

## Exhibition Description:

With their hands and minds hard at work and sweat on their brows, American workers perform a diverse array of jobs to power our society. Office workers, factory workers, homemakers, truckers, soldiers and the millions more who keep the nation going through their work make great contributions not only to industry, but also to American culture.

*The Way We Worked*, adapted from an original exhibition developed by the National Archives, explores how work became such a central element in American culture by tracing the many changes that affected the workforce and work environments. The exhibition draws from the Archives' rich photographic collections covering more than 150 years to tell this compelling story. Why, where, and how do we work? What value does work have to individuals and communities? What does our work tell others about us?

The exhibition will offer multiple interpretive opportunities for visitors through large graphics, along with relevant objects. Through audio components and photo flipbooks, hear from workers their own stories about with changes in their industries, coping with new tools and technologies, and confronting workplace challenges. Follow workers into their workplaces through films of various industries. Interactive components will introduce visitors to the experiences of multiple generations of families involved in the same work. A companion website will invite host communities to create online exhibitions on their local work history and for visitors to share their own work experiences.



## Sample Humanities Programs and Local Activities:

The exhibition will spark a variety of public humanities programs including local exhibitions that focus on the history of local businesses, agricultural work, and work at home, including memorabilia, work clothing and photographs; local exhibitions and discussions that examine prominent industries and their impact on the growth and settlement of local communities; oral history and research collecting the stories of workers, reflecting on the rapid growth of industries and technologies during the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and examinations of the historical and societal aspects of work as depicted in film, literature, and music.

## Curator:

*The Way We Worked* is organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) and is adapted from an original exhibition developed by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The exhibition curator is Dr. Bruce Bustard, senior curator, National Archives and Records Administration.

**Funders:**

*The Way We Worked* is part of Museum on Main Street, a direct collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and state humanities councils nationwide. Support for Museum on Main Street is provided by the United States Congress.

**Contents and Crates:**

Exhibition consists of five free-standing sections, with video, audio and interactive components, along with artifacts mounted in cases and exhibition banners. Requires 650 square feet of floor space, plus additional space for local exhibitions and components. Crate quantity and weight to be determined.

**Availability to State Humanities Councils:**

Exhibitions available for tours beginning in September 2011.

**Administrative Resources:**

- State and local coordinator manuals featuring program development strategies, exhibition script, installation instructions, sample budgets/contracts and other support materials. Materials provided in hard copy and available online at [www.museumonmainstreet.org](http://www.museumonmainstreet.org)
- Museum on Main Street listserv for project questions and opportunities for networking and project development.
- Experienced MoMS team members assigned to each state to provide advice and assistance in all areas of program development and tour coordination.

**Workshops and Meetings:**

- National MoMS Orientation Webinar – First-time state council coordinators to meet with Smithsonian project directors in advance of the exhibition tour
- National *The Way We Worked* Content and Planning Meeting – State council coordinator meets with project organizers, exhibition curator, and other participating state councils in advance of the tour to discuss exhibition themes and identify ways to enhance the exhibition at the state level.
- State Planning Workshop – State council gathers together all host communities and partners to discuss exhibition content and its relationship to local heritage, identify needs for host communities, and brainstorm on local programmatic and interpretive possibilities. SITES will provide enhanced presentation materials and support for bringing in relevant content and program expertise.
- State Installation Workshop – Smithsonian MoMS personnel co-host a workshop at the site of the exhibition's tour opening for all in-state participating venues for training in the installation and care of the exhibition.

**Public Relations/Marketing:**

- Full participation in national publicity efforts by the Smithsonian, including relevant social media
- Smithsonian web page, at [www.museumonmainstreet.org](http://www.museumonmainstreet.org), featuring each state's itinerary and links to each state humanities council
- Project press kit: national press release, digital press images, and news releases for local use
- Promotional materials featuring council name and/or logo – poster, postcard, flyer, and one outdoor color banner

**Fundraising Resources:**

- Foundation proposal template and, as required, letters of support from SITES and exhibition curator
- Opportunities to provide underwriting credit on exhibition's title panel.

**Educational Materials:**

- Take-away brochure for exhibition visitors
- Lesson plan links available online at [www.museumonmainstreet.org](http://www.museumonmainstreet.org)
- Docent training guide