



## Museum on Main Street (MoMS) Guidelines

Museum on Main Street is a unique partnership between the Smithsonian and Mass Humanities that brings world-class exhibits to six rural communities in our state.

Mass Humanities Museum on Main Street grants offer \$10,000 for sites to host the 2025-2026 tour [Voices and Votes: Democracy in America](#) and create programming rooted in their community.

**About the Tour:** Voice and Votes will be in Massachusetts from April 19, 2025, to February 1, 2026.

Each site will host the exhibit for six weeks and create six programs related to the exhibit. Mass Humanities will provide capacity-building workshops and training in the months leading up to and during the tour.

**About the Exhibit:** Voice and Votes explores the history of American democracy, and how it is reflected in local stories. Based on the exhibition "[American Democracy: A Great Leap of Faith](#)" at the National Museum of American History, "Voices and Votes" introduces visitors to the context and main controversies behind America's democratic system. It explores the fight for fair representation, the different ways we can participate in democracy, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens, asking visitors to think about these questions and acting as a springboard for conversation about how these themes are reflected in local stories.

### Questions?

If you have questions about the requirements below or the Museum on Main Street program, please contact Program Officer Marie Pellissier at [mpellissier@masshumanities.org](mailto:mpellissier@masshumanities.org).

Book an appointment with Marie: <https://calendly.com/mpellissier-mh/museum-on-main-street-inquiries>

### Grant Snapshot

**Funding Awarded:** \$10,000

**Key Dates:** LOI opens March 11, 2024; LOI due May 10, 2024; Award Notification July 1, 2024; Voices and Votes Tour April 19, 2025, to February 1, 2026

**Eligibility:** Non-profit organizations located in Massachusetts towns with a population of 12,000 or fewer, interested in being one of six sites chosen to host the 2025-2026 Smithsonian Museum on Main Street exhibit.

**Sound like you? Keep reading.**

## Before You Start

Museum on Main Street is targeted specifically at rural communities. Applicant organizations must be based in a community with a population of 12,000 people or fewer, according to the 2020 US Census. A list of these communities can be found at the end of this document.

## The Application Process

To apply for a Museum on Main Street grant, review the guidelines below and complete the online Letter of Inquiry by **May 10, 2024**. Sites will be selected from the Letters of Inquiry. If your site is selected, you will be asked to complete a full application, including a formal budget, later in the process.

## Key Dates

**March 11, 2024:** Letters of Inquiry Open

**May 10, 2024:** Letters of Inquiry Due

**July 1, 2024:** Award notification

**April 19, 2025-February 2, 2026:** Voices and Votes tour in Massachusetts

## Space Requirements

The Voices and Votes exhibition has specific space requirements. Please consult the following list of criteria and make sure that your organization's space meets these requirements.

- A minimum of 650-700 square feet of display space for the Smithsonian exhibit
- A ceiling height of at least eight feet
- At least one doorway of 82" clearance
- Enclosed, clean, temperature-controlled storage space of at least 200 square feet for shipping crates.
- A secure location for exhibit and crate storage
- Ability to ship exhibit in a 26-foot U-Haul (or similar) truck

## Eligibility

Applicant organizations must:

- Be a 501(c)(3), non-profit, fiscally sponsored association, state or federally recognized tribe, or non-federal government organization.
- Serve Massachusetts residents in a rural community (defined as a population of 12,000 people or less according to the 2020 US Census).
- Be in compliance with state and federal regulations which bar discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, or sexual orientation, and which require accessibility for persons with disabilities. Specifically:
  - The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
  - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)
  - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
  - The Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- Not have a currently open grant with Mass Humanities with the exception of 2024 Reading Frederick Douglass Together grants.

## Tour Dates

The “Voices and Votes” exhibition will be in Massachusetts from April 19, 2025, to February 1, 2026. Each site will host for six weeks, with one week in between for transit. In the LOI, you will need to indicate your top three choices from the following date ranges in the LOI.

- 4/19/2025 – 5/31/2025
- 6/7/2025 – 7/19/2025
- 7/26/2025 – 9/6/2025
- 9/13/2025 – 10/25/2025
- 11/1/2025 – 12/13/2025
- 12/20/2025 – 2/1/2026

## Budget Requirements

You are not required to complete a formal budget for the LOI. If your site is selected, you will complete a formal budget later in the process.

Each host site selected for Museum on Main Street will receive \$10,000. These funds are to be used for expenses related to the exhibition, particularly programming. They may also be used for publicity, to cover the cost of moving the exhibit from one site to the next, or for staff time and other costs. Further details about budgeting will be discussed in capacity building workshops after the sites have been selected.

Each selected host site will be required to match the Mass Humanities funds with funds from other sources, called the “cost-share.” Cost-share can come in two ways:

1. Cash share: Cash-share support is when actual money changes hands—when your organization pays for things like work, supplies, external venue rentals, travel costs or fees. The cash can come from your organization’s operating budget and from other grants and donations.
2. In-kind share: In-kind support is a cashless donation. It includes things like free use of facilities, supplies donated to the project, and volunteer time.

The combination of cash share and in-kind support makes up your “matching funds.”

Please note that at least ten percent (10%) of your matching funds must be a cash share. The rest can be in-kind contributions.

## How to Apply

### Using Mass Humanities Online Application System

All LOIs are submitted via Mass Humanities’ online application system. Here’s how it works:

### Starting your online LOI

If your organization already has an account in the Mass Humanities online grant system, log in and make sure that all of the contact information is up to date.

If you are new to your organization and do not have the previous account login information contact [grants@masshumanities.org](mailto:grants@masshumanities.org).

If your organization is new to Mass Humanities, you will need to create an account.

### **Creating an Account**

To create an account in the online grants system you will need to provide the following information:

1. Name, address, phone number, and email address of the person responsible for managing the application. The email address you enter here is important for two reasons:
  - a. The email address and password you enter at this stage will become your account login. You will need them whenever you want to log in to the online grants system. Make sure you save them for future use.
  - b. The email address will become the primary contact for your grant application. All notifications about the progress of your application, and all information should you be awarded a grant, will be sent to this address.
2. Name and IRS Tax Identification Number of the applicant organization.
  - a. Note: If your organization does not have a Tax Identification Number you may enter 99- 9999999. In the application, you will be asked to provide the Tax Identification Number of your fiscal sponsor.
3. Address and phone number of the applicant organization.

### **Accessing and completing application forms**

1. Accessing the Online LOI Form: When you log in to your online account, go to the “Apply” page and select the “Museum on Main Street (MoMS) 2024-2026” grant. A “LOI” form will open. Work on answering the questions. Your responses save automatically so that you can work on the form over a few sittings. You can also click the “Save Draft” button to receive confirmation that your answers are saved. When you’re done, click the “Submit” button.
2. Submit LOI: Make sure you’ve answered all the questions marked with a \*. Double-check any additional documents you’ve uploaded and press “Submit.” As always, leave time to troubleshoot technical glitches. Your final application is due by 11:59pm on the final application deadline.
3. Final Application Notification: Museum on Main Street grant applicants will be notified of their award and the dates they will be hosting the exhibit on July 1, 2024. All notification will come from the online grants system. Check your spam filters to make sure that you do not miss an email.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Organization Capacity: Does the sponsoring organization appear to have the capacity to adequately host the exhibit? Do they meet the logistical requirements? How many hours and days of the week will they be open? Do they have the staff or volunteer capacity to attend the required workshops?

Facility: How well will the space fit the exhibit?

*MoMS exhibitions are designed for remote museums or cultural organizations with severe space limitations, especially non-traditional gallery spaces that require compact configurations. For these reasons, they are intentionally designed to be small and portable. Conversely, this means that they may not work well in large spaces, where their impact can be lost. Experience has shown that placing a MoMS exhibition in a large venue, such as a conference ballroom or field house, does not bring optimal results.*

Local Story: Does the proposed community programming tell a unique local story that ties in with the themes of Voices and Votes? Does the host organization have special or timely events that could augment the exhibition, such as an anniversary year or a facility re-opening?

New Partnerships: Will the proposal help foster new partnerships between organizations? Has the applying organization ever worked with Mass Humanities before?

Organizational Impact: Will this project have a significant impact on the organization? Will it help the organization reach new audiences? Will it help build their capacity as an organization?

Audience: Do the applicants have a clear sense of the audience they are trying to engage in the exhibit? Are the topic, format, venue, and schedule appropriate for the intended audience?

Outreach: Does the proposal include a feasible plan for attracting the intended audience? Do the outreach methods suit the intended audience? Is the plan realistic and not too much work?

In addition to these criteria, Mass Humanities also considers date availability and geographic reach across the state.

## Communities in Massachusetts with Less Than 12,000 People

*Based on the 2020 US Census*

Acushnet	East Brookfield	Lunenburg
Adams	Eastham	Manchester-by-the-Sea
Alford	Edgartown	Marion
Aquinnah	Egremont	Mattapoissett
Ashburnham	Erving	Maynard
Ashby	Essex	Mendon
Ashfield	Florida	Merrimac
Athol	Freetown	Middlefield
Avon	Georgetown	Middleton
Ayer	Gill	Millis
Barre	Goshen	Millville
Becket	Gosnold	Monroe
Berkley	Granby	Monson
Berlin	Granville	Montague
Bernardston	Great Barrington	Monterey
Blackstone	Groton	Montgomery
Blandford	Groveland	Mount Washington
Bolton	Hadley	Nahant
Boxborough	Halifax	New Ashford
Boxford	Hamilton	New Braintree
Boylston	Hampden	New Marlborough
Brewster	Hancock	New Salem
Brimfield	Hanson	Newbury
Brookfield	Hardwick	Norfolk
Buckland	Harvard	North Brookfield
Carlisle	Hatfield	Northfield
Carver	Hawley	Norwell
Charlemont	Heath	Oak Bluffs
Chatham	Hinsdale	Oakham
Cheshire	Holbrook	Orange
Chester	Holland	Orleans
Chesterfield	Hopedale	Otis
Chilmark	Hubbardston	Paxton
Clarksburg	Hull	Pelham
Cohasset	Huntington	Pepperell
Colrain	Lakeville	Peru
Conway	Lancaster	Petersham
Cumington	Lanesborough	Phillipston
Dalton	Lee	Plainfield
Deerfield	Leicester	Plainville
Dighton	Lenox	Plympton
Douglas	Leverett	Princeton
Dover	Leyden	Provincetown
Dudley	Lincoln	Richmond
Dunstable	Littleton	Rochester

Rockport  
Rowe  
Rowley  
Royalston  
Russell  
Rutland  
Salisbury  
Sandisfield  
Savoy  
Sheffield  
Shelburne  
Sherborn  
Shirley  
Shutesbury  
Southampton  
Southborough  
Southwick  
Spencer  
Sterling

Stockbridge  
Stow  
Sturbridge  
Sunderland  
Sutton  
Templeton  
Tisbury  
Tolland  
Topsfield  
Townsend  
Truro  
Tyringham  
Upton  
Wales  
Ware  
Warren  
Warwick  
Washington  
Wellfleet

Wendell  
Wenham  
West Boylston  
West Bridgewater  
West Brookfield  
West Newbury  
West Stockbridge  
West Tisbury  
Westhampton  
Westminster  
Weston  
Whately  
Williamsburg  
Williamstown  
Winchendon  
Windsor  
Worthington