



# THE AMERICA 250 | CT MUSEUM MAKEOVER GRANT PROGRAM

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## GUIDELINES

The America 250 | CT Museum Makeover is a grant program designed to help cultural organizations tell new and unique stories about the American Revolution and how the themes of the America 250 | CT Commission reverberate through our nation's history. The outcome should improve the visitor experience through a deeper and richer understanding and appreciation of the themes of the American Revolution and increase their understanding of the people, places, issues, and stories facing our communities so we can both learn from the past and make progress to a better future. Proposed projects can include exhibitions; orientation galleries; interpretive spaces, such as period rooms in historic house museums; or accessibility improvements, such as creating bilingual content, and developing new tools for improved visual, auditory, and physical access (these components should meet the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act). The project should support at least one of the America 250 | CT themes: Tell Inclusive Stories, Power of Place, Doing History, and For the Common Good. More information on these themes can be found on the America 250 | CT website - <https://ct250.org/about/themes/>. America 250 | CT has also created a Planning Guide that provides assistance in developing new and unique projects -- <https://ct250.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/America-250-CT-Planning-Guide.pdf>.

Successful applicants will receive two free site visits from a curatorial project manager who will work with the institution's paid and unpaid staff throughout the grant period to implement their project. Paid and unpaid staff at these cultural organizations will be actively involved in all phases of Museum Makeover and will work closely with their assigned curatorial project manager to implement recommendations. Each participating institution will also receive up to \$5,600 to help cover the costs of upgrading or creating exhibition and interpretive areas. This funding can be used for curatorial consultants, graphic designer, exhibit designer, exhibit fabrication and production, and exhibit installation.

### 1.1 WHO CAN APPLY

An applicant organization must:

- Be incorporated in the state of Connecticut for at least one year as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization governed by a board of directors that meets regularly OR be a municipality in the state of Connecticut OR be a Connecticut-based federally or State recognized tribe.
- Provide significant programs and/or services to the public on a regular basis, including open hours and special events; or function as a professional service organization that supports humanities program providers.
- Be in compliance with all terms and conditions of previous Connecticut Humanities grants.
- Must either own or have responsibility to care for, interpret, and present collections, interpretive content, and/or cultural knowledge and traditions to the public, vis a vis thematic exhibitions.

The following are not eligible for funding:

- For-profit organizations
- Individuals
- Agencies of the state of Connecticut, including state universities, state parks and state historic sites
- Organizations not in compliance with terms and conditions of previous Connecticut Humanities grants

## 1.2 MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

No cash or in-kind match is required.

## 1.3 PROJECT DURATION AND PROJECT WORKPLAN

Successful applicants to the Museum Makeover grant program will receive notification in March 2025 and the project must be completed by October 30, 2025. No extensions are allowed.

Successful applicants will be required to agree to a project workplan at the start of the grant in March 2025 in order to help them stay on schedule, meet deadlines, and complete their projects by October 30, 2025

Institutions can only have one (1) Museum Makeover per grant cycle. Preference will be given to organizations that have not received a Museum Makeover in a previous grant cycle.

## 1.4 APPLICATION DEADLINE SCHEDULE

Applications are due by 11:59pm on January 22, 2025. Award notifications are made in March 2025.

## 1.5 HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted using [Connecticut Humanities' online grant portal](#). Before applying, organizations must contact Conservation ConneCTion director, Kathy Craughwell-Varda, [CSL.ConservationConnection@ct.gov](mailto:CSL.ConservationConnection@ct.gov), to discuss their grant application. We are eager to help you submit a strong application and are available to review draft applications received at least two weeks before the grant deadline.

## 1.6 EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUSLY FUNDED MUSEUM MAKEOVERS

In determining your project for The America 250 | CT Museum Makeover, consider the scope of projects below that highlight the types of projects that could be funded by a grant.

- **Tell New Stories:** Introduce new stories to existing house tours and exhibits that highlight the unique experiences of people whose stories are often untold.

- **Install Outdoor Exhibition:** Provide a visitor experience when your site is closed through outdoor exhibit panels along walking paths that share information about your site and what makes it unique.
- **Create Orientation Gallery:** Create an orientation gallery for historic house museums to inform visitors and provide interactive graphics where visitors can indicate their level of interest in different topics.
- **Install New Exhibit:** Use existing research and objects from the collection to create an interpretive exhibit, including banners with descriptive text, enlarged photographs, and/or illustrations.
- **Enrich Existing Exhibit:** Research and write text panels and object labels to be added to an existing exhibit and hire graphic designer and production company to create visually dynamic exhibit components.
- **Update Exhibit Content:** Create a new introduction, including text panels and new case layouts with object labels, to existing permanent exhibit to engage visitors and introduce them to themes in the exhibit.
- **Provide Greater Accessibility:** Add bilingual content to new or existing content. Create exhibition elements that serve audience members with visual, auditory, and/or physical needs.

America 250 | CT Museum Makeover is a program of Conservation ConneCTion and the America 250 | CT state commission, administered by CT Humanities (CTH), with funding provided by the Connecticut State Department of Economic and Community Development/Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) from the Connecticut State Legislature.