

Museum on Main Street

Community Assistance Subsidy & Services Allowance (CASSA) Offering Capacity Building Training for MOMS Host Communities

Overview: Museum on Main Street is a partnership between state humanities councils nationwide and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) that provides Smithsonian-quality exhibitions as the basis for locally developed humanities programs in small, rural communities. Since 1994, MOMS has engaged 530 small towns in 39 states. In 2002, the Smithsonian received a congressional appropriation that added \$500,000 to the MOMS budget. This appropriation, which we fully expect to be ongoing, has allowed us, through a contract between SITES and the Federation, to make available Community Assistance Subsidies (CAS) to support legacy building activities at the local level. These subsidies are provided in the second and third years of each tour and have amounted to around \$3,000 per state per year, although the amount is determined by availability of funds.

Program Changes: This program has been modified and expanded to offer funding *and services* geared specifically to provide capacity building training for local host communities. Beginning with the 2008 tours*, these funds may no longer be used for regrant, promotion or shipping expenses. Assuming continuation of the federal appropriation, a **Community Assistance Subsidy and Services Allowance (CASSA)** will be offered to councils beginning in 2007. Councils will be asked to consider how these resources can make the largest impact for their local hosts and may select from one or more of the training opportunities listed below. MOMS will reimburse state councils for approved CASSA expenditures, up to the amount allocated for the second and third year of their tour. The amount allocated will be determined each year, based on availability of funds.

**As part of the transition into this new program format, councils participating in the 2007 tours will be able to utilize the Community Assistance Subsidy they will receive in 2007 according to the previously existing guidelines, but we encourage them to consider targeting these funds for capacity building training as outlined here. However, their process for requesting and receiving the funds in 2007 will be as described below.*

Procedures & Timeframe:

- In January of each year, participating councils will be notified of the amount of their CASSA allowance for the year.
- Once a state coordinator has determined how they wish to utilize their Community Assistance Subsidy & Services Allowance, they will contact their MOMS project liaison for initial approval. They will be asked to complete Part I of a CASSA Request and Report form (provided earlier and also available at the state coordinator notebook section of the MOMS web site at www.museumonmainstreet.org) and submit it to the MOMS Co-Director/State Councils, LuAnn Kern for approval by April 1st.
- After the training is conducted, (ideally sometime between February and November) they will need to complete Part II of the same form and submit it, along with appropriate documentation of all expenditures by December 1st so that reimbursement funds can be disbursed within the contract year. MOMS will reimburse the state council for all approved expenses up to the amount allocated for that year.
- A council may not carry over their unspent CASSA allowance from one year into the next; any unspent funds will be returned to the CASSA "general pool" for redistribution to participating

states the following year.

If you have questions regarding the appropriate use of your Community Assistance Subsidies & Services Allowance, contact your MOMS project liaison or LuAnn Kern at 517-242-8005 / luannkern@comcast.net or Carol Harsh at 202-465-5267 / harshc@si.edu.

CASSA Capacity Building Training Opportunities:

- **MOMS Workshop Bureau:** State coordinators may invite one or more presenter(s) from the MOMS Workshop Bureau (see attached information) to do training at their program planning meeting, installation workshop, other project meetings or in the individual host communities. CASSA would be used to reimburse state councils for honoraria, travel expenses and material costs for the presenter(s).

- **In-State Expertise:** State coordinators may wish to hire in-state museum professional(s) to provide training for their local hosts. They may opt to utilize the PowerPoint presentations and related materials from the MOMS Workshop Bureau programs to do training, in which case, such trainers would use the materials provided as the basis for their presentations, but supplement it with their own experiences and state/local examples. Or, a state council may desire to have an in-state museum professional do a training on a different topic. CASSA would be used to reimburse state councils for honoraria, travel expenses and material costs for presenter(s).

- **In-State Expertise/Site Visits:** State coordinators may elect to contract with a museum professional or extend the contract with their project scholar to provide for *additional* site visits and consultations to assist local hosts in researching and developing their local exhibitions or in strengthening some other aspect of their operations. CASSA would be used to reimburse state councils for honoraria and travel expenses for these consultations.

- **Statewide Conferences and Training Opportunities:** State coordinators may wish to use their CASSA allowance to support local host participation in state or regional conferences or professional development opportunities related to the MOMS exhibition. For example, this may include sending local project directors to a state museum association training or to a state or regional conference on a topic related to the theme of the exhibition. CASSA could be used to reimburse state councils for registration fees and travel costs for participants.

- **Other Ideas:** State coordinators may have other ideas for providing training for their local hosts. If so, we encourage you to discuss these ideas with your MOMS project liaison.