

# EXHIBITION STARTER KIT FOOD

The Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street (MoMS) is pleased to announce this call for applications to select five organizations for the 2023 cohort for Exhibition Starter Kit: FOOD. **Applications are due by February 15, 2023.**

Exhibition Starter Kits provide a Smithsonian-developed framework that guides venues through the development of local humanities-based exhibitions using their own collections and cultural content. While working on their own exhibition project, participants will be able to learn from the Smithsonian as well as from peers in their cohort through regularly scheduled zoom calls.

Want to create a long-term local exhibition in association with the Smithsonian? Starter Kit: FOOD offers an opportunity for prior Museum on Main Street hosts and other rural cultural organizations to apply for this exciting collaboration!

## The Big Idea

Exhibition Starter Kits give local organizations a great opportunity to use Smithsonian exhibition content as a device for giving national context to local exhibitions. Host museums use exhibition support materials and a guided script to create an integrated, seamless presentation of both national and local content.

## Exhibition Starter Kits for Small Museums

Drawing on past MoMS exhibitions, Starter Kits help small museums develop great local exhibitions. The kits embrace the power of local history and culture by providing a set of tools created by the Smithsonian that leverage local culture, creativity, and artistic expression.

MoMS provides the curatorial framework for the exhibition. Host museums add additional content— such as historical images, art and artifacts, video clips, and quotes from oral histories — that highlights their local history and culture.

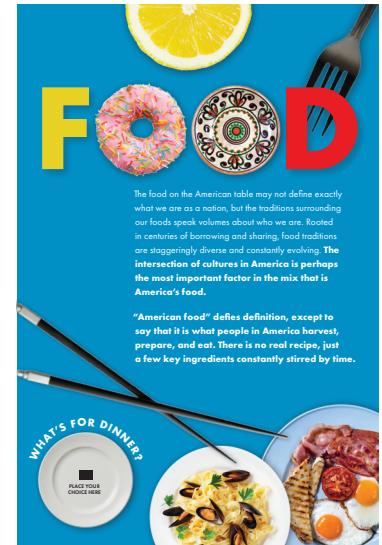
Exhibition Starter Kits provide communities with Smithsonian-curated humanities-based exhibition frameworks and enable them to decide what is most important to present about their towns. The open build-it-yourself concept helps them preserve their past by presenting it in the most relevant way to their constituents. Smithsonian staff will provide assistance throughout the exhibition development process for each host.

MoMS is now accepting applications to select five organizations to develop local exhibitions using an Exhibition Starter Kit based on the topic of Food. A description of Exhibition Starter Kit: FOOD, criteria for selection and an application are attached.



# Exhibition Starter Kit: FOOD

Exhibition Starter Kit: FOOD is based on the MoMS exhibition Key Ingredients: America by Food. How does food help define your community? Most people do not give a second thought about the wealth of history and culture that shapes our dining habits and taste preferences. Our recipes, menus, ceremonies, and etiquette are directly shaped by our country's rich immigrant experience, the history and innovations of food preparation technology, and the ever-changing availability of key ingredients. Our food traditions extend beyond our homes to encompass local restaurants, diners, and celebrations that help build a sense of community through food. Tell your local food story!



The kit offers a multi-faceted template for local cultural professionals to learn about the exhibition development process used by MoMS. By incorporating local elements directly into the exhibition, each installation will be unique while broadly addressing the same national themes.

## Package Offerings

Exhibition Starter Kit: FOOD offers a suite of items for developing an exhibition, including:

- An Exhibition Planning Guide explaining basic exhibition planning concepts
- FOOD Project Handbook to help guide the process from conceptualization to creation.
- Digital files for:
  - 18 predesigned text panels in pdf and InDesign.
  - 40 reproducible image panels in PDF and InDesign format.
  - 12 Food Fun Fact “tidbit” panels.
- Graphics package of design elements (such as logos, paint colors, and instructions)
- Reusable script worksheets and design templates for local content.
- Six 1-hour Zoom call training sessions spread out over the first year.
- 10 hours of one-on-one consultation time from Smithsonian staff.



Pitmaster Ed Mitchell from The Pit in Raleigh, North Carolina, rotates a whole hog at The Big Apple Barbeque Block Party in June 2008. Photo by Wally Gobetz, Flickr: CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The cost for the package is \$1000 with a \$250 discount for venues that have hosted a Museum on Main Street exhibition in the past. Local production costs for exhibitions are the responsibility of venues and are expected to start at around \$3000. However, venue costs will vary greatly depending on selected design components, chosen materials, and labor cost associated with production.

Exhibition Starter Kits are provided digitally, including a series of virtual training sessions. No on-site, in person Smithsonian and/or Museum on Main Street programming or training is offered with these packages. However, state humanities councils may choose to offer program grants to museums on a case-by-case basis.

## Who is eligible to host the exhibit?

Non-profit organizations, government, and affiliated organizations (museums, historical societies, libraries, preservation groups, downtown development groups or chambers of commerce) located in communities with populations of approximately 20,000 or less are invited to apply.



Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) Research Assistant Kyle Kootswaytewa checks on the health of a black tomato in the IAIA Demonstration Garden, Santa Fe, New Mexico, September 2019.  
Photo by Lance Cheung, USDA

## What are the project participants responsibilities?

The goal is for the project participant to add local content to the exhibition topic that enriches the local experience for the visitors. This happens through display and related educational programming. Organizations will work directly with Smithsonian staff to develop their own local script and exhibition plan and submit each completed phase for approval before proceeding with the next phase.

### During Exhibition development and production, organizations are responsible for:

- Content collection, development and research.
- Creation of the local script and exhibition plan using templates provided by the Smithsonian.
- Keep on track with their own conceptualization and production schedules.
- Fabricate the exhibition utilizing the approved script and exhibition plan.
- Project leaders should attend at least 80% of zoom trainings offered by the Smithsonian.
- Take the lead in submitting required information to the Smithsonian for information and appropriate approvals.

### While the exhibition is open organizations should plan to:

- Ensure the location is handicap accessible, with bathroom facilities for visitors.
- Be open to the public for at least 25 hours per week.
- Not charge a special fee to visit this exhibition in addition to any regular admission fee.
- Implement humanities-based community programs on the theme of the exhibit with the help of a programming committee.
- Ensure public programs serve a broad public audience.
- Have a network of partners in your community and region to promote the exhibit and enhance audience development.
- Organize a committee to support programming related to the exhibition.
- Continue to submit required information about planned public programs, opening and closing dates to the Smithsonian Liaison.

## What are the criteria for selection?

- ❑ **Geography and Organization Size** – Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street is a nationwide program that exists to serve small and underserved communities through exhibitions that highlight local culture and history. Our intent is to serve as many different parts of the country as possible through small organizations.
- ❑ **Project Objectives** – The fit between the starter kit topic and the community’s cultural assets will be an important consideration. Selections will be based on the strength of stated project objectives and a demonstrated relevance to the starter kit framework in a host community, and/or within their organization. Additional consideration will be given to projects with rich humanities-based cultural programming beyond the exhibition.
- ❑ **Collaboration and Support** – Preference will be given to communities that show evidence of a network of organizations collaborating to produce and showcase the exhibit locally. Additional preference will be given to organizations that are providing a letter of support from their state humanities council or other statewide MoMS partners.
- ❑ **Timing and Time Availability** – Venues accepted in the 2023 Cohort are expected to have exhibitions with opening dates any time between October of 2023 and October of 2025. Exhibitions can continue to be on display for any period of time, but not longer than March of 2028.



## How do I become a host organization?

Museum on Main Street is accepting applications through February 15, 2022. Non-profit and government-affiliated organizations interested in being part of the 2023 cohort for Exhibition Starter Kit: FOOD are invited to apply. Exhibitions from this cohort are expected to have an opening date between September of 2023 and September of 2025. Host venue selections for five venues to join the 2023 Cohort will be made by March 15, 2023.

The application on the following pages can be completed digitally and emailed directly to [MOMS@si.edu](mailto:MOMS@si.edu), with “Starter kit FOOD” in the subject line. Organizations are encouraged to contact anyone on the MoMS team to discuss program objectives before submitting their final application. Please attach any supporting documentation to the same email as the application.

Intereste, want more details, or a digital version of the application? Please contact the project director for Exhibition Starter Kits, Selwyn Ramp at [ramps@si.edu](mailto:ramps@si.edu) or 202.633.7711.

# EXHIBITION STARTER KIT: FOOD - APPLICATION

## Geography and Organization:

Name of Host Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Type of host organization:

Museum      Library      Historical Organization / Society      Community Center

School / College      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of paid staff: \_\_\_\_\_, equal to \_\_\_\_\_ full time equivalent (FTE)

Number of volunteer staff: \_\_\_\_\_, equal to \_\_\_\_\_ full time equivalent (FTE)

Total population of your town: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your operating hours? \_\_\_\_\_

Will you have staff or volunteers available to interact with visitors? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the amount of gallery space available for this exhibition (linear ft. and/or square ft.):

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you a former Museum on Main Street host?    YES /    NO

If yes, which exhibition and year you hosted? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Project Objectives:

Describe the core elements of the exhibition you want to create. How will you reflect your community's diversity in your exhibition? Who can best tell those stories? What types of collections do you intend to use in your exhibition (objects, photographs, audio stories, or videos)?

How will you present your content? If you do not already have access to the research or collection items you need to interpret your stories, how will you obtain them (loan, purchase, oral history interviews, videography, etc.)?

What types of humanities-based programming do you intend to create to complement the exhibition?

## **Collaboration and Support:**

What do you hope to achieve by developing this exhibition? Why is coming together over a topic like food important in your community? What community partners do you expect to work with for the development and display of this exhibition and related cultural programming? What type of collaborations do you expect to forge through this project? Are you receiving any support from your state humanities council or other statewide MoMS partners? (Attach any letters of support to the submission email.)

## **Timing:**

Describe your process for developing the exhibition. What is your process for conceptual development? How long do you expect to take to develop content and produce your exhibition? When will you open it to visitors and how long would you keep it on display?

## **Other Thoughts and Comments:**

Is there anything else you want us to consider? Is there anything we forgot to ask?