



The Arizona Historical Society (AHS) offers our communities amazing opportunities to explore, create and question. The changing galleries and flexible spaces at our museums and historic sites allow us to provide a variety of experiences for our visitors. These experiences give people a reason to visit again, and allow us the opportunity to examine current topics from a historical perspective (i.e., “everything has a history”) or present something new and novel, while encouraging critical thinking.

Since ideas can come from a variety of sources, we have designed a structure and process to help determine which projects move forward to a fully realized experience for the public. This document serves as a guide to the process of the approval of new ideas to be developed into AHS experiences.

Please note, this is for temporary or changing experiences. Core galleries or permanent site experiences follow a different process.

## PROCESS

First, familiarize yourself with the Experience Model below. Remember, good experience ideas need to be 1) based in two or three-dimensional objects, 2) relevant, and 3) engaging to our audiences. Experience Ideas can be exhibitions, public programming, and/or events. (See AHS Experience Idea Standards for more info.)

1. Complete the Experience Ideas Online Form on the AHS website. Ideas can be submitted at any time during the year. There are no deadlines for proposals.
2. The Experience Ideas Committee meets monthly to review submitted proposals. Ideas will be evaluated on how well they align with the Experience Model and meet AHS experience needs and long-range objectives.
3. Following committee review, viable ideas will then be reviewed by the marketing, communications, and revenue enhancement team to ensure marketability and fundability.
4. Upon approval by the committee and marketing team, you will be notified if your idea has moved to the next step in the process.
5. You will then be asked to develop a project outline on the experience idea, using a provided template. In this step, you will provide more detailed explanations of the project, the intended audience(s), and staff commitment.
6. After completion, your Online Form and Project Outline will be submitted to the Senior Leadership Team for review. The leadership team meets in February and August to review proposed ideas, and approve or reject.
7. For time-sensitive projects, the committee may elect to submit proposed ideas directly to the leadership team for review the last Monday of every month.
8. After a decision is made by the leadership team, the committee will make an appointment with you to discuss next steps.



It is important to understand that that exhibits, programs and events are planned months, and years in advance. Approved projects require significant planning and production time. In addition, the experience will have to be placed on the rotating gallery/program/event schedule of the respective site. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that an approved Experience project may not be fully realized for as much as two years or more.

## CALENDAR

The Experience Ideas Committee will meet monthly to consider ideas.

## EXPERIENCE MODEL

Experience ideas can come from many sources including staff passions, community interests, collections focus, external partner resources, and other factors. While there are an infinite number of good ideas, AHS experiences should first and foremost be grounded in our mission:

- The mission of the Arizona Historical Society is connecting people through the power of Arizona's history.

For internally produced experiences that are worth the time and money to develop, an experience idea needs to include the three criteria listed below. Typically, the core of an experience idea will stem from one of these characteristics, for example:

- Collections-based: Uses our collection or a loaned collection to tell a unique narrative
  - Example: The *A Camera and A Canyon: The Photography of the Kolb Brothers*.
- Audience engagement: Offers our visitors active ways to explore a topic
  - Example: At the core of *Faces of Resilience* is a deep visitor experience involving complex contemporary topics.
- Relevancy: Timely and closely connected to our visitors' lives.
  - Example: The *January 8<sup>th</sup> Memorial Experience* addresses community resiliency in the wake of a trauma.

All ideas will be evaluated on how well they meet the three above criteria. If you have a great core concept and need help fleshing it out, talk to an experience idea committee member. The group's members can help you further develop your idea and speak to how it can utilize the collection, engage audiences and be relevant to our communities.

For questions, contact Jaynie Adams, Museum Educator at [jadams@azhs.gov](mailto:jadams@azhs.gov) or 520-617-1154.