Stories: YES

Stories from Main Street: **Y**outh **E**ngagement and **S**kill-building

A Complementary Education Program for Museum on Main Street Exhibitions

https://museumonmainstreet.org/content/stories-yes

WHO: Host venues guide youth projects based on the themes of MoMS traveling exhibition.

WHAT: *Stories: YES* provides digital technology and critical thinking skills for kids in your community to explore local history and gain professional expertise by creating ***online*** stories (3-5 minutes each).

WHEN: The timeline is entirely independent from your exhibition

June 2020—Proposals are submitted by venues and MoMS selects partners

August 2020—MoMS applies for funding with support of selected exhibition host venues

September 2020—Projects are planned and training begins with youth

January 2021—Funding is awarded for technology purchases

WHERE: Digital stories are made by kids in your community and become part of Smithsonian's Stories from Main Street online collection, highlighting youth talent and relevance of local history.

WHY: New technology enables your organization to deepen the relationship with youth and local educators because you support the acquisition of professional 21st century and real world skills.

HOW: Young people conduct research and interviews, make recordings, and produce digital stories relevant to your MoMS exhibition by using professional equipment.

Stories: YES makes your organization a technology hub, creating a connection to kids in a way they can relate. Kids use the experience for college applications or to build resumes, while venues enhance local partnerships and acquire valuable equipment.

Projects may be multi-media websites or short videos, as long as they support youth to explore the community from their perspective. (See Examples)

The program can be extracurricular or a school collaboration. Age range and number of participants can vary, usually depending on how many kids your organization can assist with research, interviews, writing, and editing their digital stories.

You can blend support and expertise from as many individuals and organizations as you'd like—more community input and collaboration make the projects stronger. Residents, businesses, and local organizations are assets for this inspiring collaboration with kids, while also building and strengthening your impact within your community. See the Project Proposal for more details on planning your *Stories: YES* program.

PROJECT EXAMPLES – *Stories: YES*

Iowa 2018, exhibition *Hometown Teams*
In 2012, the Mount Vernon High School Boys Basketball Mustangs won the State Championship. Players and the Coach recall the difficulties and successes. (7:23 video)
https://museumonmainstreet.org/content/unforgettable-season-2012-state-champions-boys-basketball

Arkansas, 2018, exhibition *The Way We Worked*
Buffalo Island possesses some of the most fertile soil in the world. Originally surrounded by swamps, this ArcGIS Story Map explores how the area became farmland. (website)
https://museumonmainstreet.org/content/buffalo-island-swamp-farmland

Maryland, 2017, exhibition *The Way We Worked*
Ivan Lufriu, the last miller in Carroll County, Maryland, discusses the process of milling, and how the historic Union Mills Homestead was established in 1797 by the Shriver family. (3:47 video)
https://museumonmainstreet.org/content/union-mills-homestead-and-milling-maryland

Illinois, 2016, exhibition *Water/Ways*
Sisters Sue Gerhart and Rose Gerhart Robison recall the flood in 1943 when their family evacuated in the middle of the night. (5:04 video)
https://museumonmainstreet.org/content/lawrence-county-floods-gerhart-sisters

Illinois, 2016, exhibition *Water/Ways*
Three young people worked together to explore water issues in their community. (4:26 video)
https://museumonmainstreet.org/content/pollution-our-waterways-central-illinois

Stories: YES Proposal Guidelines and Advice

To apply for *Stories: YES*, please consider these questions as you develop your proposal. Additional planning resources are available on MoMS website: https://museumonmainstreet.org/content/stories-yes-resources.
Sydney Thatcher, Stories: YES Program Coordinator, is happy to answer any questions: thatchers@si.edu **;**
973.617.7485

1. What are your goals for working with local youth and how will you ensure their participation? What will be the benefits to your organization?
   o How can storytelling improve your organization's youth outreach?
   o Could you combine this with an existing youth project in your community or fulfill a need?
   o Partnerships are a hallmark of this program. Can you collaborate with schools and/or teachers? Alternatively, is it possible to collaborate with youth organizations or other extracurricular programs (e.g. Future Farmers of America or library youth programs)?
2. Describe how your organization will make historical and other cultural resources available to youth for completing their projects. If you're not a history organization, how will this benefit your mission?
   o Youth engage with your organization and partners through research and primary sources (i.e. interviewing locals, finding images, searching local libraries or archives). What resources will you provide to help youth develop their stories?
   o Can your partners provide youth access to other cultural resources?
3. What type of project would you like youth to create (e.g. video or website)? What local history subjects or themes would you ask them to explore? Remember that youth should lead the projects.
   o Successful projects highlight local history and relate to the themes of your MoMS exhibition. How will these topics stimulate community reflection on local history?
   o What are your organization's goals for the final project? How will you share the finished stories with your community (i.e. display them or hold a premiere celebration)?
   o Can you combine any other planned exhibition programming with youth activities?
4. Describe the personnel that would be involved in your project.
   o A Project Manager should be a representative of your organization (staff or volunteer) while a Technology Adviser may be external. Do you know people who fit these roles or can you partner with an organization or business that can help? These roles could be filled by educators or teachers depending on their area of expertise and availability.
   o If already identified, provide specific names, job titles and a description of the roles.
5. Describe the logistics of your program. How long will it take and when will stories premiere?
   o What town, county or region will be the basis for your program? Will youth from multiple schools or locations participate? Will youth travel to access research, interviews and technology?
   o Although equipment is purchased in the winter, what activities can you begin earlier in the fall to prepare youth for the recording and editing process? You may use MoMS online tools and training modules or develop your own workshop plan. Please describe or use a MoMS sample timeline.
6. Describe the technology you will use. How will new equipment (video cameras, microphones, lighting kit, etc.) and software benefit your organization and local youth? A sample equipment list can be found here.
   o How will you provide training for youth (e.g. Learning Lab, Field Guide, other resources)?
   o How might you continue to use this technology and pursue other partnerships to expand your community services and programming?
7. Attach support letters demonstrating that you have established partners who will participate in this project, particularly if you don't normally host youth programs. For an even stronger proposal, include in-kind matches. Match ideas can be found in the template on the *Stories: YES* program webpage.

Stories: YES Project Proposal

Organization/State: _____

Contact Person Name and Email: _____

Name of Exhibition and Dates: _____

1. What are your goals for working with local youth and how will you ensure their participation? What will be the benefits to your organization? (please limit to 200 words)

2. *Describe how your organization will make historical and other cultural resources available to youth for completing their projects. If you're not a history organization, how will this benefit your mission?*

3. What type of project would you like youth to create (e.g. video or website)? What local history subjects or themes would you ask them to explore? Remember that youth should lead the projects.

4. Describe the personnel that would be involved in your project (teachers, advisors, etc).

5. Describe the logistics of your program. How long will projects take and when will they finish?

6. Describe the technology you will use. How will new equipment (video cameras, microphones, lighting kit, etc.) and software benefit your organization and local youth?

7. Attach support letters from your organization and your primary partners (e.g. school, history or youth organization). Address them to:

> Carol Harsh
> Director, Museum on Main Street
> Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service
> PO Box 37012
> MRC 941
> Washington, DC 20013-7012

Please submit this application to Sydney Thatcher, *Stories: YES* Program Coordinator at thatchers@si.edu . **DEADLINE for applicants is by close of business, Friday June 26, 2020.**