

America 250 Ideas

from the AASLH 2022 Conference in Buffalo

Washington State:

Focusing on the Power of Place

Focus on projects already in the pipeline, rebrand as Am 250, use leverage and resources of America 250.

1. Monuments: Review, Advisory Committee, IMLS grant, civic dialog.
2. Redevelop major section of the State Historical Center gallery, add indigenous stories.
3. Diversity and Local History. Help others with grants, intern program for small museums, inclusive storytelling.

Texas:

No lead Commission. Use appropriate state agencies to lead.

Focusing on the American Experience: Texas independent for 10 years; starts American Experience in 1836.

1. Cross collaborate with folks like the Texas Library, Texas Educational System, Texas State Museum.
2. Texas PBS history series.
3. Work with schools, teaching standards and understanding how to work with history.

California:

No Commission yet. (Did not make it past the legislative committee.) Just realized in January the celebration was coming.

Focus: Unfinished Revolution.

1. Tackle the history of dreamers, farm workers, women, hospitality industry.
2. Exploring what is a Revolution?

Utah:

State History Society the appointed Commission.

Focus: Move forward to a more inclusive and diverse state narrative.

1. Share marginalized stories.
2. Scholarships for research. Look for non-traditional scholars.
3. Community history work: oral history, catch and release sessions.
4. Your story matters – look for gaps.
5. Connect to collections: Look for private collections no normally available.
6. Explore who is actually in our state and makes us unique.
7. Help the public understand with history work is.

They plan to continue past 2026. Working on states first History Museum, opening 2026.

Idaho

Focus: “We the People”

1. Who came to Idaho and why.
2. Community Engagement.
3. Education a top priority.

Tennessee:

Focus: “Doing History”

1. Making sure professional development information is available to do the work – connect people to resources.
2. Get everyone to start thinking about history – from ground, swell up.
3. Work with schools.
4. Online surveys.
5. What more inclusive diverse state narrative.
6. Community History – memory based, communities need to express their stories.
7. Compile recipes.
8. Leave plans open ended now, door open.
9. Is this 1976 Part 2? – Finish work started then.

Summary: Everyone wants...

- Something to rally around – a common theme that they can connect to.
- Want people to PARTICIPATE, and not be just spectators.
- Big Outreach!
- Advisory Groups are good.
- Integrate futurism: What does our state look like in 25 years:
- Legacies important.
- Sustainability important.
- People want to see their voices in the projects.
- Don't forget the power of places: rural, urban, etc.
- What was your state like in 1776 and how did it change overtime.

Wendy Zucal
Executive Director
Dennison Railroad Depot Museum
P.O. Box 11, 400 Center Street
Dennison, OH 44621
director@dennisondepot.org
740.922.6776