number of 2022 in-person attendees |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| | |

Section E | Short Essay Response

New York is deeply connected to our nation's women's suffrage and civil rights movements. Five US Presidents were born and raised in New York. New York ranks third in our nation in welcoming New Americans. In 2022, 4.5 million, or almost a quarter of New York residents, were designated as "immigrants" by the US Citizenship and Immigration Service. The stories inherent in the collections of our museums and these interwoven historical and political factors come together to make twelve New York museums ideal locations for an exemplary Humanities Discussion Series connected to the NEH's A More Perfect Union initiative.

Share the ways in which your museum's collections and archives can tell the story of how your community has participated in American Democracy. *500 words or fewer*

Please address the following components of the *Voices and Votes* program: Exhibition, Partners, and Publicity. Use the questions provided as a guide to your responses.

500 words or fewer per section

Exhibition

What about your museum's focus or your community's history and culture make it a particularly appropriate site for *Voices and Votes*? For example, do you have a special collection that you will highlight with the exhibit? Was your town or county the site of a historical event that adds context to the *Voices and Votes* exhibition or tells the story of how people in their community created positive change for our nation?

Partners

Are there particular resources in your community that would make the exhibition successful? Describe any arts organizations, libraries, universities, community centers, special facilities, individuals, and any other resources that you believe would be valuable. List any groups that may assist you with the project and describe the roles they might play.

Publicity

How would you describe your organization's current capacity for promotion and publicity? How would you like to build capacity in this area?

Section F | Additional Host Site Qualifying Criteria

In addition to the previous requirements, points will be awarded based upon answers to the following questions. The **total score** will contribute to site selection. Initial next to the criteria that your site meets.

PHYSICAL *10 points each*

___ Town in which the museum is located has a population of 30,000 or less (2020 census data)

___ Site offers complimentary wi-fi access to all visitors

___ Site is open more than 25 hours a week

COMMUNITY PARTNERS *10 points each*

Site has identified:

___ at least 1 business or government partner with whom they have previously partnered with

Name of partner: _____

___ at least 1 education partner with whom they have previously partnered with

Name of partner: _____

___ at least 1 non-profit partner with whom they have previously partnered with

Name of partner: _____

EXHIBITION/PROGRAM *10 points each*

___ Site commits to plan and implement at least if not more than the required three public programs

___ Site has proven success in developing public programming

___ Site has proven success marketing exhibitions and programming

EXPERIENCE WITH MANY *5 points each*

___ Museum is an active MANY Organizational member

___ Site staff have participated in a MANY professional development program

Name and date of professional development program: _____

Section G | “A New Agora for New York: Museums as Spaces for Democracy” Humanities Discussions Programs

The Museum Association of New York has applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities to produce “A New Agora for New York: Museums as Spaces for Democracy.” This proposed series of humanities programs will use *Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* as a launching point to support the work of selected museums and their communities to explore, reflect on, and tell the story of their role in the evolution of American Democracy and envision the future of our nation as we approach the semiquincentennial.

Humanities Discussion Programs will include two training symposia for two staff from each of the selected museums, access to a scholar advisory committee, the development and installation of an exhibition of materials from the museum’s collection that tells the story of their community’s relationship with democracy, a lecture by a project scholar, an oral history gathering project using *OurStoryBridge*, a Community Conversation discussion program and training led by HNY staff, and a workshop for local teachers to help build their knowledge and discussion leadership skills.

Participants will also be given access to AASLH’s Vital Resources package including memberships in AASLH, enrollment in their Standards and Excellence Self-Assessment Program, one registration for their annual conference, and access to four webinars.

Funding for these programs will be announced April 2023 and selected museums will know as soon as we do.

Additional Requirements

Please initial to indicate your site’s agreement to the following requirements (if selected):

- Two staff will attend two planning symposia
- Identify and provide leadership for community partners to support programming
- Plan and implement a lecture by a project scholar
- Plan and implement an oral history gathering project in conjunction with *OurStoryBridge*
- Plan and implement a Community Conversation discussion program lead by Humanities New York staff
- Plan, implement, and attend a Community Conversation training for museum staff
- Plan and implement a workshop with New York State Museum staff for local teachers to help build their knowledge and leadership skills
- Track program attendance
- Track staff and volunteer time and use of facilities and resources that are donated to programming
- Complete program evaluation report

To complete your application, please sign below and submit to meves@nysmuseums.org by 5 PM Friday, March 17, 2023.

Primary contact name and title

Date

Executive Director or Board President (name and title)

Date