SPARK!

PLACES of INNOVATION

A Smithsonian Exhibition Coming to Arizona

Apply Today!

Arizona has always been a place of new beginnings and new ideas. Our exceptional landscapes, multicultural communities, and unique challenges have ignited the sparks of innovation across all aspects of our lives, from the arts to the sciences, from agriculture to tourism, from the study of our skies to the understanding of our soils, and beyond. These changes take root and grow in our rural communities.

Spark! Places of Innovation asks, what makes rural Arizona a place of innovation? What new ideas have been sparked when people come together to solve a problem or create meaning? Is it our desire for social improvement? Is it our concern about natural resources…or the scarcity of resources? Is it our unique natural landscapes or environmental changes that affect our lives and livelihoods? All of these and more can inspire innovation.

Designed for small-town museums, libraries, cultural organizations, and more, *Spark! Places of Innovation* will feature stories of innovation from across the nation and inspire visitors to reflect on how innovation shapes communities, including their own. Arizona towns will develop complementary exhibits, public programs, and educational resources that tell their local stories and invite visitors to celebrate innovation.

Tell us your story of innovation!

Arizona Humanities (AH) is accepting applications from Arizona communities to host an exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution. The traveling exhibition will visit six (6) communities in Arizona beginning June 2025. AH covers all expenses, including shipping, publicity, travel to two (2) host workshops and an installation workshop, and provides each site with $2,500 for public programming.

Deadline to Apply: May 31, 2024

AH Staff Visits: June 2024

Selection Date: June 30, 2024

Exhibition Tour: June 14, 2025 – March 28, 2026

About *Spark! Places of Innovation*

"*Spark! Places of Innovation* explores the unique combination of places, people, and circumstances that sparks innovation and invention in rural communities. Inspired by an exhibition by the Smithsonian's Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, the exhibition features stories gathered from diverse communities across the nation. Photographs, engaging interactives, objects, videos, and digital stories bring a multilayered experience to reveal the leaders, challenges, successes, and future of innovation in each town. Technical, social, cultural, or artistic– every sort of innovation story is as unique as each community and will be represented in *Spark! Places of Innovation*." – Smithsonian Institution

Spark! is a traveling exhibition brought to Arizona in partnership with AH and the Smithsonian Institution as part of the Museum on Main Street program. Museum on Main Street is a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and the state humanities councils across the country. Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the United States Congress

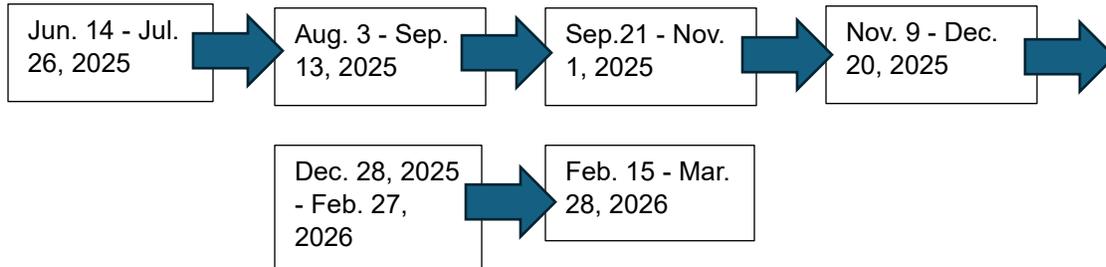Learn more about the exhibition here: https://museumonmainstreet.org/spark

How to Apply

Applications must be submitted electronically through the AH online dashboard. *Paper applications will not be accepted.* Organizations that do not have an account on the AH online dashboard will need to create one. The link to access the application can also be found on the Spark! webpage.

What Is Provided?

- Multimedia exhibition produced by the Smithsonian.
- Shipping costs of the exhibition to and from the venue.
- Travel costs for two (2) staff/community representatives to attend two (2) program workshops.
- Travel costs for two (2) staff/community representatives to attend an installation workshop.
- $2,500 grant award to support the host community's public programming and complementary exhibit.
- Publicity materials, including postcards, posters, and a banner.
- Consultation with state scholar(s) to develop local humanities-based public programs.

Tour Schedule

Applicants will be required to select the top three dates that work best for them to host according to the schedule below:

| Jun. 14 - Jul. 26, 2025 | → | Aug. 3 - Sep. 13, 2025 | → | Sep.21 - Nov. 1, 2025 | → | Nov. 9 - Dec. 20, 2025 | → |

| Dec. 28, 2025 - Feb. 27, 2026 | → | Feb. 15 - Mar. 28, 2026 |

Applicant Eligibility

Arizona-based nonprofit organizations; tribal and governmental entities; and educational institutions.

All organizations must have a valid System for Award Management (SAM) Unique Entity Identified (UEI) number or have applied for a SAM UEI number through the sam.gov website at the time of application. Please refer to the AH grant guidelines (page 6) for details regarding the SAM UEI number.

Special consideration will be given to organizations serving rural communities and underserved communities.

Please note that this exhibition is intended for rural communities. Rural can be defined by population size (e.g., <50,000 according to the Census Bureau); location (e.g., proximity to urban areas and resources); or as a community that self-identifies as rural.

Venue Requirements

The venue must meet all the following to be considered to host the exhibit:

- The venue must have a minimum of 650 square feet of space for the exhibit.
- The exhibit cannot be displayed in a hallway, alley, outdoors, or in a tent/temporary building.
- The exhibit must have staff watching during the entire time the exhibit is open and may not be left unsupervised while open.
- The exhibit must be locked and secure at the end of the day (when public cannot access the exhibit).

Smithsonian   az HUMANITIES
EXPLORE. SHARE. EXPERIENCE.

- There may not be direct sunlight in the exhibit space. You must diffuse the sunlight in the space if there is any.
- The venue space may not exceed 80 degrees the entire time the exhibit is in the space.
- The venue space must be ADA compliant.
- The venue space will need a minimum of about 8'6" ceiling height clearance.
- You will need about 50 square feet of storage for the exhibit crates.

Public Programming & Complementary Exhibit Requirements

All host sites will be required to have additional programs open to the public. These programs should tie themes from Spark! to the host community with a focus on humanities topics. Programs may be either in person or virtual, and it is encouraged to have programming leading up to, during, and in the weeks after the exhibit is in your community.

Examples of programs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Oral storytelling collection with community engagement
- Lecture/presentation/discussion events
- Digital and audio programs such as podcasts and interactive websites
- School field trips with interactive activities that engage students

All host sites will be required to produce a site-based exhibit (small or large), exploring the theme of innovation in their community to complement the Spark! exhibition. The exhibit can include photos, text, objects, and any other materials that tell the local story of innovation.

Personnel

AH requires all host sites have a designated Project Director and Authorizing Official:

Project Director is responsible for the implementation of the Spark! exhibit and programming, the primary contact with AH in all aspects regarding the exhibit, and responsible for submitting final reports.

Authorizing Official is the person with the responsibility to sign legal contracts on behalf of the applicant organization. Their primary obligations include record-keeping and accounting for the award funds, matching contributions, and services received. The Authorizing Official may be the Executive Director, Chair of the Board, President, etc.

Cost Share/Match Requirement

Please note that all selected organizations will be asked to demonstrate a one-to-one in-kind or cash match for the award of $2,000* for Spark! programming. The match can be met either with in-kind contributions (e.g., volunteer hours, venue rentals, etc.) or third-party cash contribution. The cost share match can be a combination of in-kind and cash contributions. Cost share reporting will be determined *after* host sites have been selected.

*Please see the AH grant guidelines (page 11) for a full list of activities not covered by the $2,500 award.

Contact

Need help or have questions? Have ideas or want to brainstorm possibilities? Please contact AH Staff, Julianne Cheng, by email jcheng@azhumanities.org or call 602-257-0335. We encourage all interested applicants to reach out to us before applying!