

Rationale

Capacity building opportunities for Museum on Main Street (MoMS) hosts are an integral part of the MoMS program. Under the watchful eye of state humanities councils, capacity building training maximizes the MoMS experience for host venues. This training enables small historical organizations to raise the quality of local program initiatives, educational activities, and locally developed exhibitions related to the MoMS exhibit; and leaves a lasting legacy of enhanced museum practices in host organizations. Councils that agree to provide capacity building training are eligible to earn up to 100 credits that can be used to reduce their overall participation fee by up to \$4,000.

In order to be eligible for this fee reduction, councils must support one or more of the following project outcome options:

- Enhance host organization's development of a complementary exhibition focused on local history and culture and/or the presentation of the MoMS exhibition through local collection activities;
- Strengthen public programs and/or educational activities provided by the host organizations to add a local component to the MoMS exhibition;
- Reinforce host organizations' ability to use technology and/or social media to record and/or present local history and culture to complement the MoMS exhibition;

In addition to one or more of the above options, host organizations may also elect to provide training to increase professional capacity or address current organizational limitations. Similarly, council participation in the MoMS National Planning Meeting enhances the capacity of the council to successfully participate in the MoMS program and can therefore be included in the Capacity Building Training Plan.

Capacity Building Training Plan

When developing a Capacity Building Training Plan, councils are encouraged to provide needed assistance where it is most likely to benefit local hosts. This assistance should complement and extend program support already offered to host communities by state humanities councils. Councils are encouraged to consult with host communities to identify their needs. Many host venues express the desire to learn more about a wide range of topics, such as: collecting oral histories; developing interpretive exhibitions; digitizing collections for web use; developing promotional websites; training volunteers to be good docents; discovering new ways to engage teachers and students; participating in AASLH's Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations (StEPs); and developing better grant writing skills.

A council's plan to provide capacity building training for host venues is shared with the MoMS staff by using the Capacity Building Training Form found on the MoMS website. The plan should briefly identify the need for training and describe the "who, what, when, and where" for training activities and how training will enhance host organizations' presentation of the MoMS exhibition, locally produced exhibitions, or public humanities programs.

Schedule for Training Credits

Councils may earn up to 100 credits for capacity building activities. The schedule for various types of training that councils may offer in order to earn credits is listed below:

- **Attendance at the MoMS National Planning Meeting (10 credits)**
Credits are awarded for council participation in a National Planning Meeting prior to hosting the MoMS exhibition.
- **Consultation (8 credits per community served)**
Credits are awarded for council-sponsored and initiated one-on-one consultations by scholars, content specialists, technical experts or other professional mentors to assist host organizations develop local exhibitions; story collection activities; work with teachers and students; or plan public programs.
- **Special projects, equipment or materials (not to exceed 20 credits)**
Credits can be received for council purchases of equipment for use in special projects, oral history initiatives, websites, podcasts, etc. that allow host organizations to collect, digitize, and share stories and collections for the Stories from Main Street web initiative or for another web-based project or for a locally developed exhibition that complements a MoMS exhibition. Councils should consult with MoMS staff prior to applying for credits in this category to determine the number of credits allowable for a particular item. The review committee will make the final decision on credits awarded for an activity.
- **Professional development opportunities (8 credits per community)**
Credits are awarded for council support paid to subsidize participation by representatives of local hosts in conferences, networking opportunities, or other training provided by state and/or regional museum associations or other professional organizations that relate to and enhance the goals of the MoMS project.
- **Training Workshop (15 credits for one-day workshop or 30 credits for a two-day workshop, plus 8 credits for each scholar, content specialist or technical expert drawn from outside the council staff)**
Credits are received for organizing program planning or installation workshops, or other training workshops, if training is conducted that pertains to at least one of the project outcomes listed above. Additional credits may be received for providing scholars, content specialists, technical experts or other museum professionals to enhance or expand the scope of the workshop. These activities must utilize specialists and provide training that would not otherwise be part of a typical MoMS program planning or installation workshop.
- **Evaluation meeting (15 credits)**
Councils can receive credits for hosting an evaluation meeting or focus group about a MoMS project to help councils strengthen relationships with small museums.

Councils may submit a training plan that includes more than 100 credits, but extra credits will not increase the fee reduction beyond \$4,000. Councils may use any extra credits built into a training plan as a substitute for any planned activities that do not take place in order to ensure that their total credit balance remains at or above 100 credits. In the event that a training plan includes less than the allotted 100 credits, the fee reduction will be based on a rate of 1 credit equals \$40.

Ineligible Activities for Credits

Please note that credits may not be earned for the following:

- Food (including catering) and entertainment
- Capital improvement projects
- Fundraising
- Shipping
- Statewide publicity or advertising
- Salaries of employees
- Travel expenses
- Sensitive equipment such as firearms or explosives
- Computers or other equipment with a life expectancy of more than two years or that is earmarked for management or administrative purposes

Review of Capacity Building Training Plan

To ensure a high standard of excellence for this capacity building program, training plans provided by councils are evaluated by an outside panel of museum professionals and state humanities council staff. Panel members serve for one year and preside over two review cycles. The committee convenes in December and July to review plans submitted by councils during each cycle. Training plans are evaluated using the following criteria:

- Effective use of funding to accomplish stated needs
- A well thought out and articulated training plan, timeline, and anticipated credits
- Clarity of intended outcomes

Councils will be notified by SITES of the results of the review process promptly, and proposals requiring revision or additional work shall be returned with comments and suggestions. The review committee may elect to approve only a portion of or the entire training plan presented. Once approved, the Capacity Building Training Plan will become the “Approved Plan” and will indicate the number of credits requested by the council and approved by the review committee.

Required Documentation and Final Report

Within one month of the close of the MoMS exhibition, councils must submit a final detailed report describing all training activities, as well as evidence of the impact and the benefit to the host organization(s). The report must include such items as meeting agendas, participant lists, and other documentation gathered to evaluate the success of the training activity and that indicates the impact it had at the local level.

The final report must include a listing of all training activities completed by the council and the credits earned up to 100, as outlined in the Approved Plan. This final report will be filed with all other project materials from the state, and kept in the office of Museum on Main Street’s Director.

Original receipts for scholar consultation fees, meeting expenses, travel (boarding pass and ticket receipt document), lodging, and other expenses must be kept on file by the council as backup documentation in the event that MoMS is audited and additional information is needed.

Checklist:

- Council signs an exhibition contract and commits to providing Capacity Building Training to earn up to 100 credits to qualify for a reduced total participation fee of \$5,000 or \$6,500;
- No later than one year before exhibition opening, council develops the Capacity Building Training Plan and submits the planning document to MoMS;
- Capacity building training plans are reviewed by the Review Committee in December and July each year. The Review Committee will approve the training plan as well as the number of credits requested by the council;
- Once approved, the Capacity Building Training Plan becomes the Approved Plan and can be implemented;
- Upon completion of training, council submits a report to MoMS staff documenting impact on host communities, schedule of training, and an itemization of credits earned.
- Councils that are unable to complete all elements of an approved Capacity Training Plan should contact their MoMS liaison to amend the plan to preserve the credit balance.

The MoMS team is always available to help council staff determine what best suits the goals of the program and share ideas about how other councils have provided successful training that benefit host organizations. To discuss “best practices” in capacity building training, please contact Carol Harsh, HarshC@si.edu; 202-465-5267 or 202-633-5333.