



2025 America250KY Grants Fact Sheet

The Kentucky Historical Society's America250KY 2025 grants aim to improve the programming and sustainability of Kentucky's museums and historic sites as they celebrate and commemorate the 250 years of American history since the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

AMERICA250KY

As the United States prepares a 2026 celebration of the sesquicentennial signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) and partners across the commonwealth are exploring the history of the state from the nation's founding to today.

This commemoration will recognize the people, places, and events over the past 250 years that created our shared history. It will also allow us to examine Kentucky's role in the development of the United States and how our country's ideals of freedom, liberty, and justice have evolved since 1776.

Through educational programs and statewide events and activities, we will celebrate our history while considering what it means to be a Kentuckian.

For more information, visit history.ky.gov/america250ky

THEMES OF AMERICA250KY

The success of this application is based on several factors, including how well the five America250KY themes are included within the project. The themes include:

Revolutionary Experiment

Our founders did not have all the answers. They knew America was a revolutionary experiment and they expected future generations to improve upon their work. The four editions of the Kentucky constitution serve as a prime example of this experiment as people advocated for their inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This



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history is full of both progress and challenges; the theme prompts reflection on Kentucky's and the nation's founding ideals, while encouraging discussions about democracy and civic institutions.

We The People

Since the settlement of Kentucky lands by Native groups, what it means to be a Kentuckian has changed. The definition and process of citizenship has altered drastically over the past 250 years, in both Kentucky and the United States. Today, Kentucky is home to a diverse populations from various backgrounds.

Power of Place

Our environment—both natural and built—shapes our identity. Over the past 250 years, our environment and populace has changed. Today, across the regions of Kentucky, how people identify with the Commonwealth varies. Although our experiences and perspectives vary by region, we all share a common history. This shared history allows us to draw similarities between different places, helping us better understand the past and present.

Crossroads in History

Since 1776, Kentucky has stood at the crossroads of multiple historic movements, from westward expansion, the Civil War, the Trail of Tears, the Underground Railroad, the Great Migration, and more. Moreover, Kentucky's political and cultural output has expanded far beyond the state, influencing our nation's history and broader social trends.

Doing History

By examining state and local history during the 250th, Kentuckians can use the past to understand our roles and responsibilities within our communities. To accomplish this, Kentuckians can visit museums and historic sites and discuss why history is important today. By engaging with history, we become better informed citizens who understand where America has been and where it's going.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following may apply:

Museums in Kentucky, local history organizations, public libraries, educational institutions, applicable government agencies, and 501(c)3 not-for-profit institutions are eligible for grant funds. Those who are NOT eligible include for-profit businesses or private individuals.

Criteria

Examples of eligible projects include:

- Meaningful programs that commemorate state and local history on or around July 4, 2026
- Research
- Publications
- Exhibition implementation
- Interpretive signs
- Events and public programs
- Educational programs
- Production and implementation of tours
- Planning, including research, collections assessments, exhibition planning, event/programming planning
- Collections management planning, materials, or software



- Collections preservation, stewardship, or storage supplies and materials
- Digital history projects

Projects that are NOT eligible include:

- Brick-and-mortar projects (i.e. window replacements, shingle repairs, etc.)
- Building maintenance, utilities, grounds keeping, insurance costs, interest or debt payments, or other projects that KHS considers to fall under an organizations' day-to-day or administrative operations
- Personnel, payroll, or benefits
- Purchasing collections
- Artistic projects (i.e. public murals, theatrical productions, etc.; Kentucky Arts Council already offers a grant for artistic projects related to America250KY)
- State historical markers
- Fundraising events
- Oral history projects (the Kentucky Oral History Commission, administered by the Kentucky Historical Society, already offers a variety of grants for the preservation and creation of oral histories; see history.ky.gov for more information)

Application scoring is based on the following:

- Relevance of project to America250KY themes (30%)
- Demonstrated ability to complete project (30%)
- Outcomes and Impact (25%)
- Originality and quality (10%)
- Budget (5%)

Application Deadline: June 18, 2025

Award Notification: July 25, 2025

Fiscal Year: 2026

Maximum Amount: \$10,000

Cash Match or In-Kind Match Requirement: No

Agency Name: Kentucky Historical Society

Description: The Kentucky Historical Society is an agency of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, an affiliate of the Smithsonian, has full accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums and is a founding member of the History Relevance Campaign. The Kentucky Historical Society works to educate and engage the public through Kentucky history in order to meet the challenges of the future.

Contact: America250KY@ky.gov

For More Information, click or scan the QR code!

