



Smithsonian  
Institution

## The Smithsonian's *Voices and Votes* exhibit is coming to Michigan in 2021

Apply today to become a host site!

Visit [www.michiganhumanities.org](http://www.michiganhumanities.org) by July 16, 2020

### About the Exhibition



When American revolutionaries waged a war for independence they took a leap of faith that sent ripple effects across generations. They embraced a radical idea of establishing a government that entrusted the power of the nation not in a monarchy, but in its citizens. That great leap sparked questions that continue to impact Americans: who has the right to vote, what are the freedoms and responsibilities of citizens, and whose voices will be heard? *Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* will be a springboard for discussions about those very questions and how they are reflected in local stories.

*Voices and Votes* is based on a major exhibition currently on display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. This Museum on Main Street adaptation will have many of the same dynamic features: historical and contemporary photos; educational and archival video; engaging multimedia interactives with short games and additional footage, photos, and information; and historical objects like campaign souvenirs, voter memorabilia, and protest material.

Our democracy demands action, reaction, vision, and revision as we continue to question how to form "a more perfect union." How do you participate as a citizen? From the revolution and suffrage, to civil rights and casting ballots, everyone in every community is part of this ever-evolving story—the story of democracy in America.



## How to Become a Host Site

Michigan Humanities (MH) invites museums, libraries, and other nonprofit cultural organizations to apply.

Eligible applicants will:

- Be located in a community with a population below 20,000.
- Identify a staff member to serve as project director for the exhibit and related programs.
- Provide a minimum of 700 square feet of climate-controlled, secure exhibit space with an additional space for crate storage.
- Work within guidelines to install and de-install the exhibit in a timely manner.
- Collaborate with community partners to develop robust public humanities programs that support the exhibit, including an opening event, two programs, and a complementary local exhibit.
- Conduct an extensive public relations campaign to ensure widespread community participation.
- Track attendance, maintain budget records, submit assessment forms, and submit final program reports.
- Have convenient hours that are free and open to the public.
- Send two staff or board members to a Program Meeting in Lansing in October, 2020 and an Installation Workshop at the first host site in March, 2021.

## Voices & Votes Host Sites Receive

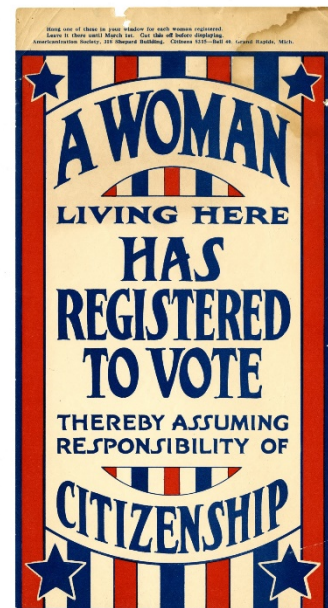
- The exhibit, rent free, for six weeks.
- Free exhibit shipping.
- Opportunity to apply for a MH grant to support local programming.
- Resource notebook, educational materials, and promotional materials.
- Program planning assistance from MH and Smithsonian staff.
- Access to a statewide network of experts for consultation, presentations, and for facilitated conversations.

## Voices and Votes Exhibition Content

The exhibition will explore historic events and pose questions for today in the following content area:

**The Great Leap:** Examine the context and main controversies behind America's democratic system. Learn the stories of our famous founders and those who remain mostly unknown. What were the principles and events that inspired the writers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution? Just how revolutionary was our new democracy led by the people? And who were "the people?"

**A Vote, A Voice:** We have a diverse body of voters today, but not every American has always had the right to vote. The fight for fair representation, suffrage, and a voice at the polls has meant struggle and changes to laws ever since our founding. Learn about these struggles, how voting was expanded, and continued challenges to voting.



**The Machinery of Democracy:** We participate in the political system through state and national parties, nomination conventions, and stumping for our candidate of choice. Learn about this machinery of democracy, how it calls us to be involved, but can also control how we get information about candidates and issues.

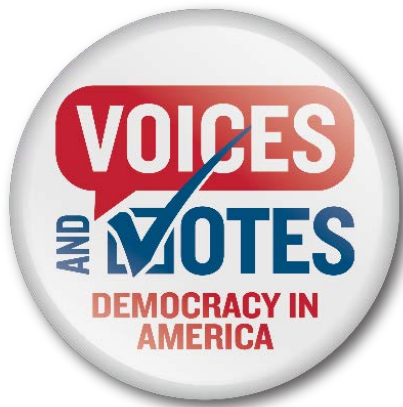
**Beyond the Ballot:** Americans fight against injustice. Men and women of every ethnicity, class, and state have shared in the revolutionary spirit of rising up and speaking out. The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees this right to peaceably assemble and petition the government. See the different places and different motivations of diverse Americans to petition for their interests and concerns.

**Creating Citizens:** Who are “We the People?” What is the meaning of citizenship? Ever since the creation of the Constitution, Americans continue to interpret, expand, and shape the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen. Explore how those views of rights and responsibilities have shaped our national identity and our complex national story

### **Voices and Votes will be available during the following time period**

- Site One: March 27 – May 9, 2021
- Site Two: May 15 – June 27, 2021
- Site Three: July 3 – August 15, 2021
- Site Four: August 21 – October 3, 2021
- Site Five: October 9 – November 21, 2021
- Site Six: November 27 – January 9, 2022

### **Bring the Smithsonian to your hometown!**



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#### **Questions?**

Contact Director of Grants, James Nelson, at 517-372-7770 or [jnelson@mihumanities.org](mailto:jnelson@mihumanities.org)