

BE AN EXHIBITIONIST!

TIPS FOR ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY AROUND A TRAVELING EXHIBIT



DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL

Work the exhibit theme into existing program structures

story times
puppet shows
film screenings
lectures and tours
book groups
craft programs
panel discussions
home school group activities

GET DETAIL ORIENTED

Read the exhibit or grant application carefully. It should spell out exactly what is required of the hosting institution, such as special considerations dealing with:

shipping and handling
insurance
security
environmental controls (temperature/humidity/lighting)
minimal programming requirements
promotional requirements
reporting/follow-up requirements



And think about how you will handle larger-than-usual crowds!

HIGHLIGHT YOUR RESOURCES



Take advantage of your existing collection to create special displays of books, music, and movies.

Expand and enliven the context of the exhibit by featuring things that relate in unexpected ways (i.e. connecting Shakespeare to astronomy or medicine).

Showcase databases and other services you offer.

Use your spaces to host not only the actual exhibit, but also programs and events.

SHARE THE LOAD

Reach out to your existing partners as well as other community organizations who serve the different populations you would like to reach, even if they don't have an obvious connection to the exhibit theme.



During the early planning stages, schedule a meeting to bring everyone together at the same time. You will be able to explain what you're doing fewer times, and have a more productive brainstorming session by including a variety of perspectives.

Play to your own strengths and engage your own natural audiences, i.e.

- * Public Library (family programs, book groups)
- * Academic Library (classes, lectures, teaching resources)
- * Museums (art, science, or history programming)
- * Theater groups (plays, improv, or costuming programs)
- * Cultural groups (artists/musicians respond to themes)
- * Businesses (lots of cross-promotion opportunities)

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