

A Smithsonian Exhibition Coming to Arizona in 2027!

When you hear “Americans,” most people don’t think of Indigenous peoples. Native Americans make up less than 1% of the population, yet their images, names, and stories are everywhere. How can a people be so visible—and yet so absent in American life? Join us as we explore this question and uncover the

realities behind representation, identity, and history.

Americans is a traveling exhibition adapted from the thought-provoking Smithsonian exhibition from the National Museum of the American Indian. Designed for small-town museums, libraries, cultural organizations, and more, *Americans* surrounds visitors with images and objects of Native Americans from popular culture and invites us to explore our nation’s complicated history. Arizona towns will develop complementary exhibits, public programs, and educational resources that tell their local stories and encourage visitors to reflect on their memories and perceptions of Native Americans.

How does Native history and culture shape your community?

Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes. Tribal lands comprise a quarter of the state. Native people, history, and culture have defined Arizona and continue to shape local communities. How do we begin these conversations around Arizona and Native history? Help us explore the stories of Native Americans of Arizona and how they contribute to the cultural heritage of our state!

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 August 2027. AH covers all expenses, including shipping, publicity, travel to two (2) host workshops, and provides each site with \$2,500 for public programming.

Applications Open: May 1, 2026

Deadline to Apply: June 15, 2026

Notification Date: Late Summer 2026

Exhibition Tour: August 21, 2027, to June 4, 2028

Americans Host Site Webinar 1 - May 20, 2026:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85219859607>

Americans Host Site Webinar 2 - June 3, 2026:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81169639936>

About *Americans*

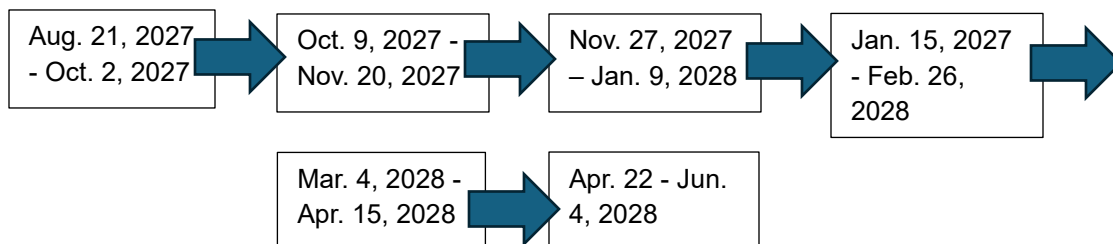
“Americans is adapted from an original exhibition developed by the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian and focuses on four historical events: Thanksgiving, the life of Pocahontas, the Trail of Tears, and the Battle of Little Bighorn. These events infuse both American history and contemporary life. The exhibition shows what is remembered, contested, cherished and denied, and why that still resonates. Objects and images in Americans will help spark unexpected memories of visitors’ perceptions of American Indians.” – Smithsonian Institution

Americans 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/americans>

Tour Schedule

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



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:

- 750 square feet of space for the exhibit.
- Minimum ceiling height of 8 feet.
- Staff/volunteer/docents supervising the entire time the exhibit is open.
- Exhibit must be locked and secure at the end of the day (when public cannot access the exhibit).
- Limited, to no, direct sunlight in space. Direct sunlight can fade panels.
- Exhibition space needs to be clean, dry, and below 75 degrees F.
- ADA compliant. Leave at least 36 inches between exhibit kiosks and walls to comply.
- Must have 50 square feet of storage for the exhibit crates.
- Exhibit will NOT be displayed in a hallway, alley, outdoors, or in a tent/temporary building.
- Access to electricity.

Public Programming & Complementary Exhibit Requirements

All host sites will be required to have at least 2 additional programs open to the public. These programs should tie themes from Americans 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 themes of American Indian history in their community to complement the Americans exhibition. The exhibit can include photos, text, objects, and any other materials that tell their local story.

Personnel

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

Project Director is responsible for the implementation of the 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 \$2,500* for 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, Chris Elliott, by email celliott@azhumanities.org or call 602-257-0335.