

AASLH Awards Committee Statement on Good History

AASLH bestows Leadership in History Awards to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the interpretation of state and local history at institutions of every size and type. As superior and innovative achievements, the projects that earn Leadership in History Awards serve as inspirations and models to others in the field. Award-winning projects are rooted in “good history” and reflect AASLH’s aspirational philosophy.

But what does it mean to do good history? Here are the main components of this idea and examples of past award winners who have exemplified this spirit. Award winners do not need to meet all of the ideals outlined in the aspirations, but should strive to identify with at least one of the philosophies described below. You can read more about these specific projects on the awards website on the “Winners” tab or by googling them.

Good History:

- **Embraces difficult history** by reflecting current scholarship, grounding the work in primary source research, and providing a genuine contribution to the understanding of history.
 - *KKK Ledgers Rollout Project*, History Colorado, 2022
 - *Understanding Our Duluth Lynchings: Racial Violence in America and the Road to Justice and Reconciliation*, Minnesota Humanities Center in partnership with the Collaborative Legal Community Coalition, 2022
 - *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories*, Heard Museum (AZ), 2020
 - *Yesterday, This Was Home: The Ocoee Massacre of 1920*, Orange County Regional History Center (FL), 2021
 - *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*, the Library Company of Philadelphia, 2021
- **Acts to build diversity and inclusiveness** through interpretation that considers race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and geography, and is provocative through presenting contested history and multiple perspectives.
 - *Artistry in Iron: Blacksmiths of New Orleans*, Hermann-Grima + Gallier Historic Houses, 2022
 - *Voices from Somerville: Culture, Community and History*, Somerville Museum, Dan Breen, Erline Tanice, and participating panelists and advisors, 2022
 - *Ihdago Manipi: Clay County at 150*, Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County (MN) and Native American Advisory Group, 2022
 - *Waccamaw Indian People: Past, Present, Future*, the Waccamaw Indian People and Coastal Carolina University (SC), 2022

- *Voices of Vail*, Vail Preservation Society (AZ), 2020
- **Cultivates an experimental and creative spirit** as a source for imaginative problem solving, exploring new approaches, and resourcefulness, while also looking to others for inspiration. Projects that extend the mission of an organization, demonstrate risk-taking, and offer activities outside conventional boundaries will merit greatest consideration.
 - *Stories from Our Community: The Art of Protest*, Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, 2022
 - *H2O Today in the Bear River Heritage Area*, Bear River Heritage Area and Hyrum City Museum (UT), 2022
 - *If These Walls Could Talk*, Neill-Cochran House Museum (TX), 2021
 - *Nashville To Miami To Havana: Cuba, Castro and the Croft Family*, Grassmere Historic Farm at the Nashville Zoo and the Tennessee State Library and Archives, 2020
 - *Art from the Ashes*, Joliet Area Historical Museum (IL), 2020
- **Demonstrates the relevance of history** and showcases how the public can make use of the past in discussions of the present and the future.
 - *Reflections on Grief and Child Loss*, President Lincoln’s Cottage, 2022
 - *Common Struggle, Individual Experience: An Exhibition About Mental Health*, Connecticut Historical Society, 2022
 - *When Women Lost the Vote: A Revolutionary Story, 1776-1807*, Museum of the American Revolution, 2022
 - *Johnson County Museum Responds to COVID-19*, Johnson County Museum (KS), 2021
 - *Spit Spreads Death: the 1918-19 Influenza Pandemic in Philadelphia*, Mutter Museum at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 2020
- **Attempts to be accessible** to wide audiences with differing learning styles, abilities, and interest in history.
 - *Bridging the Gender Divide: Toys That Build STEM Skills*, The National Museum of Toys and Miniatures (MO), 2021
 - *Brucemore and Feed Iowa First Historic Garden Project*, Brucemore (IA), 2021
 - *Teaching Iowa History*, Iowa Museums Association, 2021
 - *Florida Frontiers Television: "Free Black Settlements in Spanish Colonial Florida"*, Florida Historical Society, 2020
 - *City of Baseball Museum*, St. Paul Saints (MN), 2020