

Exhibit Planning Road Map

SO, YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR AN EXHIBIT

That's great! This list of questions below will help your idea get a rolling start and help you to arrive at your destination.

Set Your Course

- *First things first. What are you trying to accomplish with your exhibit?*
- *What is the primary theme of the exhibit? Think of it like a mission statement. Short. Sweet. Succinct.*

Who Are Your Passengers (Visitors)?

- *Who are your passengers (visitors)? The general public? Children? Veterans? Puppies? (hey, we'll help you with whoever you're trying to target).*
- *Are there passengers (visitors) who you've been wanting to impact, but haven't quite figured out how to yet?*
- *What's the number one theme/memory/lesson you want visitors to take away from the exhibit?*
- *Are you passengers (visitors) unique and have particular needs? Think about ADA requirements, bilingual content, etc.*

What Are You Packing?

Time to haul out the luggage. Create a "need it" and "want it" list. Think about any special circumstances related to each resource.

- *Spaces – buildings, gallery spaces, lobbies, etc.*
- *Collections – artifacts, specimens, macro-artifacts*
- *Archival materials – ephemera, books, posters, research materials*
- *Props – replicas, models, dioramas*
- *Images – digital and hard copy photos and drawings*
- *Media – videos and audio clips in digital or hard copy*
- *Supporting documents – past exhibit planning documents, site plans, floor plans, elevations, electrical plans*

Who's driving?

Getting to your destination without bumps in the road is a team effort. Think about who you'll need as your copilots to arrive at your destination successfully.

- *Main point of contact – Who's the driver? This is the go-to for most questions throughout the exhibit planning and should be considered the project's internal leader.*
- *Secondary point of contact – Who is the driver's primary copilot?*
- *Maintenance or facility director – You might want to loop them in on the project for specifications and electrical needs.*
- *Content expert – Often times, this is a collections manager or curator.*
- *Boards or committees – How involved do you want your board to be? Perhaps consider creating a smaller committee that's focused on your exhibit or certain aspects of your exhibit.*

Your Dream Destination

- *Start to make a list of what your ideal exhibit looks like. Once you have a list, be sure to prioritize it from most important to least important. Your list should consider indoor and outdoor components, digital elements, hands-on interactives, activities, as well as static experiences.*
- *Be sure to think about your timeline too. When do you want to get to your destination? Are there major milestones (or pit stops) to be aware of upfront?*
- *Have you seen other exhibits you like that we can keep in mind as we're driving?*

Trip Budget

- *Have a serious discussion about your exhibit's budget. Try to establish a solid budget that keeps your goals in mind and your wish list in check.*
- *Do you intend on having any big fundraisers or campaigns soon? What tools might you need make it successful?*
- *Are there expenses to consider before the exhibit can be installed? Electrical? Construction? Content development?*
- *Keep the future in mind. Think about the required ongoing maintenance for your exhibit.*

You're ready to hit the road!