



Crossroads Planning Checklist

□ Create and Submit Budget

HK provides \$2,000 in support for the development of a companion exhibit, public programs, and some publicity and promotions.

_____ Budget is submitted to HK at least 6 weeks before the exhibit arrives to your site. You must submit a budget in order to receive the \$2,000. You may request your funds when you are ready to start purchasing supplies for programs and exhibit materials. *See page 13 for instructions on how to request your \$2,000 funds.*

_____ Process in place to track local contributions.

□ Establish Committees – *6-12 months before opening*

_____ **Community Partners:** Strong community partnerships make *Crossroads* a success. Reach out to local organizations to collaborate with you on your *Crossroads* project for program planning, publicity, volunteers, and exhibition development. Suggestions include: tourism organizations, school districts, service organizations, libraries, museums, community pride organizations, and more. Meet early with your local Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, or tourism organization. Brainstorm ways to put together itineraries for out-of-town visitors.

_____ **Docents:** Many visitors prefer guided tours of exhibitions. Plan ahead to create docent scripts and provide personable and energetic docents to lead guided tours for adults and school children.

_____ **Local Exhibit:** A strong exhibit highlighting a significant person, group of people, or event that is both unique to your local history and related to the national story of the way changes transform and shape rural life.

_____ **School Programs:** Often teachers will want to take advantage of this unique opportunity. Contact your school district early to brainstorm ideas. Other youth programs may be appropriate depending on the time of year, including daycares, summer camps, home school networks, Scout groups, 4-H, or other youth group/summer programs.

_____ **Publicity and Promotion:** Develop your marketing plan: Will you purchase ads? What social media platforms will you use? Will you print flyers or banners? Now is the time to secure ad space, design ads, and plan your publicity timeline.

_____ **Special Events:** Make arrangements for special events related to your exhibition – plan your events calendar, book speakers, coordinate supplies, etc. HK also provides two public programs to *Crossroads* host site organizations via the *Crossroads Conversations* program catalog – speakers, book discussion, film discussion, and reader's theater events. **Note: *Crossroads Conversations* program catalog events are funded through the HK's Speakers Bureau program and do not need to be included in your \$2,000 budget request from HK. *Crossroads Conversations* program catalog coming soon!**

_____ **Grand Opening Event:** Your *Crossroads* exhibition is opening and it's time to go big! Plan an event for your organization to kickoff the exhibition. Contact local officials, legislators, members of Congress, and other local officials to save the dates. Plan entertainment, speakers, and activities to make the event extra-special.

□ **Project Director starts planning programs and exhibits – 6-12 months before opening**

_____ One companion exhibit

**Title:

**HK will need to know the title of your companion exhibit 6-12 prior to the opening.

_____ Two *Crossroads* Conversations program catalog public events scheduled

1.

2.

□ **Develop local exhibit – 3-6 months before opening**

_____ **Story:** What is the story that will be featured in your exhibition? How is it unique to your community? Create an exhibition that tells an engaging and visually compelling story of rural life in your community with photographs, graphics, artifacts, and labels.

_____ **Hands-on components:** Creating activities that families can do while viewing the exhibit is encouraged.

_____ **Photographs:** What photographs and images help tell your rural story? Select photos to enlarge and mount for display.

_____ **Artifacts:** What unique objects help tell your community's story related to rural life?

_____ **Secure Artifact Loans:** Will a community member or another organization be loaning you an artifact to display in your exhibition? Make sure you have them fill out loan paperwork when they drop off the item.

_____ **Plan Cases, Panels, and Mounts:** How will you display your artifacts? Will anything need to be built for the exhibition?

_____ **Graphic Identity:** What colors, fonts, or graphics will tie together the information in your display? Will you work with a graphic designer or do everything in-house?

_____ **Create and Submit Budget:** HK provides \$2,000 in support for the development of the companion exhibit, public programs, and some publicity and promotions.

_____ Budget is submitted to HK at least **6 weeks** before the exhibit arrives to your site.

_____ Process in place to track local contributions.

□ **Publicity**

HK provides a statewide *Crossroads* brochure promoting all six Smithsonian host communities and the partner sites. In the past, some host organizations have created a community-specific **insert** that highlights local activities to slip **inside** the brochure. HK will also promote the exhibit statewide through press releases and public radio announcements.

Local and regional marketing efforts are the partner site organization's responsibility:

- Facebook ads and boosted posts
- Work with local Chamber, Convention and Visitors Bureau, or local tourism organization to publicize exhibit & programs.
- Continually update local newspaper.
- Publicize on local radio stations.
- Publicize on local cable station.
- Regional newspapers contacted and updated.
- Regional radio stations contacted and updated.
- Stock brochures & flyers at museum(s), art center, senior center, and library.
- Submit information to Farm Bureau newsletter and 4-H Clubs.
- Distribute brochures at local community events.
- Distribute posters, brochures, and flyers to courthouse and local businesses.
- Develop an exhibit website or add a page to your exhibit website and link it to your Chamber or Convention and Visitors Bureau website.
- Contact local bank or grocery store to see if they will insert brochures in bank envelopes or grocery bags.
- Other

Working with Schools – 6-12 months before opening

- Contact superintendent, principals, individual teachers.
- Work with teachers to develop tour that fits curriculum.

Training Docents – 3-6 months before opening

- Recruit volunteers comfortable giving tours to kids and/or adults.
- Recruit coordinator to schedule docents.
- Plan a docent training session before the exhibit opens using docent scripts you have created.

Recruit volunteers to work during the exhibit – 3-6 months before opening

Remember: someone needs to be monitoring the exhibit when your exhibition is open to the public.

- Housekeeping (picking up trash, wiping down surfaces).
- Receptionist/Greeter (this person should also be asked to take attendance and encourage all visitors to fill out the visitor survey form).
- Schedule coordinator (bus tours, school groups, etc).

Finalize event and publicity details – 1 month before opening

- Grand opening plans:
 - Send invitations
 - Plan refreshments
 - Confirm program (entertainment, speakers, special guests)
 - Secure ribbon cutting supplies
 - Invite the media to cover the event
- Follow up with *Crossroads* Conversations program catalog speakers to confirm dates and times

- ___ Put posters/flyers around town
- ___ Send out press release about grand opening

□ **Submit Closing reports – *after the exhibition closes***

*** See After the Exhibition on page 17 ***

___ **Final Expenditure Report.** This report shows HK how the program funds were actually used. You'll need to use exact dollar amounts and note any major changes from the original budget.

___ **Close-out Report.** This close-out report is provided for you in the Exhibition Support Manual. One copy of this report goes to the Smithsonian Institution and once copy is sent to HK.

___ **Visitor Survey.** A summary of the information you collected throughout the run of the exhibition.