**America 250-Ohio Grants program**

**Fall 2024**

The countdown is on to the 250th anniversary of the United States, and Ohio is getting ready!

The Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial (America 250-Ohio) is launching a new round of grants specifically for locally-designated “America 250-Ohio Communities.” These grants will assist with activities being planned at the county, city, village and township levels.

Not yet an America 250-Ohio Community? Please ensure your community is designated prior to December 31, 2024, to be eligible for these grants of up to $5,000. Every grant application **must** include a letter of support from the local government entity (village, township, city, or county). To learn more about your local community being designated as an “America 250-Ohio Community,” please visit <https://america250-ohio.org/communities>.

***What we’re looking for*:**

Please note this grant cycle is different from the two previous America 250-Ohio grant opportunities. The Commission is looking for activities that are aligned with and complementary to America 250-Ohio programs and projects described below.

This third round of grants will focus on two broad categories - **Storytelling** and **Education** (*Next Generation Citizens*).

The goal of this round of grants is to fund local activations that are supplemental to the programs that America 250-Ohio is producing statewide and to further the reach of America 250-Ohio-related educational programming more broadly into all 88 Ohio counties. Ohio Humanities is partnering with America 250-Ohio to help manage the grants program and assist applicants as needed.

***Criteria for consideration:***

* Awardees must be a registered AM250-OH Community by December 31, 2024.
	+ For instructions on how to become a registered community please visit our website at <https://america250-ohio.org/communities>.
* Projects should align to one or both of two specific categories:
	+ **Storytelling**
	+ **Education** (what America 250-Ohio calls *Next Generation Citizens*)
* Greater consideration will be given to smaller communities and counties that did not receive funding in either of the first two America 250-Ohio grant cycles.
* Period of Performance: April 1, 2025, through August 31, 2026
* One grant application per community. If there are multiple organizations within a community that would like to apply for a grant, we encourage developing a single collaborative application. The application must include a letter from the local government entity in support of the project.
* The applicant may be the local government entity applying or a nonprofit organization in good standing that is involved in the grant project.

***Grant amounts:***

* Grants in the amount of $5,000 will be awarded to up to 55 communities.
* A total of $250,000 - $275,000 is expected to be awarded.
* Matching funds are not required.

***Storytelling Initiative Activations:***

* Heritage Trees

The Heritage Trees activation encourages communities to plant trees that symbolize local history and culture. Each tree becomes a living monument, with plaques or QR codes providing stories about significant events, people, or traditions associated with that location. This initiative fosters environmental stewardship while deepening connections to local heritage, ensuring that these stories live on for future generations.

* Honoring Veterans

This activation pays tribute to all veterans by collecting and sharing their stories, organizing events, and creating memorials that highlight their contributions. Communities can host ceremonies, establish markers, and involve local schools in learning about and preserving the legacy of those who served. The goal is to ensure that the sacrifices and heroism of veterans are never forgotten.

* Honoring Revolutionary War Veterans

Focused on Revolutionary War veterans, this activation involves researching and sharing the stories of those who fought for America's independence. It encourages communities to identify and commemorate gravesites, host re-enactments, and create educational programs that teach the historical significance of these individuals. This ensures these patriots’ pivotal roles in shaping the nation are remembered.

* Telling Local History Stories (including little-known or under-told stories)

This activation seeks to uncover and celebrate lesser-known or under-told stories from local history. Communities are encouraged to document and share these narratives through various mediums, including exhibits, digital archives, or storytelling events. By spotlighting diverse and overlooked aspects of local heritage, this initiative enriches the broader understanding of community identity.

* 12 Monthly Themes for 2026

The [12 Monthly Themes](https://america250-ohio.org/2026-celebration-themes/) activation offers a structured way to engage communities in storytelling throughout the year with the designated America 250-Ohio Themes. Each month focuses on a different theme related to local or national history, encouraging events, educational programs, and public displays. This consistent, thematic approach helps keep history alive and relevant, fostering continuous community engagement. For more information about each of the themes, please visit our website: <https://america250-ohio.org/2026-celebration-themes/>.

***Next Generation Citizens Initiative Activations:***

* Judicial/Judiciary Process Exploration

The Judicial/Judiciary Process Exploration activation encourages communities to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the justice system and landmark court cases related to Ohio. Through interactive experiences like mock trials, courthouse tours, and discussions with legal professionals, students learn about the judicial process and its significance in a democratic society. This initiative aims to develop informed citizens who understand and appreciate the rule of law.

* iCivics Ohio Programming

iCivics Ohio activation encourages communities to integrate digital civic education tools into classrooms, helping students learn about government, citizenship, and democracy in an engaging way. Through interactive games, lesson plans, and activities, students explore the workings of the government and their role as citizens. This initiative empowers the next generation to actively participate in civic life with a strong foundation in civics.

* Service-Learning

The Service-Learning activation encourages communities to connect academic learning with community service, allowing students to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts. By participating in projects that address community needs, students develop leadership, critical thinking, and civic responsibility. This initiative bridges the gap between education and community engagement, fostering a sense of citizenship and social responsibility among students.

* History Pass (open to students of any grade)

The History Pass activation encourages communities to provide students with opportunities to explore historical sites and museums, enhancing their understanding of history through experiential learning. Open to students of all grades, this activation offers things like free or discounted access to historical locations and virtual field trips.

* Founding Documents (Northwest Ordinance, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution)

The Founding Documents activation encourages communities to focus on educating students about the key texts that shaped American democracy, including the Northwest Ordinance, Declaration of Independence, and U.S. Constitution. Through activities such as interactive lessons, debates, and primary source analysis, students gain a deep understanding of the principles and values that underpin the nation. This initiative promotes civic literacy and an appreciation for the foundational ideas of American government.

**Grant Timeline:**

* Application Open: October 15, 2024
* Grants Webinar: October 28, 2024 at noon (will be recorded)
* Application Close: January 31, 2025
* Grant Award Announcements: March 31, 2025
* Period of Performance: April 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026
* Final Report Due from Grant Recipients: September 30, 2026

For questions, please contact our partners at Ohio Humanities:

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