

Museum on Main Street

OVERVIEW

Project Scholars and State Committees

Project Scholars

Your state humanities council is expected to use one or more project scholars in the implementation of Museum on Main Street in your state. Depending on the exhibition topic and the council's and the venues' interests one or more scholars may be chosen in any number of diverse fields of the humanities.

The overarching intention of using a project scholar is to help local venues with the development of locally-based ancillary exhibitions, community activities and public educational programs that expand on the Smithsonian exhibition's central themes. In order to avoid the project being overly packaged and "top-down," it is critical that venues take direct ownership of the project. Ideally, the state project scholar is essential to this process, working hand-in-hand with local organizers to craft exhibitions and activities that are expressions of their unique history and experience.

In addition, project scholars have been used by participant councils in a wide variety of ways, as lecturers at exhibition openings, to develop educational resources for teachers/students, as contributors to state-based websites, as authors of exhibition-related essays for academic journals and state council newsletters, and even as frequent respondents to statewide media. A sample state contract with a scholar is available [here](#).

State Committees

A growing number of participating humanities councils establish statewide committees in year one of the MOMS project to help with various aspects of implementation. For instance, *Barn Again!* exhibition hosts frequently partner with architectural preservation groups and agricultural agencies; *Produce for Victory* sponsoring councils sometimes take on experts in oral history, and partner with WWII veterans groups; with *Yesterday's Tomorrows*, school teachers, futurists and high-tech agencies are likely state committee members, and councils bringing *Key Ingredients* to their states may seek alliances with folklorists and restaurant associations. In addition to these topically connected partners, state committee members that know and care about the welfare of small museums are likely participants; these folks are easily found among state museum associations, field services offices of state historical societies, and at travel and tourism agencies. But taking on project partners such as these clearly has its benefits and obstacles: obviously the project's impact is broadened and local venues benefit from additional program resources, but credit must be shared and in-state fund raising must be coordinated. We suggest that you consult with your peers on the MOMS listserv as you develop a state committee.