

NEH Application Cover sheet (TA-296613)

Public Impact Projects at Smaller Organizations

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Dr. Christine M Shearer
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Field of expertise: Art History and Criticism

INSTITUTION

Allen County Historical Society
Lima, OH 45801-4665

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Title: *Planning of Reorganization and Reinstallation of Permanent Collection Galleries and Development of a Interpretative Plan*

Grant period: From 2024-03-01 to 2025-02-28

Project field(s): U.S. History; Cultural History

Description of project: The Allen County Historical Society (dba Allen County Museum) is seeking funding to plan for the reorganization of three permanent collection galleries, relocation and reorganization of its temporary exhibit gallery, and the development of an interpretative plan. The proposed activities are a direct consequence of ACM's in-depth institutional plan completed in 2020. Specific activities include 1) reorganization of permanent collection galleries to create more engaging, impactful, and exciting visitor experience; 2) development of an interpretative plan to provide a cohesive experience and narrative; 3) creation of thematic programming in conjunction with permanent collection and exhibits to reach new audiences and increase visibility; and 4) creation of programming to enable an immersive, interactive experience in the exhibits. The overall project will focus on visitor-centered design and interpretative approaches.

BUDGET

Outright request	25,000.00	Cost sharing	7,432.86
Matching request	0.00	Total budget	32,432.86
Total NEH request	25,000.00		

GRANT ADMINISTRATOR

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Summary

The Allen County Historical Society and Museum (dba Allen County Museum) is seeking funding to plan for the reorganization of three permanent collection galleries, relocation and reorganization of its temporary exhibit gallery, and the development of an interpretative plan.

While our museum focuses on the history of Allen County and beyond, our exhibitions are representative of only a select few. In addition, our language is dated in some galleries, particularly the oldest exhibitions. In our 2020 Strategic Plan, ACM shifted its focus to be more inclusive of the humanities and our community by adjusting its mission to: *The Allen County Museum preserves and promotes our cultural heritage through exceptional collections, exhibitions, and educational programs that inspire and serve our diverse communities.*

This project is the first step in making our exhibitions and programs stronger and more inclusive. It will enable staff to further research and reach out to underserved communities. Through the creation of an interpretative plan that coincides with the reinstallation of the galleries, the stories told will have a stronger humanities focus. The interpretive plan will act as a guide for programming and updates to permanent exhibitions. The inclusion of underserved members of our community in our narrative will enable us to tell a more comprehensive history of the county, and people visiting will see themselves represented in the galleries.

Audience

Before the pandemic, the Allen County Museum (ACM) typically served close to 40,000 visitors through its school tours, adult tours, Traveling Trunks outreach program, exhibitions, lectures, musical events, and children's programs. Located in a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) just outside the central business district of downtown Lima, the museum serves constituents from across Lima and Allen County, an area that is largely rural. According to the 2020 Census for Lima, the total population of the city was 35,579; with 24.9% of the people living in poverty (compared to the average of 13.4% in all of Ohio). The demographics are as follows: 59.2% white alone; 27.6% black or African American alone; 4.2% Hispanic or Latino; and 8.7% two or more races.

While the museum is in Lima, which is the county seat, it serves the entirety of Allen County as well as the surrounding counties. In 2022, the US census stated the population of Allen County was 101,115 people. The largest racial and ethnic group was white (non-Hispanic), making up 80.1% of the population. The Hispanic/Latino group was the fastest growing since 2010, making up 3.7% of the population in 2022. The black (non-Hispanic) population was 12.2% in 2022.

Our audiences are broad and include museum members, donors, docents, FB friends, families, Ohioans, educators and students, children, residents, and the general public. Allen County residents made up 11% of the overall attendance in 2022. The surrounding five counties made up roughly 2.8% of our annual attendance in the same year. In 2022, the education department served 14,095, getting closer to our pre-pandemic numbers of over 17,000 each year. The museum typically welcomes guests from over 40 of the states throughout the US.

The communities that are not strongly represented include Black Americans, Native Americans, AAPI, Latinx, immigrant populations beyond pioneers, women, and children. We currently engage our audiences through exhibitions (on-site and online), publications like our Allen County Reporter, lectures

(on- and off-site), social media, research facilities, traveling trunks, tours, educational programs and workshops, and educational events.

The Annual Christmas Tree Festival (CTF), which brought over 10,000 constituents in 2022, has been an annual community tradition. Visitors come to the CTF to see trees decorated by community organizations throughout Allen County, hear elementary students performing live along with adult performers, enjoy baked goods, and get their annual wreath photo or fingerprint ornaments. The event is sponsored by the Allen County Museum, Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District, and Church Women United of Lima and is now in its 51st year.

Activities and Outcomes

The ACM is requesting funding to assist in the planning phase of the re-installation of three of our permanent galleries, the relocation of our temporary gallery space, and the creation of an interpretative plan. With a small staff and budget, this entire project from conception to completion needs to be done with outside consultants and experts. It is also important that these two major projects occur simultaneously so that they each relate completely to the strategic mission and vision of ACM.

The proposed activities are a direct consequence of ACM's in-depth institutional plan completed in 2020. The goal of this strategic plan is to ensure that ACM is a creative, vibrantly engaged museum for the community. Specifically, as it relates to this project, ACM has identified a need to "use ACM's collections and exhibitions to position the museum as the leading cultural institution in the area" and "use ACM's position as the cultural heritage center of the community to create active and engaging educational programs and initiatives." The main components of these two strategic goals are:

- 1) Reorganization of the permanent collection galleries to create a more engaging, impactful, and exciting visitor experience.
- 2) Development of an interpretative plan to provide a cohesive experience and narrative.
- 3) Creation of thematic programming in conjunction with permanent collection and exhibits to reach new audiences and increase visibility.
- 4) Creation of programming to enable an immersive, interactive experience in the exhibits.

The permanent exhibit galleries, while updated periodically, have not been completely redesigned or reconfigured since 1976. The museum gives a good basic introduction into the history and significance of Lima, Allen County and its citizens, and a few galleries have recently been expanded or revamped to include more in-depth interpretation and humanities content. For example, in 2022, ACM unveiled a renovation and reinstallation of exhibit space highlighting the museum's two most significant paintings: *Senator Calvin Brice* by John Singer Sargent and *Brice's Wife and Daughters* by Carolus Duran. This project highlights the story of Brice and his family through didactics and brochures and incorporates a more humanities focused approach as it focuses not only on the Brice family but also on the artists John Singer Sargent and Carolus Duran. The success of this reinstallation proved that we need to keep making changes to the permanent collection galleries.

In 2019, ACM began organizing single, temporary exhibits in our changing gallery space (initially designed to be a multipurpose room). ACM knew it had greater potential to expand its audiences through ongoing temporary exhibits and corresponding programming. Response to the three exhibits organized since 2019 in the space have been positive, with the greatest success coming from *The Ohio Presidents: Surprising Legacies* exhibition in 2022. Starting in 2024, ACM will have a regular schedule of

three temporary exhibits each year. With this in mind, we believe moving the temporary gallery closer to the entrance would have greater impact when visitors enter the museum. The location for this gallery is currently the 19th Century Gallery, which will also need to be moved, requiring a reassessment of the entire first floor gallery spaces.

In addition, our Native American Gallery has not been touched since it was installed in 1976, and ACM has been working on an inventory list of native artifacts to comply with NAGPRA regulations regarding sacred objects, funerary objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. At this time, we have reached out directly to the nations represented in our collection for consultation, consulting with our state history organization for additional knowledge, and compilation of a summary of our items. In 1995, correspondence indicates that museum staff did reach out to the native tribes: however, there were no responses given. As we near the completion of our inventory, we are aware that a re-installation of that space is a necessity since there was never consultation with the tribes during its development. It also will strengthen connections to our community and include accurate information.

While ACM has humanities scholars on its staff, it also knows that additional input and assistance will make the overall project stronger and more diverse. The first phases of our project will be the planning of the reorganization and reinstallation of the entire first floor, the reinstallation of the Native American gallery on the lower level, and the draft of our interpretative plan. The plan that will result from this project will be based on meetings with a team of scholars; meetings with a core group of docents with teaching backgrounds; visits to other sites and museums; participation of an exhibit design team; and in-depth research on our collections and its relationship to its constituents.

The overall project will focus on a visitor-centered design and interpretative approaches. Specifically,

- Base plans on museum exhibition development best practices
- Research a variety of visitor experiences—didactic explanatory labels and simple participatory elements to immersive spaces, interactive media, and visitor-contributed content
- Foster inquiry and encourage visitors to explore their own questions
- Provide a better flow for a more cohesive experience for educational and visitor tours
- Expand cultural heritage connections of the permanent collection

The new interpretation/design will allow visitors to “see themselves” in the space and to understand that they are a part of the Allen County experience and incorporate opportunities for flexibility and change within the galleries. In 2020, the education department of ACM recreated and expanded its school tour scripts. During this process, state standards will be reviewed to ensure current material still fits, but also to see where we could enhance our educational experiences. The museum has a unique collection that enables the story of transportation to be included throughout the museum, from walking, to driving, to mass transit. It is our desire to combine this strength with an in-depth connection to our overall community while also maintaining state educational standards.

Project Components

Phase 1: Research and Conceptual Design

Research: The ACM project team will meet with the team of scholars to access the current exhibits and make note of what stories need to be added. ACM project staff will also visit other sites and museums to

collect ideas and information on the use of interactive elements to explain our themes and stories, to see ways to combine exhibition and educational programs to create a blend of traditional exhibit elements, hands-on interactives, and take-away curriculum and activity packets. This will help us gain a sense of what will work within our community and structure. This phase will allow us to focus on shifting the narrative of our exhibits from primarily object focused to people-focused, to balance the narrative of our exhibits between objects and people, allowing for the addition of the stories of underserved members of our community.

Conceptual Design/Development: This step provides the “road map” for the project and answers the following questions: Where is the project going? How will it get there? What resources are needed to complete the project? ACM project staff and Edwards Creative will be working hand-in-hand in the following steps:

- Initial planning/conceptual meeting to organize our thoughts, ideas and priorities.
- Onsite workshop that begins with a tour of the space to learn about its offerings and significance followed by a creative charette to identify high level themes, storylines, ideas, media and initial exhibit wish list.
- Edwards Creative team would begin constructing road map for the project and defining resources needed to complete the project.

The second step will flesh out the scope and character of the project as well as additional research into the subject matter. This includes diving deeper into interpretation goals, spatial arrangement, micro and macro artifacts the museum has and wants to feature, audio visual components, and overall graphic identity of the exhibits. The third step consists of pencil sketches and confirmation on the themes, subthemes, and concepts. This includes several revisions to the sketches as the project team and Edwards Creative work out the details. The final step is to take the selected exhibit concepts into a rendered format complete with narratives and color. Budget estimates are then also provided at the conclusion of this stage to take the project from conceptual development to final design and fabrication.

The main outcomes of Phase 1 will include combining the narratives of our exhibits to include both objects and people, and include the addition of the stories of our underserved audiences.

Phase 2: Final Design Development

Final Design Development: will flush out the scope further as well as finalize themes, storylines, interpretation goals, spatial arrangements, inventories, content research, and any AV. By the end of this phase construction drawings will be completed, fabrication budget established, and timeline of installation process developed. A complete package will illustrate the full exhibit design with detailed information on how it will be built, where everything is located, and how each works within the overall museum. This will enable ACM to solicit funding for the implementation of the project.

Relationship to the Humanities

ACM’s mission statement is to “preserve and promote our cultural heritage through exceptional collections, exhibitions, and educational programs that inspire and serve our diverse communities.” Our vision statement is “the Allen County Museum will be the essential source and destination for enrichment, inclusiveness, and creativity by celebrating our history and art through dynamic people, innovative programs, and exciting exhibits.”

An excellent example of our ability to create a strong humanities focused project can be seen in our recent The Ohio Presidents: Surprising Legacies exhibition and the publication of Snapshots of Democracy: The Eight Ohio Presidents book. The exhibition was organized initially by the Decorative Arts Center of Ohio in 2019, but ACM expanded the exhibition and added additional content. This NEH funded project was the largest outside exhibition ACM has ever worked with, and ACM itself published the accompanying catalog which serves as a scholarly, stand-alone book.

Through the depth of local history present in our collections, this project will relate more to the cultural heritage within our community. Through our local history the project will embrace a wide range of humanities disciplines and encompass a breadth of American history from Native American residents to early pioneers to industrialism. It ties directly into NEH's American Tapestry initiative because it "advances the knowledge of the country's history" and "explores the untold stories of historically underrepresented groups." It also will "build capacity to benefit underserved communities.

While the project encompasses a wide range of humanities disciplines, it also helps with the museum's desire to engage a diverse audience. ACM is uniquely positioned to provide a more inclusive and diverse look at the humanities themes, topics, and issues due to its emphasis on cultural heritage. Engaging in a planning process that incorporates specific narratives and themes will enable us to have conversations with our public.

Our ability to weave the story of transportation through the permanent collection galleries is just one of many connections that will be made in the planning phase of this project. Through the input of the people working on this project, the diverse collections of ACM will speak even more directly to Lima's history and draw connections to both American and world history. In addition, staff will be able to continue to refine the scope of the collections, expanding collecting areas to include underrepresented communities.

Key Humanities Personnel (bios included in support material):

Project Director: Dr. Christine Fowler Shearer (Ph.D., Cultural Art History, Warnborough College, Ireland), ACM Director and Executive Secretary.

Brittany Venturella (MA, Museum Professions, Seton Hall University), Director of Curatorial Affairs

Morgan Miller (MA, Public History, Bowling Green State University), Curatorial Assistant

Sarah Rish, (MA, History, Case Western Reserve University), Curator of Education

Key Humanities Consultants (bios included in support material):

Nekole Alligood (MA, Cultural Anthropology, University of Oklahoma)

Katie Solender (MA, Art History, Johns Hopkins University)

David Strittmatter (PhD, History, University at Buffalo)

Other Personnel (bios included in support material):

Charles Bates, Curator of Rail Transportation; Missie Bennett, Education Assistant; Donna Collins (Lima Technical College), Administrative Asst/Bookkeeper; Anna Selfridge (MA, Librarianship, University of Denver), Curator of Archives and Manuscripts

1) Allen County Museum <https://allencountymuseum.org>

a) Founded

- i) Dec. 30, 1908: Articles of Incorporation of the Allen County Historical & Archaeological Society.
- ii) 1995: Agreement between the Allen County Historical Society (ACHS) and County Commissioners signed and property owned by ACHS is transferred to Commissioners.
- iii) Museum expanded in 1976, 2007, and 2010. Today ACM is a 73,758 square foot campus, consisting of the main Museum facility, the Museum Annex, MacDonell House, the Carriage House, and a Log House. In 2019, ACM completed renovation of an additional collections storage facility.
- iv) 2019: board approves doing business as the Allen County Museum and drops Historical Society from its branding.

b) Mission Statement: The Allen County Museum preserves and promotes our cultural heritage through exceptional collections, exhibitions, and educational programs that inspire and serve our diverse communities.

Vision Statement: The Allen County Museum will be the essential source and destination for enrichment, inclusiveness, and creativity by celebrating our history through dynamic people, innovative programs, and exciting exhibits.

c) Annual Budget: \$285,430.00

d) Staff: FT 4, PT 8

- i) A dedicated staff of 4 FT museum professionals bring over 60 years of combined experience with administration, finance, research, exhibits, and programming. Our 8 PT staff assist with the daily operation of the museum to make up the education department, curatorial department, and administration.

e) Volunteers: 60

- i) Volunteers assist in the education and curatorial departments. They give tours to students and adults, provide floor duty, assist in programs, do research, give presentations, and more. Some volunteers also assist with general maintenance of the building when needed.

f) Accreditation: Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums since 1984.

g) Hours of public operation:

- i) Summer Hours: Tues. – Fri. 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Sat. 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- ii) Winter Hours: Tues. – Fri. 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. and Sat. 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

2) Audience Data

- a) Geographic region: Western Ohio, specifically Lima and Allen County (pop. 101,115) as well as the surrounding counties of Auglaize (pop. 45,948), Hancock (pop. 74,861), Hardin

(pop. 30,416), Mercer (pop. 42,348), Putnam (pop. 34,334), and Van Wert (pop. 28,769). The majority of the surrounding region of Lima is rural and mostly agricultural.

- b) Average annual attendance: pre-pandemic 40,000; 2022 actual attendance was 36,943, up over 30% from 2021.
- c) The following table compares Allen County demographics to the other six combined counties served by ACM.

	Allen County	Auglaize County	Hancock County	Hardin County	Mercer County	Putnam County	Van Wert County
Race/Ethnic Demographics							
White alone (not Hispanic or Latino)	80.1%	95.3%	87.6%	93.6%	94.6%	91.5%	92.9%
Black or African American, alone	12.2%	0.8%	2.3%	1.3%	0.6%	0.8%	1.2%
Hispanic or Latino	3.7%	2.0%	6.3%	2.4%	1.9%	6.8%	4.1%
Income/Poverty							
Median household income	\$55,114	\$69,315	\$60,828	\$52,112	\$68,692	\$73,122	\$59,210
Persons in poverty (%)	15.3%	7.9%	10.0%	16.9%	7.3%	7.1%	8.9%

- d) The city of Lima is the county seat of Allen County and its population in 2022 was 34,977, with 61.5% white alone (not Hispanic or Latino), 24.6% black or African American alone, and 5.2% Hispanic or Latino.
- e) Allen County residents made up 11% of the overall attendance in 2022. The surrounding six counties made up roughly 2.8% of our annual attendance in the same year. The museum typically welcomes guests from over 40 of the states throughout the US. Through its exhibits and programs, ACM serves children and teachers, families, adults and seniors, genealogists, local history researchers, preservationists, and railroad history researchers from all over the world. The museum’s collection exceeds 280,000 objects that tell the story of Lima and Allen County. Objects range from prehistory to present day. The museum campus also includes the MacDonnell house, an excellent example of Victorian Shingle style dating from 1893.
- f) ACM has a suggested donation of \$5 for admission to the museum. The MacDonnell house has an admission of \$3 per person for non-members, or free for children under the age of 9. Our lectures and public programs are open to the public.

Key Humanities Scholars/Personnel:

Project Director: Dr. Christine Fowler Shearer (Ph.D., Cultural Art History, Warnborough College, Ireland), ACM Director and Executive Secretary, is an art historian, curator, and writer with over 25 years' experience in the museum field. Her background includes the ability to combine history and art into compelling exhibitions that are visually stimulating and informative. She understands the importance of exhibition planning and implementation and its need to connect to the strategic plan, programming, and the local community. As director of the Massillon Museum, Shearer coordinated and oversaw the planning and funding of a new collections storage facility. For this project she will be the main point of contact, meet regularly and collaborate with the Edwards Creative team, coordinate museum site visits, compile information from meetings with humanities scholars and docents, read and approve reports, and help identify themes, stories and artifacts for the galleries. She will also be responsible for grant reporting and lead the effort to find implementation funding.

Brittany Venturella (MA, Museum Professions, Seton Hall University), Director of Curatorial Affairs has exceptional experience with collections management, exhibition development and installation, research, and technology. She will bring to the team an intimate knowledge of the museum's object collections as well as oversee the curators, educators, and docents working on the project. For the planning phase she will collaborate with the design team, meet with the humanities scholars and docents, and help identify themes, stories, and artifacts for the galleries.

Morgan Miller (MA, Public History, Bowling Green State University), Curatorial Assistant, joined ACM a year ago. She will assist the Director and Director of Curatorial Affairs in all stages of the project, providing research support of the objects in the permanent collection and the stories related to our underserved constituents. In the year she has been on staff, Miller has already researched and highlighted some of these stories into current permanent exhibitions. She will also participate in related meetings and attend site visits.

Sarah Rish (MA, History, Case Western Reserve University), Curator of Education has been with ACM for 38 years and has experience in developing museum education programs for children and adults. She directs the museum's Education Department and oversees the docents. She will oversee the educational initiatives for this project.

Key Humanities Scholars/Consultants:

Nekole Alligood (MA, Cultural Anthropology, University of Oklahoma), is a cultural anthropologist and member of the Delaware Nation of Oklahoma, with experience in Native American museum collections and cultural resource management. She served her tribe as NAGPRA Officer as well as Director of Cultural Preservation, working on three repatriations, completing them, and providing oversight on projects taking place on land historically important to the Delaware people. She currently works as the NAGPRA Specialist of the Ohio History Connection where she has worked directly with the 45 tribes associate with Ohio to return their Ancestors and cultural material in the museum's collection.

Katie Solender (MA, Art History, Johns Hopkins University), has been involved in the arts for more than 40 years. She joined the staff of the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) in 1978 as lecturer of the education department, and from 1995 to 2001 served as exhibitions manager and then director of exhibitions. During her years at CMA, she organized several exhibitions and edited labels and numerous

publications. Since leaving CMA, she has taken on both writing and editing projects as well as being an active museum consultant.

David Strittmatter (PhD, History, University at Buffalo), is an assistant professor of history at Ohio Northern University, where he also oversees public history initiatives. His first book, *Memory, Heritage, and Preservation in 20th-Century England*, was published in 2023. His current book project, *British National Identity and Memory in the Twentieth Century*, is under contract at Palgrave Macmillan. It explores how battlefields, political sites, and world's fairgrounds in the United Kingdom develop as heritage sites. He teaches an array of classes from Baseball History to Tudor England.

Design and Exhibition Consultant Team

Due to the extensive nature of this project, ACM has asked the **Edwards Creative** team to assist in the overall planning and design of the project. **Tim Wren**, a 16-year veteran in the museum services industry, will be the lead on the project. He has knowledge of both interactive media development and museum exhibits, and he has completed over 250 successful installations across the country. **Josh Nelson** will serve as creative director and has over 17 years of design experience. **Michael Edwards**, director of interactive media and a graphic designer, will be the audio visual specialist on the project. Matt Nielsen, director of fabrication and production for over 20 years, has an accomplished background in design and production and is also a skilled fabricator. Donnie Hammond has over 30 years in designing, building, and installing custom exhibits, displays, and environments.

Other Personnel:

Charles Bates, Curator of Rail and Transportation has a tenure of 38 years with ACM. He has extensive knowledge of the history of transportation and will be an asset in developing the narrative and stories related to the transportation gallery. He will participate in related planning meetings and research artifacts.

Missy Bennett (MS Education, Bowling Green State University), Education Assistant is a retired elementary school teacher who joined ACM in 2022. She will assist in the planning of interpretative materials and educational programs and ensure everything meets state standards.

Donna Collins (Lima Technical College), Administrative Asst/Bookkeeper, came to the ACM in 2001. She is responsible for all bookkeeping matters using Quickbooks for accounts payable, accounts receivable, processing payroll, and monthly financial board reports. For this project, Donna will process payments relating to the grant, track grant dollars, and assist the Director with financial reporting for the grant report.

Anna Selfridge (MA, Librarianship, University of Denver), Curator of Archives and Manuscripts, has a tenure of 42 years with ACM, and this year changed her position to part-time. She has extensive knowledge of the history of Allen County and is known within the community as “the area historian.” Anna will fact-check and provide research assistance as needed for the project.



Edwards Creative

Listen. Interpret. Create. Deliver.

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About Us

Edwards Creative has been a leader in exhibit design, custom display and exhibit fabrication, installation, and large-format printing in the Quad Cities area since 2005. Our unique blend of customer service and creative expertise has been trusted by museums and world-renowned corporations for 15 years. Our collaborative work environment and team-oriented approach to projects allow us to take on one-of-a-kind projects that require custom management, trusted experts, and most importantly, creative genius.

We have an incredibly talented team of creatives made up of designers, graphics installers, programmers, print production staff, custom builders, project managers, and administrative staff. All are respected experts in their field.

Our 21,000-square-foot custom-built office, showroom, and fabrication facility allows team members to work in a highly collaborative environment. We invite clients to browse our showroom displays of tradeshow exhibits, material samples, and lighting options that can be applied to any project that comes through our doors. Our in-house production team uses top-of-the-line equipment to deliver high-quality products that exceed our clients' expectations. Some of the tools in our arsenal include a UV flatbed printer, three roll-to-roll printers, a Tornado CNC machine, an X-5 cutting machine, a plotter, laminator, and paint booth.

We are an award-winning and certified woman-owned small business with over 20,000 projects in our portfolio. The Edwards Creative team is honored to serve clients with top-notch customer service, customized project management, and outstanding creativity.





Our Services



EXHIBIT DESIGN

Our 5 designers are always ready to bring it! We have the creative energy to plan everything from a stand alone exhibit to an entire gallery. From concepting through final design, we develop experiences that resonate with your audience.



CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTS

First impressions are everything. Come to us when you need a dynamic change for an entryway, lobby or meeting area. We'll custom-design it – signage, banners, kiosks, casements – you name it, we do it. And we'll consult with you about all the deets – from color scheme and carpentry, to cost and installation. We'll turn a first impression into a lasting one!



CUSTOM FABRICATION

We'll custom-build what you want, exactly how you want it. Our expert builders work closely with our design and production teams to make sure your vision comes to life. From our full carpentry finish shop, to our paint booth, to our leading edge print technologies – all the creating and building happens right here, under the Edwards dome! Want to see your project in progress? Come in any time to watch us do our thing.



MUSEUM SERVICES

When it comes to museum exhibits, extraordinary is what we do. We thrill, inspire, and impress. From concept to completion, our relentless drive to make awesome visitor experiences is second to none. We pride ourselves on establishing a solid relationship with you that is founded on communication. You are the most valuable team member during the life-cycle of any project. It's our job to value engineer our concepts to best fit your needs, budget, and ideas.



INTERACTIVE MEDIA

We'll help you connect with clients, visitors, and employees in a unique way. We consider interactive media to be an art — keeping the user in mind at all times as we develop unique and engaging interfaces and media experiences. From games and timelines, to way-finding interactives and virtual reality, our team of experienced designers, programmers, and all-around tech enthusiasts are ready to develop your next great digital experience.



TRADESHOW EXHIBITS

Edwards' tradeshow displays make big statements. Can we say they scream "awesome"? We've handled displays for literally thousands of shows — large and small. And we know it's the little details that make a big difference. The right measurements. The best materials. Custom-made signage. We're tradeshow veterans — design to delivery.



OUTDOOR WRAPS

Your brand deserves to be seen everywhere — and your ride is your rolling billboard. We can outfit a single vehicle, or a fleet — no worries. From design to installation, our team keeps it real with high-quality materials made to last. Not sure a wrap is right for you? Come in and check out an installation! We'll talk through what's best for your business and your budget.



EVENTS & SIGNS

Pulling off an event from "welcome" to "exit here" — and all the cool stuff in between — is a big job. Sports tournaments, corporate events, local charities — we've handled them all. Need a huge, light-up, custom sign? We've got you. Don't forget the add-ons like name badges, wayfinding signage, and the map to the food vendors! Events are what we do, and we do it on the regular. That's why our customers keep coming back.



Our Team

CEO

CATHY EDWARDS

President

STEVE EDWARDS

Director of Operations

TIFFANY HOGAN

Museum Services

TIM WREN | *Director*

SYDNEY ION | *Project Manager*

Quality Director

DARIN KAIN

Project Managers

ANNE KIRKPATRICK

RILEY VAUGHAN

JACKI SCHNELL

Project Estimator

JONI NACHE

Creative Director

JOSH NELSON

Graphic Designers

CHRISTINE ELLIOTT

EVAN DAVIS

HALEY HURST

*Director of Interactive Media/
Graphic Designer*

MICHAEL EDWARDS

Director of AV Integration

MARK WEITZEL

Director Fabrication/Production

MATT NIELSEN

Fabrication

DONNIE HAMMOND

RYAN MORFORD

RYAN WAKEFIELD

JAMES HOGAN

BRIAN GENTRY

BRAD BEYER

Preflight Designers

MITCH KNOBLOCH

MATT GOOCH

Production

ARYN CARPENTER | *Specialist*

KADE BUYSSE | *Specialist*

NATHAN KROMER | *Specialist*

Graphics Installers

B.J. MENDEZ

AUSTIN DECOSTER



Our Clients

This is a partial list of our clients that we have served over the last 15 years.

Figge Art Museum

Ames Historical Society

*National Mississippi River Museum
& Aquarium*

*Herbert Hoover Presidential
Library and Museum*

Augustana Teaching Museum of Art

Camp Algona POW Museum

Iowa 80 Trucking Museum

Buffalo Bill Museum

John Deere Tractor & Engine Museum

National Pearl Button Museum

The German American Heritage Center

Geneva History Museum

Antique Car Museum of Iowa

Johnson County Historical Society

Field of Dreams Museum

Laurel Historical Society

Bettendorf Children's Museum

Muscatine Art Center

Kalona History Museum

Clay County Heritage Museum

Theatre Museum of Repertoire Americana

Putnam Museum

Nelson Pioneer Farm & Museum

*"I'm starting to wonder what I did
without Edwards Creative!"*

Cyndi, Iowa Museum Association

*"Really happy with the outcome!
Your team was very professional
and I appreciate the care they
used when installing the artwork
– and for being good citizens in
the building. Thanks again."*

Barb, University of Iowa

*"Edwards Creative has a fantastic
team to work with, they helped at
every stage of our exhibit, from
concept design to fabrication. We only
had a rough outline for an exhibit, and
Edwards Creative took our idea from
a dream and made it a reality."*

Amanda, If You Build It Exhibit



References

KALONA HISTORICAL VILLAGE

715 D Ave, Kalona, IA 52247

Jan Ferry

jferry@kctc.net

309.325.2178

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

180 S Grand Ave, Iowa City, IA 52242

Barbara Kelley

barbara-kelley@uiowa.edu

IF YOU BUILD IT EXHIBIT

201 1st Avenue E Dyersville, Iowa

Jacque Rahe

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563.875.2311

Amanda Schwartz

aschwartz@dyersville.com

563.875.2727

IOWA MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

PO Box 824, Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Cynthia Sweet

Executive Director

Director@iowamuseums.org

Iowamuseums@gmail.com

319.239.2236

GENEVA HISTORY MUSEUM

113 South Third Street, Geneva, IL 60134

Terry Emma

Executive Director

director@GenevaHistoryMuseum.org

630.232.4951

JOHNSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

200 E 9th St Suite 101, Coralville, IA 52241

Alexandra McKendree

alexandra@johnsoncountyhistory.org

319.321.6317

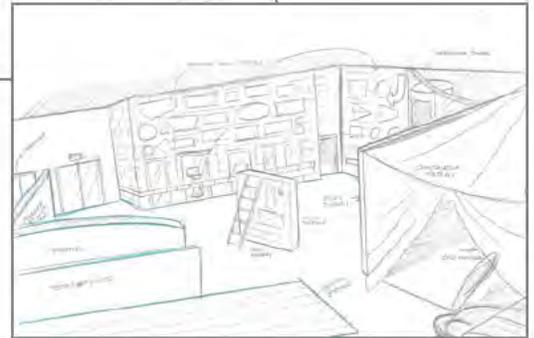
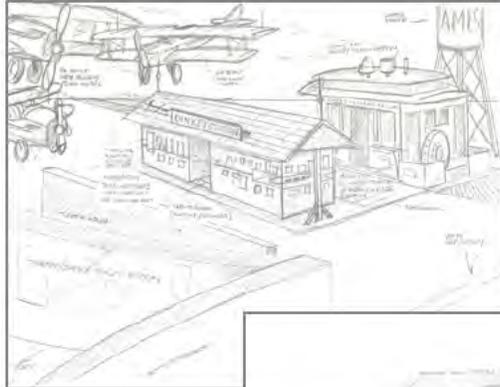
Ames Historical Society

As the Ames Historical Society, in Ames, Iowa, planned to begin a major capital campaign to construct a new addition to their current building, they needed a conceptual design package that would give donors an idea of what their updated permanent exhibit gallery could look like. Edwards Creative met with the Ames Historical Society's museum team to identify key themes, people, places, and topics of Ames' history that would be important to showcase in their new permanent gallery.

Soon, nine themed exhibit areas were identified and we laid out the exhibit that would be appropriate for visitor flow.

Visitors would begin their experience by being directed past a large portrait of one of Ames' founders. They would then learn about the early and geographical history of Ames and Iowa in a chronological fashion.

The largest exhibit in the gallery features a full-size replica of a the Dinkey Train Engine. The Dinkey Train plays a vital role in Ames' early history when students from the college needed access to the downtown area of Ames. The train brought people and ideas together which contributed to the success of Ames as a university town and hub of business and industry. In addition to the engine replica, a miniature depot would serve as a timeline detailing the history of Ames.





Ames Historical Society

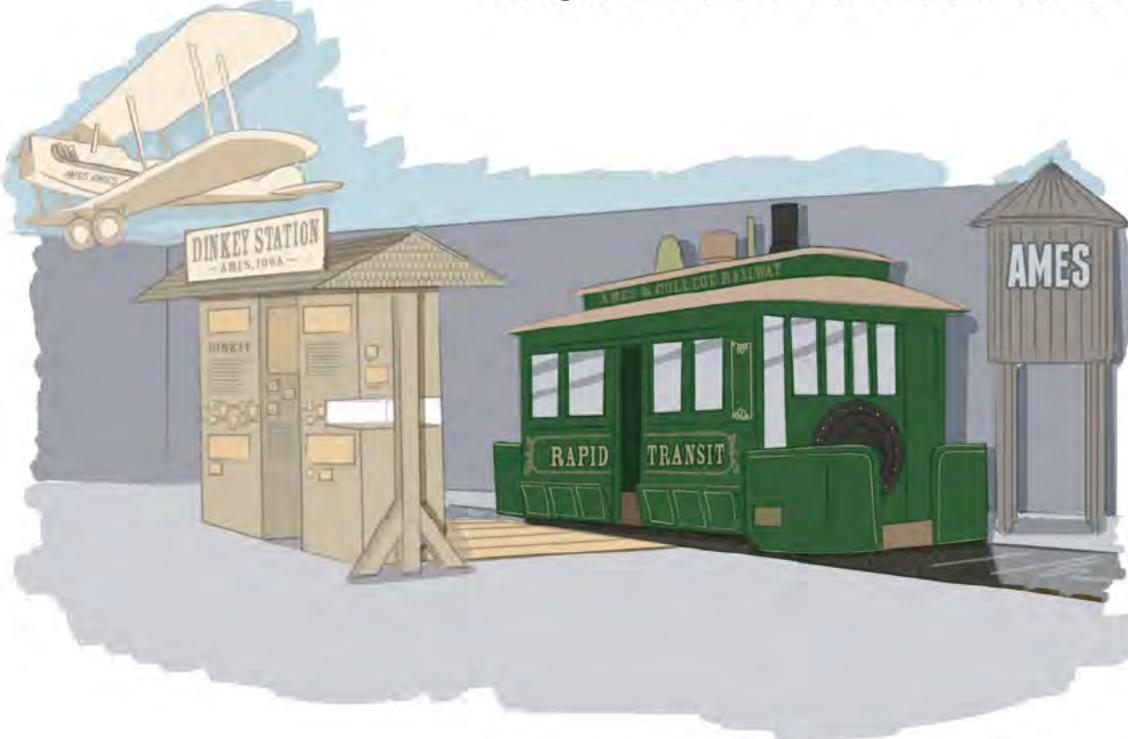
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Visitors would be guided through the rest of the gallery to learn about Ames' aviation history – complete with 1/4-scale model airplanes, entertainment history – displayed as a vintage Chautauqua-style tent, journalism history – utilizing a photography dark-room door, history of various businesses, and the theater and opera house histories.



In addition to static exhibits, digital interactive elements were proposed in the space. A 'selfie' photo op station, utilizing a vintage camera, would be incorporated in the entertainment exhibit. A touchscreen interactive detailing the history of Ames' floods over the years, showing the destruction caused during each flood would be included. In addition, a number of audio push-buttons would be incorporated throughout the space.

The conceptual design package that was created for the Ames Historical Society included a number of sketches, floor plans, and descriptive text that detailed Edwards Creatives' vision of the space.

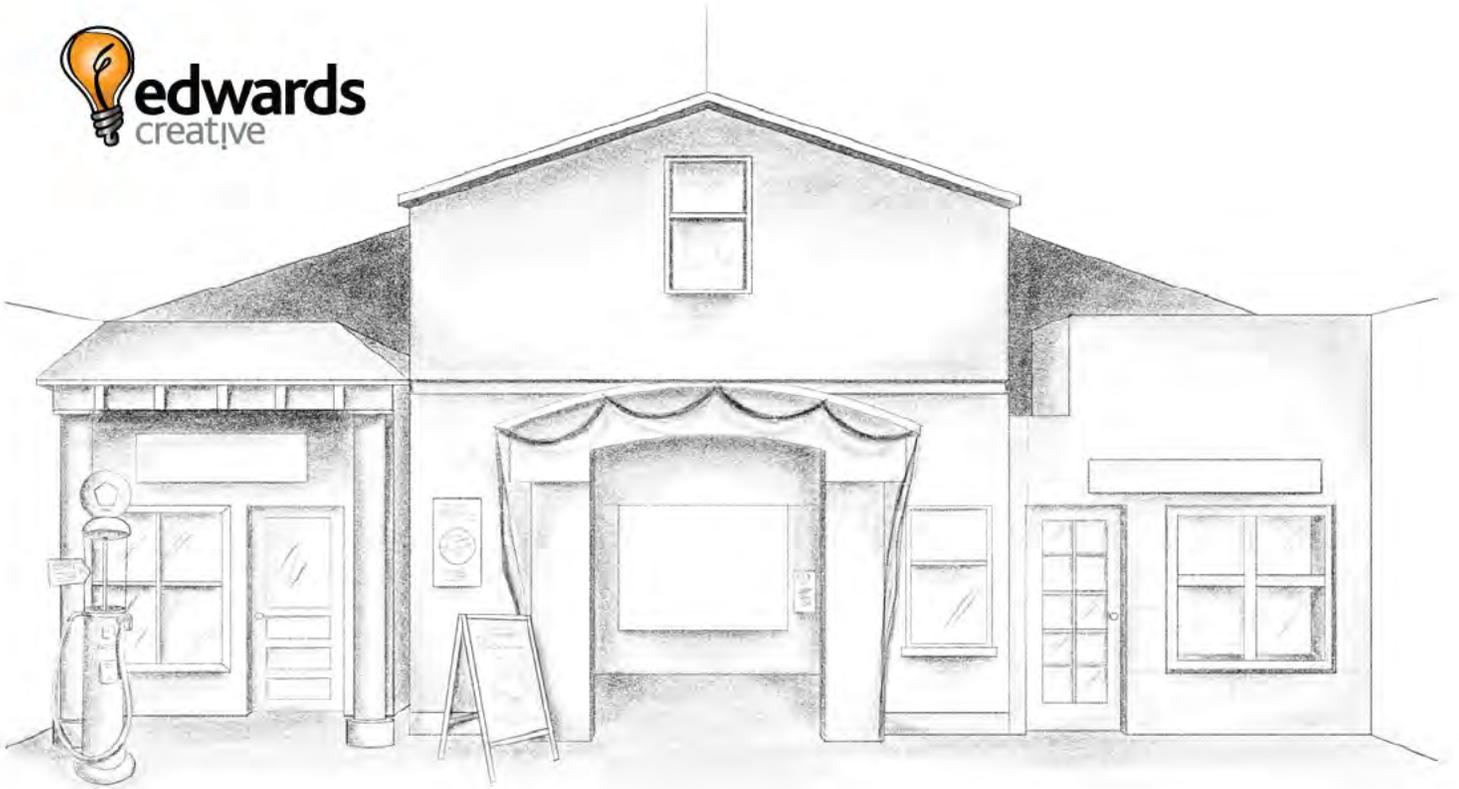




Kalona Historical Village

With the introduction of the railroad in the late 1800's, the small rural town of Kalona became a bustling economic center. With more and more people moving to and visiting the town, local businesses opened to serve the prospering community, some of which can still be seen in the town today.



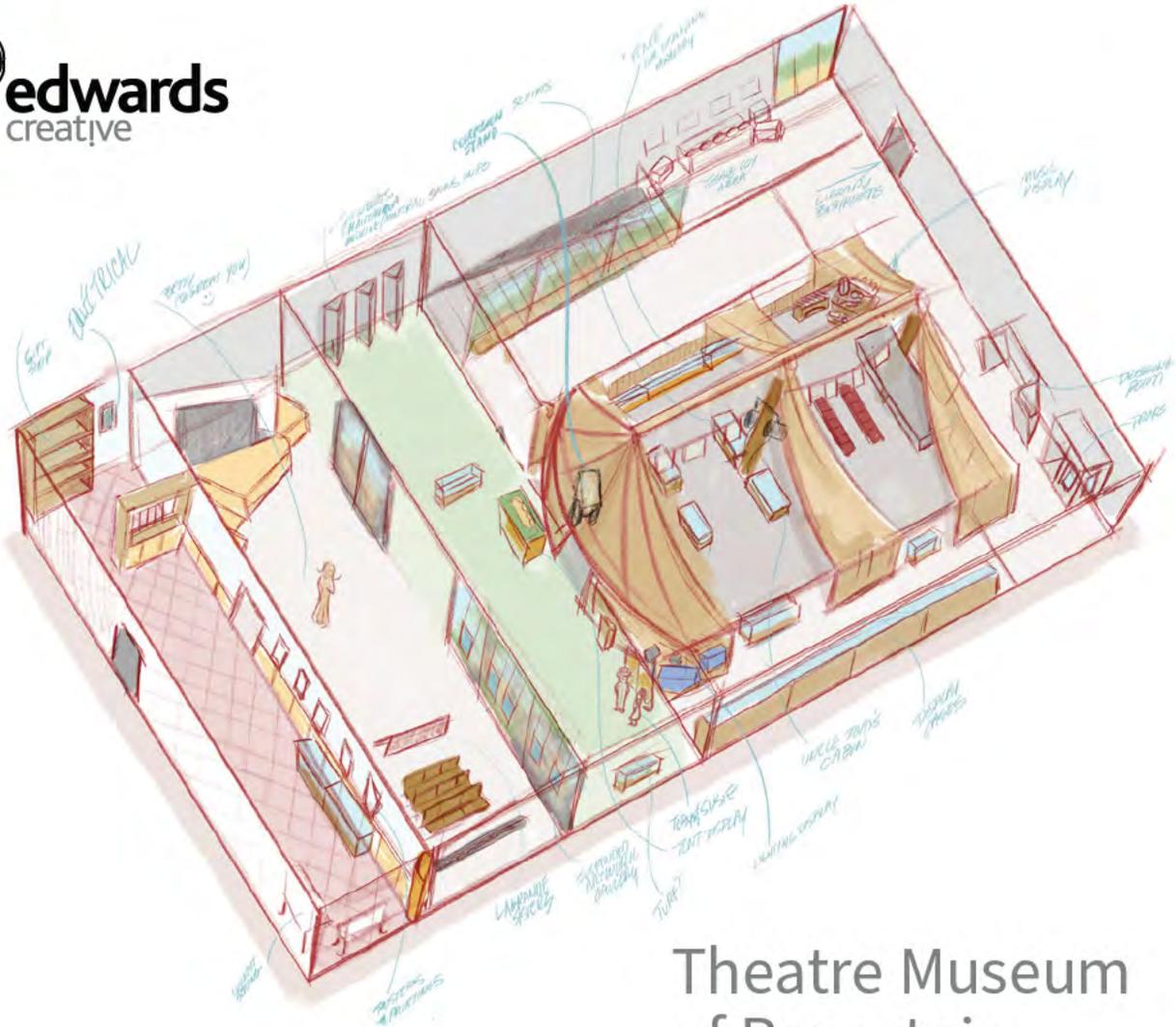


Kalona Historical Village

(continued)

Housed within a new exhibit building, Edwards Creative conceptualized a new permanent museum exhibit for the Kalona Historical Society. In order to acknowledge the importance of the town's origins and founding families, Edwards Creative designed a streetscape exhibit, highlighting 20 local businesses from Kalona's history. Using archival photographs, the facades of each business were designed to accurately represent the original architecture of each location. Large windows in each first level business allows visitors to peer into the building, where staged exhibits and artifacts tell the story of early Kalona and the founding families of each business. Three larger businesses are open for visitors to step into as well, featuring a variety of hands-on interactives and experiences. As visitors walk through the streetscape, they are able to learn about the importance of the railroad to Kalona's growth, how early commerce was done in the town, and about the families that helped Kalona develop to the community it is today.





Theatre Museum of Repertoire Americana



In Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, The Theatre Museum of Repertoire Americana dedicates its exhibits, storytelling, and mission to preserving artifacts, anecdotes, memorabilia, and art pieces that tell the colorful and impactful history of early repertory theatre throughout the United States. With an impressive collection of artifacts ranging from photos, scripts, and playbills to large hand painted show curtains, costumes, and stage equipment, the museum gives visitors a fascinating glimpse into the lives of 19th and early 20th Century theatre performers and the impact they had on communities and the nation as a whole.



Theatre Museum of Repertoire Americana

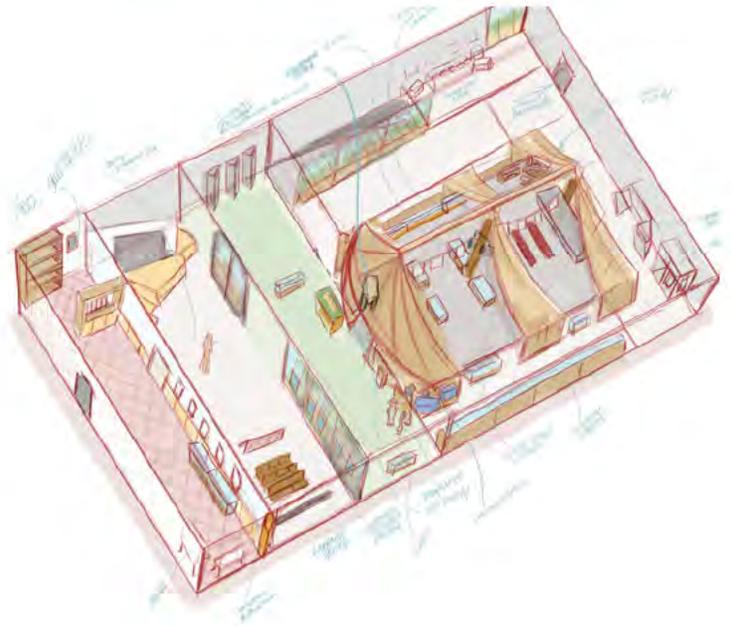
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Edwards Creative proudly partnered with the Theatre Museum to develop a one-of-a-kind conceptual design package that gave the permanent gallery a welcoming, engaging, and modern approach to their permanent gallery. The focus was to provide ample learning opportunities for visitors of all ages while safely displaying rare, unique, and important artifacts to tell the story of early theatre in America.

While ensuring smooth visitor flow throughout the space, the creative team broke the permanent gallery into seven sections – Opera House Lobby, Opera House, Outside the Tent, Under the Tent, Business Part 1, Backstage, and Business Part 2.

In the proposed concept, visitors enter the gallery through an area with the look and feel of an opera house lobby then walk into an area dedicated to telling the history of opera houses. Perhaps the most impressive area of the gallery features a near life-size custom fabricated theatre tent that visitors can walk inside to learn about what life was like for actors, attendees, and the communities that hosted the performances. Surrounding the tent's perimeter are vignettes that display the stories of the production crew, props, dressing rooms, script writers, and life backstage using artifacts, photos, mannequins, and impressive storytelling.

To pull everything together, Edwards Creative developed conceptual didactic panels to give the gallery space a cohesive look and feel that allows visitors to fully embrace the history and impact of early repertory theatre in America.





The Lockmaster's House Heritage Museum

The Lockmaster's House Heritage Museum is a one-of-a-kind building owned by the Guttenberg Heritage Society in Guttenberg, Iowa near Lock and Dam No. 10. The house is the last surviving lockmaster's house on the upper Mississippi River and was lived in by a U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Lockmaster from 1938 to 1990. The museum features exhibits and artifacts about the construction of Lock and Dam No. 10, stories about the various Lockmasters who lived in the home, and general history related to the Guttenberg area.

Edwards Creative developed a comprehensive conceptual design package that outlined two new timeline exhibits featuring the history of Lock and Dam No. 10, and the history of Guttenberg. Two separate rooms in the home were used for the development of the conceptual package. The living room of the home is dedicated to telling the story of Mississippi River commerce and conservation and puts the lockmaster's house in its place

in history while chronologically telling the history, purpose, and impact of dams along the Mississippi. Using a series of panels, artifacts, and images, visitors understand how the lockmaster's house fits into the overarching story of Mississippi River commerce and conservation. The dining room features a similar chronological timeline dedicated to local Guttenberg history. Focusing on events, hardships, and key players in Guttenberg's history, the timeline features artifacts, photos, graphics, and text that tell the area's history, all while connecting the importance of the Mississippi River and the lockmaster's house to its story.



PROPOSAL

CONTACT US
309.756.0199
TIM WEBB
tim@edwardsideas.com

DATE
06/28/23
PROJECT NO.
22575

Conceptual Design Package

PLEASE SIGN AND EMAIL YOUR APPROVED PROPOSAL

Allen County Museum – Conceptual Design Package

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Edwards Creative will develop a Conceptual Design and Planning Package for the Allen County Museum, located in Lima, OH. The Design Package will include proposed floor plans and visitor flow of the exhibit galleries, sketches of exhibit updates, and didactic signage concepts. The designs and layout will consider the artifacts in the museum's collection and the themes and stories the museum would like to feature in each exhibit space.

Edwards Creative will collaborate with the museum stakeholders to gather ideas and objectives, select artifacts, photos, themes, and stories to be incorporated into the exhibit space.

The final Conceptual Design Package will be delivered as a digital PDF and a bound booklet. Edwards Creative will produce one foam core poster of exhibit concepts to assist with fundraising efforts.

NOTES: ADA standards will be taken into consideration in all designs.

PROPOSAL INCLUDES:

Virtual meetings, idea gathering, narrative drafting, measurements, conceptualizing, sketching, graphic design.

PROJECT DUE DATE:

TBD

PROJECT COST: \$24,000

Re-location and Planning for Temporary Gallery = \$3,000

Conceptual Planning for 19th Century Gallery = \$5,500

Conceptual Planning for Transportation Gallery = \$10,000

Conceptual Planning for Native American Gallery = \$4,500

Travel / Site Visit = \$1,000

TERMS OF PAYMENT:

50% down payment to begin project. Remaining 50% to be paid upon project completion.

AGREEMENT:

This proposal is an agreement between Edwards Creative Services and the signer of the project approach, outlined and quoted above. All other costs reflected in this proposal are subject to review. The Standard Terms listed on the following page are part of this proposal.

If you approve this proposal, please sign and email back with approval to tim@edwardsideas.com.

Accepted: _____ **Date:** _____

PRICES IN THIS PROPOSAL ARE SUBJECT TO REVIEW AFTER 30 DAYS

All print ready files will require ECS pre-flight setup & review. Any deviations to the above may result in a price adjustment including all costs involved. No sales tax or delivery cost included unless otherwise stated.

Thank you for this opportunity!



RESEARCH & RELATED BUDGET - Budget Period 1

OMB Number: 4040-0001
Expiration Date: 11/30/2025

UEI:

Enter name of Organization:

Budget Type: Project Subaward/Consortium

Budget Period: 1 Start Date: End Date:

A. Senior/Key Person

Prefix	First	Middle	Last	Suffix	Base Salary (\$)	Months			Requested Salary (\$)	Fringe Benefits (\$)	Funds Requested (\$)
						Cal.	Acad.	Sum.			
Dr.	Christine	M	Shearer		(b) (6)	12.00			0.00	0.00	0.00
Project Role: <input type="text" value="PD/PI"/>											

Additional Senior Key Persons: Total Funds requested for all Senior Key Persons in the attached file

Total Senior/Key Person

B. Other Personnel

Number of Personnel	Project Role	Months			Requested Salary (\$)	Fringe Benefits (\$)	Funds Requested (\$)	
		Cal.	Acad.	Sum.				
<input type="text"/>	Post Doctoral Associates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	Graduate Students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	Undergraduate Students	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	Secretarial/Clerical	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	Total Number Other Personnel						Total Other Personnel	<input type="text"/>
							Total Salary, Wages and Fringe Benefits (A+B)	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>

C. Equipment Description

List items and dollar amount for each item exceeding \$5,000

Equipment item	Funds Requested (\$)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Additional Equipment:

Total funds requested for all equipment listed in the attached file

Total Equipment

D. Travel**Funds Requested (\$)**

1. Domestic Travel Costs (Incl. Canada, Mexico and U.S. Possessions)	2,000.00
2. Foreign Travel Costs	
Total Travel Cost	2,000.00

E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs**Funds Requested (\$)**

1. Tuition/Fees/Health Insurance	
2. Stipends	
3. Travel	
4. Subsistence	
5. Other <input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/> Number of Participants/Trainees	
Total Participant/Trainee Support Costs	

F. Other Direct Costs

Funds Requested (\$)

1. Materials and Supplies	
2. Publication Costs	
3. Consultant Services	23,000.00
4. ADP/Computer Services	
5. Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs	
6. Equipment or Facility Rental/User Fees	
7. Alterations and Renovations	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
Total Other Direct Costs	23,000.00

G. Direct Costs

Funds Requested (\$)

Total Direct Costs (A thru F) 25,000.00

H. Indirect Costs

Indirect Cost Type	Indirect Cost Rate (%)	Indirect Cost Base (\$)	Funds Requested (\$)
Total Indirect Costs			

Cognizant Federal Agency (Agency Name, POC Name, and POC Phone Number)

I. Total Direct and Indirect Costs

Funds Requested (\$)

Total Direct and Indirect Institutional Costs (G + H) 25,000.00

J. Fee

Funds Requested (\$)

K. Total Costs and Fee

Funds Requested (\$)

Total Costs and Fee (I + J) 25,000.00

L. Budget Justification

(Only attach one file.)

RESEARCH & RELATED BUDGET - Cumulative Budget

		Totals (\$)
Section A, Senior/Key Person		0.00
Section B, Other Personnel		
Total Number Other Personnel		
Total Salary, Wages and Fringe Benefits (A+B)		0.00
Section C, Equipment		
Section D, Travel		2,000.00
1. Domestic	2,000.00	
2. Foreign		
Section E, Participant/Trainee Support Costs		
1. Tuition/Fees/Health Insurance		
2. Stipends		
3. Travel		
4. Subsistence		
5. Other		
6. Number of Participants/Trainees		
Section F, Other Direct Costs		23,000.00
1. Materials and Supplies		
2. Publication Costs		
3. Consultant Services	23,000.00	
4. ADP/Computer Services		
5. Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs		
6. Equipment or Facility Rental/User Fees		
7. Alterations and Renovations		
8. Other 1		
9. Other 2		
10. Other 3		
11. Other 4		
12. Other 5		
13. Other 6		
14. Other 7		
15. Other 8		
16. Other 9		
17. Other 10		

Section G, Direct Costs (A thru F)

25,000.00

Section H, Indirect Costs

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Section I, Total Direct and Indirect Costs (G + H)

25,000.00

Section J, Fee

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Section K, Total Costs and Fee (I + J)

25,000.00

Service/Purpose	Costs	Total	NEH Request	Explanation
Salaries and Wages				
Project Director- Christine Shearer	(b) (6) rate x 70 hrs	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 16 hours for Creative Team Visit, 8 hrs for scholar project team site visit, 50 hrs for phone calls, online meetings, review of reports, and 12 hrs for 3 other in person visits
Key Personel-Brittany Venturella	(b) (6) rate x 60 hrs	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 16 hours for Creative Team Visit, 8 hrs for scholar project team site visit, 24 hrs for phone calls, online meetings, review of reports, and 12 hrs for 3 other in person visits
Key Personel-Morgan Miller	(b) (6) rate x 28 hrs	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 8 hrs for main site visit Creative Team Visit, 8 hrs for scholar project team site visit, 12 hrs for 3 other in person site visits
Key Personel-Sarah Rish	(b) (6) rate x 14 hrs.	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 8 hrs for main site visit Creative Team Visit, 4 hrs for scholar project team site visit, 2hrs for review of reports, documents, or conversations monthly
Other Personel-Anna Selfridge	(b) (6) rate x 6 hrs	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 4 hrs for Creative Team Visit, 2 hrs for review of reports, documents, or conversations monthly
Other Personel-Charles Bates	(b) (6) rate x 10 hrs.	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 8 hrs for main site visit Creative Team Visit, 2hrs for review of reports, documents, or conversations monthly
Other Personel-Missy Bennet	(b) (6) rate x 14 hrs.	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 8 hrs for main site visit Creative Team Visit, 4 hrs for scholar project team site visit, 2hrs for review of reports, documents, or conversations monthly

Clerical Support-Donna Collins	(b) (6) rate x 30 hrs	\$ (b) (6)		Includes 16 hours for main site visit, 1 hr for monthly review of reports or documents, 1 hr for financial reporting, and 12 hrs 3 other site visits
TOTAL		\$ 5,136.36		
Consultant Fees				
Edwards Creative-Relocation/Planning for Temporary Gallery	\$3000 flat rate	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	
Edwards Creative-Conceptual Planning for 19th Century Gallery	\$5500 flat rate	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,500.00	
Edwards Creative-Conceptual Planning for Transportation Gallery	\$10,000 flat rate	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	
Edwards Creative-Conceptual Planning for Native American Gallery	\$4500 flat rate	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	
Total		\$ 23,000.00	\$ 23,000.00	
Travel/Consultants				
Edwards Creative Site Visit	\$1000 flat rate	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	Flat charge
K. Solender	370 miles x \$.65	\$ 240.50	\$ 200.00	Cleveland to Lima
D. Stittmatter	185 x \$.65	\$ 120.25	\$ 100.00	Columbus to Lima
N. Alligood	185 x \$.65	\$ 120.25	\$ 100.00	Columbus to Lima
Total		\$ 1,481.00	\$ 1,400.00	

Travel/Staff				
Site visit to Chicago, IL (Field Museum, Chicago and First Division Museum at Cantigny, Wheaton)		\$ 1,839.00	\$ 500.00	Mileage: 560 miles x .65 = \$364; Hotel: 2 rooms at \$200/night x 2 nights = \$800; Per Diem: \$75/day x 3 x 3 days = \$675
Site Visit to Cincinnati Museum Center		\$ 242.50	\$ 50.00	Mileage: 250 miles x .65 = 162.50; Food x 4 @ \$20 each = \$80
Site Visit to Cleveland Museum of Natural History		\$ 314.00	\$ 50.00	Mileage: 360 miles x .65 = \$234; Food x 4 @ \$20 each = \$80
Total		\$ 2,395.50	\$ 600.00	
Supplies and Materials				
Folders	\$5 x 11	\$ 55.00		Supplies for site visit preparations
Photocopies	\$125 flat rate	\$ 125.00		Supplies for site visit preparations
Total		\$ 180.00		
Other Costs				
Refreshments for site visit	\$15 x 8 people x 2	\$ 240.00		Site visit refreshments
		\$ 240.00		
Total Project Costs		\$ 32,432.86	\$ 25,000.00	

|