

# SPARK!

# PLACES OF INNOVATION

The Smithsonian's *Spark! Places of Innovation* exhibit is coming to Michigan in 2023

Application Deadline: June 23, 2022



## About the Exhibit:

*Spark! Places of Innovation* explores the unique combination of places, people, and circumstances that sparks innovation and invention in rural communities. Inspired by an exhibition at the National Museum of American History, this traveling exhibition features stories gathered from diverse communities across the nation. Photographs, engaging interactives, objects, videos, and augmented reality bring a multilayered experience to reveal the leaders, challenges, successes, and future of innovation in each town. Technical, social, cultural, or artistic—every sort of innovation story is as unique as each community and will be represented in *Spark! Places of Innovation*.

*Spark!* will be the springboard for diverse local programming in the humanities, sciences, and arts. Visitors will be inspired to learn about how innovation has shaped their own communities and how they may be innovators themselves. This exhibition will be an opportunity for community members to come together in conversation around their community's history, present, and future with innovation.

Michigan Humanities is coordinating the exhibit's tour throughout Michigan and is seeking six partner organizations to host *Spark!* Selected sites will host the Smithsonian exhibit, work with local partners in their community, and create additional programming to support the exhibit.

## Host sites receive:

- The exhibit rent free for 6 weeks.
- Free exhibit shipping.
- Opportunity to apply for up to a \$2,000 grant to support local programming.  
*More funding and program opportunities may become available.*
- Resources including educational and promotional materials.
- Program planning assistance from Michigan Humanities and Smithsonian staff.
- Access to a statewide network of experts for consultation, presentations, and programming.

## How to Become a Host Site:

Michigan Humanities invites museums, libraries, nature centers, and other nonprofit cultural organizations to apply.

### Eligible applicants must:

- 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 650 square feet of climate controlled, secure exhibit space.
- Exhibit spaces must have strong internet connectivity.
- Have a minimum of 100 square feet of storage space for large shipping crates.
- Work within guidelines to install and de-install the exhibit in the time frames provided.
- 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 2 staff members to Okemos, MI, in October 2022 for an all-day in-person training AND an Installation Workshop at the first host site May 18 & 19, 2023.

### Applicants are encouraged to:

- Collaborate with community partners to develop robust programs that support the exhibit which can include an opening event, multiple programs throughout the duration of the exhibit, and the creation of a complimentary local exhibit.
- Conduct a public relations or marketing campaign to ensure widespread community participation.

### What's Included:

- Stand alone exhibit kiosks and panels.
- Photographs, text panels, and objects.
- Audio and video clips.
- Hands-on activities.
- Exhibition support materials.

### Available Dates:

**Site 1** May 19 to July 1, 2023

**Site 2** July 8 to August 19, 2023

**Site 3** August 26 to October 7, 2023

**Site 4** October 14 to November 25, 2023

**Site 5** December 2, 2023 to January 13, 2024

**Site 6** January 20 to March 2, 2024



Photo by Mehrdad Zarifkar, 2017



Photo by USDA



## Questions?

Contact Ashley Ross, Director of Programs  
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