

Arizona America250 Commission
Arts, Museums and Cultures Subcommittee
Virtually via Microsoft Teams
Meeting Minutes of January 29, 2026

1. **Call to order, roll call, and welcome.** Chair Anna Needham called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

SUBCOMMITTEE ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Anna Needham, Chair, Julianne Cheng, Caitlin Dichter, Jeannette Holverson, and Sandra Kory

SUBCOMMITTEE ATTENDEES NOT PRESENT:

Wylwyn Reyes, Bonnie Humphrey, Beverly Elliott, and Jeffrey Lazos Ferns

NON-VOTING MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Verlon Jose; Ashley Harder; Evan Kory; and Jessica Lewis.

2. **Discussion and possible action on meeting minutes from October 30, 2025**

The subcommittee considered the minutes from the October 30, 2025 meeting. There was no discussion. Sandra Kory moved to approve the minutes, and Jeannette Holverson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

3. **Discussion, possible action, and report from Executive Director on Arizona America250 tentpole initiatives**

a. Traveling Museum

Executive Director Terech reported that the Traveling Museum route is set and shared full 3D mock-ups of the vehicle's exterior and interior. The complete list of locations is available at <https://www.america250az.org/initiatives/>. Committee members asked questions about the use of QR codes and the status of video content for the exhibit. The Liberty Bell replica will be installed in the vehicle on February 12 at 5:00 a.m., with media invited to that installation and to the send-off ceremony on February 13 at the Polly Rosenbaum State Archives & History Building; subcommittee members have been invited, and the RSVP link was shared in the meeting chat. Additional details were shared about activities and plans that cities and counties are organizing around their tour stops.

b. Passport250

Once the Traveling Museum is on the road, Passport250 promotion will increase, with new prizes and additional promotional strategies in development.

c. Civics Semiquincentennial Scholarship

Executive Director Terech reported that more than \$130,000 in scholarship funding is available through Rotary and the Dougherty Foundation to support Arizona students.

d. Dear America, Love Arizona postcard campaign

Requests for “Dear America, Love Arizona” classroom postcard toolkits have been very high; the initial run of 5,000 postcards was fully requested within three days.

Additional funding has been secured to print more postcards so the initiative can continue.

The campaign provides classrooms with a free, ready-to-use activity that encourages students to reflect on what they love about Arizona and their hopes for the nation’s future.

This initiative will also be available within the Traveling Museum experience.

e. Operation Freedom March

Operation Freedom March invites participants to complete sections of the Arizona Trail as part of a Military and Veterans Subcommittee initiative open to all.

Further information is available at <https://aztrail.org/events/operation-freedom-march/>.

f. National initiatives

Executive Director Terech highlighted several national initiatives, noting that they, along with other efforts such as Moments that Made Us and Light to Unite, are listed at

<https://www.america250az.org/initiatives/>.

- **America’s Field Trip** is a nationwide contest inviting students in grades 3–12 to share what America means to them as part of the nation’s 250th anniversary, with opportunities to earn memorable field trips to historic and cultural landmarks.
- **MY AMERICA** is a nationwide, youth-driven art and civic engagement campaign designed to honor the past, reflect on the present, and inspire the future through artistic expression, civic action, and public commemoration. Arizona is currently leading in MY AMERICA submissions, which will form part of a large mosaic American flag comprised of thousands of tiles featuring messages, drawings, and poems from young people across all 50 states.
- **Our American Story** is a storytelling project to collect and preserve unique stories from across the nation, with the goal of creating the largest archive of American stories ever compiled.

Members were encouraged to nominate living individuals—friends, family members, neighbors, or community leaders—whose stories should be shared and preserved; nomination information is available at <https://america250.org/our-american-story/>.

4. Discussion and possible action on arts and culture projects for the Semiquincentennial

a. Stories250

Chair Needham asked whether the committee wished to continue exploring the Stories250 concept. Members discussed where these stories should be housed, including whether they

should live solely on social media or be archived in a longer-term format and location. Additional discussion covered ideal story length, prompts, and time limits for contributions.

b. 5 C's Art Exhibition with the Flinn Foundation and Art State Arizona

Executive Director Terech provided an update on the upcoming 5 C's Art Exhibition opening reception on February 3, held in partnership with the Flinn Foundation.

RSVPs have reached capacity. Chair Needham will offer remarks at the opening.

The exhibition will be on view from February 3 through June and will be open to the public; attendees are encouraged to call ahead if they plan to visit.

c. Public art projects

The subcommittee discussed potential public art projects, including funding options and possible partner organizations. Executive Director Laura Terech noted that funds may become available after the Traveling Museum concludes, which could support such projects.

d. Member share-out on additional arts and culture projects throughout the state

- A new city poet laureate was announced, and members expressed interest in collaborating with the laureate on America250-related programming.
- Subcommittee member Sandra Kory shared enthusiasm for local America250 activities in her area, particularly around Fourth of July celebrations.
- Subcommittee member Julianne Cheng, representing Arizona Humanities, highlighted upcoming programs including the Blue Corn Festival and AZ Speaks offerings, with more information available at <https://azhumanities.org/programs/blue-corn-festival/> and <https://azhumanities.org/programs/az-speaks/>.
- Subcommittee member Jeannette Holverson reported that Experience Prescott has America250 events planned, and additional details are available at <https://www.experienceprescott.com/things-to-do/>.
- The subcommittee also noted that current meeting dates conflict with another subcommittee; going forward, Arts, Museums & Cultural Institutions Subcommittee meetings will begin at 11:00 a.m.

5. Call to the public

No members of the public were in attendance, and no public comments were received.

6. Adjournment

Chair Needham adjourned the meeting at 11:26 a.m.