

Smithsonian National Postal Museum

SPECIAL EVENTS POLICY

The National Postal Museum, through its collection and library, is dedicated to the preservation, study, and presentation of postal history and philately. The museum uses exhibits, education, and public programs to make this rich history available to a wide and diverse audience.

The National Postal Museum is a unit of the Smithsonian Institution; accordingly, its special events policy is derived from and subject to the provisions of the Institution's policy, Office Memorandum SD 401. The term "NPM" is used throughout this document to refer to the National Postal Museum.

Non-Smithsonian organizations may use the National Postal Museum facilities when such use is directly related to Smithsonian interests. For an event to be approved by the NPM, the event must either be initiated by the Smithsonian, or the requesting organization must be:

1. a Federal Agency primarily dedicated to the increase and diffusion of knowledge, or
2. a non-profit organization that has a close working relationship with the National Postal Museum, and shares in its mission and purpose, or
3. a corporation, association, or organization that has made a substantial donation to the Smithsonian.

The National Postal Museum is supported by the resources of the Smithsonian Institution, the United States Postal Service, and by the generosity of donors – foundations, corporations, organizations, associations, and individuals. Because there is no public admission charge to Smithsonian facilities, it is through such financial support that many of the activities of the museum are made possible. It is traditional that organizations that offer a substantial donation to the museum are invited to celebrate the gift by co-sponsoring a special event in the museum. Such a celebratory occasion provides an opportunity for the museum and the donor to jointly commemorate their collaboration. While the National Postal Museum desires to allow reasonable latitude in the recognition of donors, it must be clear that such acknowledgement is in appreciation for a gift, rather than as a commercial endorsement.

Donations to the National Postal Museum are non-refundable and are applied directly to one of the following areas central to the continuing operation and expansion of the Smithsonian Institution's missions and interests:

- * Exhibitions
- * Research
- * Public Programs
- * Educational Programs
- * Collections Management
- * Administration

If at any time during the term of this Agreement a cause or causes beyond the reasonable control of the parties hereto (including but not limited to disaster, act of God, government regulations, war, terrorism or threats of terrorism, civil disorder, labor trouble, strikes, curtailment of transportation facilities, unusually severe weather conditions, fire or casualty, or any other emergency), make it illegal, impossible, or inadvisable by formal advice of a chief government officer (e.g., declaration of a state of emergency by a mayor, governor, president) for the donor to conduct the event at the National Postal Museum or for the majority of invitees to attend the event, the organization may postpone such event without penalty. If an event must be canceled, the event may be rescheduled for a mutually convenient date. **Donations to the National Postal Museum will not be returned.** The failure of either party to perform any of its covenants or agreements shall not be deemed to be a breach or violation of the terms of this Agreement if such failure is due to a cause or causes described in this section.

The following document outlines the Smithsonian Institution policies that apply to special events in the National Postal Museum:

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I. APPROVAL CRITERIA/PROCESS

A. Consistent with the objectives of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Smithsonian facilities shall not be made available to any organization that practices or advocates discrimination based on age, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or condition of handicap.

B. Non-National Postal Museum related events such as fund raisers for other than the Smithsonian Institution, and those events of a political, religious, promotional, or social nature (e.g. retirement or holiday parties, etc.) may not be held at the Smithsonian Institution.

C. The Smithsonian Institution policies may permit Federal agencies to hold events unrelated to the NPM's activities at the discretion of the director and within established guidelines. It is expected that those agencies would be charged direct costs and administrative fees for the use of the facilities, and that all aspects of this policy will be in effect.

D. A written request and the full room contribution fee must be submitted to the National Postal Museum Office of External Affairs prior to an event in order to confirm its date. All necessary elements involved, including paperwork and receipt of donation, must be received by the National Postal Museum Office of External Affairs at least six weeks prior to the event date.

II. TERMS

A. Confirmation/Written Agreement

1. The National Postal Museum Office of External Affairs will prepare a Memorandum of Agreement that confirms the event date, the donation, number of guests expected, and event scenario.
2. The Memorandum of Agreement must be signed by the donor or organization representative and returned to the special events coordinator by the date specified in the letter.
3. A non-refundable room contribution fee must be received with the Memorandum of Agreement to confirm the date on the NPM's calendar.
4. The donor or organization is responsible for payment of all costs (catering, lighting, staging, sound, floral, etc..) associated with the event

B. National Postal Museum Staff Event Participation

1. All special events in the National Postal Museum are co-sponsored by the Smithsonian and the donor/organization. The director of the National Postal Museum, or his designee, acts as co-host at the special event.
2. Official welcoming remarks, delivered by the director of the National Postal Museum or his designee, are a traditional part of a co-sponsored event at the NPM. This allows a brief opportunity to represent the NPM in acknowledging the significance of the occasion and the generosity of the donor.
3. A number of senior National Postal Museum staff attends all special events in the NPM. The exact number will be determined by mutual consent with the co-sponsor on a case-by-case basis. Names and titles of these individuals will be provided to the donor/organization, if requested. This represents an important element in the overall public education/outreach program of the National Postal Museum.
4. The NPM's Office of External Affairs is an integral partner in all phases of the event process as well as a resource for assistance. A designated National Postal Museum Special events coordinator has final approval over all aspects of the event and will work directly with a single point of contact from the participating organization throughout event planning.

C. Event Time Frames

1. As a matter of Smithsonian policy, special events should not interfere with the normal public visitation to the museum. The regular operating hours of the National Postal Museum are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Given the need to allow for proper cleaning from the day's visitors to the National Postal Museum, event time frames must be approved by the NPM's Office of External Affairs.
2. Receptions/dinners, including a program, are designed for up to a three hour time period.
3. Requests for daytime events such as breakfasts, luncheons, and meetings will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

D. Speaking Program

Should a guest speaker(s) be included as a part of the event, the speaking program and/or topic must be non-partisan in nature. In order to confirm compliance with this requirement, each speaker's name and topic must be submitted in writing to the special events coordinator at least 6 weeks in advance of the event.

E. No Smoking Policy

Smoking is NOT permitted in the NPM at any time.

F. Logos and Trademarks

1. Any use in connection with the event of the trademark or logo of donor/organization must be approved in advance in writing by the Smithsonian Institution. Requests for all approvals of this nature are to be facilitated through NPM's Office of External Affairs, and are subject to Smithsonian policies on donor recognition.
2. The trademark or logotype of a donor or organization may be placed on the invitation; however, the Smithsonian logo must also be incorporated and must be cleared in advance with NPM's Office of External Affairs.
3. A trademark or logo of a donor or organization may not be used on a podium or anywhere in the NPM during the event.

G. Invitation/Program Design and Copy

1. The style and text of the invitation/program/handouts must be submitted to the special events coordinator and receive approval in writing prior to blue line stage.
2. Since the Smithsonian Institution is the co-host of the event, all invitations are issued from the Director of the National Postal Museum and/or an appropriate Smithsonian official. The donor/organization is also represented by the title of the highest-ranking representative of the co-hosting organization.

H. Invitation Guest List Policy

In order to provide background information to the NPM director, senior NPM staff, and Smithsonian security, the donor/organization will be requested to provide the names and affiliations of guests prior to the event. This list will not be used for solicitation or publicity purposes.

I. Promotional/Advertising Material

1. The name of the Smithsonian Institution is a registered trademark and may not be used in any document without prior written approval from NPM's Office of External Affairs.
2. Except as otherwise permitted in writing, the Smithsonian Institution does not permit or authorize the use of its name or images taken from within its museums to be used to promote or advertise products or services of any commercial organizations, contractors, or donors to the Smithsonian.
3. All printed materials and objects to be distributed, or visual presentations to be made at special events, must receive prior approval from NPM's Office of External Affairs.
4. Arrangements for press and broadcast media coverage of an event must be handled in conjunction with, and approved by, the NPM.
5. Any printed/visual/broadcast materials (i.e. brochures, advertisements, TV commercials, public service announcements, press kits, letterheads, press releases, banners, etc.) produced by the donor, by an organization acting on the donor's behalf, or by a co-hosting organization, which refer to the Smithsonian or its programs, must be submitted to the NPM's Office of External Affairs for approval by the Smithsonian Office of Communications and Public Affairs prior to use.
6. Advertising and promotional materials may make no reference to specific corporate brands, products, or services, or make use of advertising slogans concerning products or services. The exception is the case in which the company name and product are the same, e.g. Coca-Cola, Nike, Xerox.
7. Banners, either promotional or otherwise, may not be displayed inside or outside the NPM.

J. Videotaping/Recording

1. The format and equipment associated with still photography/videotaping/recording an event must consider the comfort level of guests and be approved in advance by the National Postal Museum special events coordinator. Cameras should be fully self-contained and use unobtrusive lighting.
2. Photographs and videotape footage of the NPM may be used for archival and non-commercial corporate and institutional purposes only, and may not be used for advertising/commercial or promotional purposes.

K. Catering Firms/Vendors

1. The National Postal Museum's special events coordinator will provide co-sponsoring organizations with a non-inclusive list of suggested catering firms and other vendors such as florists, beverage distributors, staging, sound and lighting vendors, musicians, etc., familiar with the procedures and operations within the NPM.
2. The selected catering firm/vendor is responsible for operating under the Smithsonian Institution Catering Guidelines.
3. The National Postal Museum has final approval in the selection of all vendors.
4. The catering firm/vendor must coordinate all arrangements and access to the NPM through the NPM special events coordinator.

5. The co-sponsoring organization is fully responsible for the actions and compliance of all vendors and service personnel to the Smithsonian Institution's special events operational procedures.
6. For seated events that take place in the Atrium, tables and chairs must be 4' from the exhibit cases.
7. Insurance - The donor/organization shall require its catering firm and other vendors to provide the Smithsonian Institution evidence of the limits of insurance, and shall name the Smithsonian Institution as an Additional Insured for the use of the facility. Such evidence of insurance may be provided by a Certificate of Insurance, and must be received by the National Postal Museum Office of External Affairs one week prior to the event.
 - a. Commercial General Liability -- \$1,000,000 per occurrence, including coverage for products liability and contractual liability.
 - b. Liquor Liability Coverage -- \$1,000,000.
 - c. Automobile Liability Coverage -- \$1,000,000 per accident for bodily injury and property damage.
 - d. Workers Compensation -- statutory limits.
8. Indemnification and Hold Harmless Provision - In its agreement with the donor/ organization, all vendors must agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Smithsonian Institution and its museums from any and all claims, liability, costs and expenses arising from any act or omission of the vendors, its agents or employees, including injury to the vendors employees or agents, or to a third party, arising out of the use of the facility. A signed certificate to this effect must be provided to the Smithsonian Institution by the vendors. Donor/organization must provide evidence of this agreement.
9. Leftover Food - It is common practice that after larger events, with co-sponsoring organizations' approval, arrangements are made with the caterer to distribute leftover food to DC Central Kitchen, who delivers it to area shelters and feeding programs.
10. No food or beverages are allowed in museum exhibit areas. While the museum is open to the public, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily, food and beverages may be served only in the Discovery Center. If the Discovery Center is used as a staging area, the carpeting must be covered with a plastic covering prior to preparation. Red wine is not permitted to be served in the museum. Museum staff reserves the right to ensure that guests comply with these regulations.
11. There will be at least one walk-through with the special events coordinator, the caterer, the event holder and/or representative and possibly other suppliers prior to the event.

L. Guarantee

To avoid potentially embarrassing situations for both the co-sponsoring organization and the National Postal Museum, security personnel are equipped with manual counters, and will limit admittance to the event if guest numbers exceed the number of guests confirmed to the National Postal Museum 72 hours prior to the event and the stated guarantee to the caterer by 15%.

M. Entertainment

Most forms of entertainment and dancing are permissible in the National Postal Museum with prior approval from the special events coordinator.

N. Lighting

Special lighting design significantly enhances the appearance/atmosphere of the event space. While this component is not required, it is highly recommended. Vendor information may be obtained from the special events coordinator.

O. Parking

There is no parking at the National Postal Museum; however, parking is available at Union Station for a fee. It is highly recommended that you secure valet parking for events that take place in the National Postal Museum.

P. Deposit

To secure a date on the museum calendar the National Postal Museum requires the co-sponsoring organization sign a memorandum of agreement and return it immediately with a non-refundable **room contribution fee**. An invoice, which will outline the direct costs for the event will be billed shortly after the event and the balance is due 30 days after the invoice date.

If an event must be canceled, the event may be rescheduled for a mutually convenient date.

Donations to the Smithsonian Institution will not be returned.

Q. Cost and Donations

In lieu of an event fee, the museum suggests all group and/or individuals holding an event at the National Postal Museum provide a tax deductible gift of at least \$5,500 to support special event activities at the Museum. The suggested amount is negotiable depending on the nature of the event and/or any extenuating circumstances. A letter pleading donation must be on file before any event can be firmly scheduled.

Event holders will still be responsible for all direct costs incurred by an event. The Office of External Affairs will provide the hosting organization with an estimate of the direct costs based on the specifics of the particular event.

Additional charges may be assessed as a result of damage, abuse, or for using services beyond those approved in advance. The user must accept full responsibility for such additional obligations and their settlement.

1. **Security**: The Office of Protection Services, in consultation with the special events coordinator will determine security requirements for an event, including the number of officers, elevator operators, and other staff needed. This staff will be billed at \$26.00 per person per hour. Officers report ½ hour before the event officially begins.
2. **Building Management**: The Building Management Division sets up and takes down all equipment (tables, chairs, etc.) of an event, including cleaning all areas that will be utilized during and after the event. The building foreman will determine the number staff required. Staff will be billed at \$22.00 per person per hour. Building Management staff reports ½ hour before the event officially begins.
3. **Audio/Visual**: The Smithsonian Audio Visual Services Division provides a wide range of audio/visual services. Charges are billed for the technician's time including set up and breakdown. Cost will be determined by Smithsonian Audio Visual Services.

4. Engineer: Vador Ventures operates the electricity and lighting in the museum space. Charges are billed for the technician's time at \$50.00 per hour.
5. Photographic Services: Smithsonian photographic services are available on an extremely limited basis for special events to provide pictures of archival or publicity interest. Additional charges are made for enlargements. Contact sheets are provided to the outside organization. Negatives remain the property of the Smithsonian. Photographic services are billed at \$40.00 per hour.
6. Horticulture Services: Smithsonian Horticulture allows for 5 plants and 5 flowering plants to be loaned free to events on a limited basis, if the request is made five business days prior to the event. Additional plants may be rented within certain guidelines.
7. Late Cancellation Charge: If an event is canceled, notification must be received by the special events coordinator no less than five working days before the event is scheduled. All canceled events, whether notification is late or timely, will be charged any direct costs incurred in preparing for the event.
8. Administrative Charge: An additional administrative charge of \$250 will be added to building fees to compensate the museum for staff time spent on event coordination.

For "major" donors to the museum, groups or individuals who have contributed \$100,000 or more, the museum may absorb building, security, and engineering costs. The museum will also make arrangements with caterers for major donors. The event holder will still be responsible for costs of catering.

R. Unanticipated interruptions

The National Postal Museum will bear no financial responsibility for any disruptions that may occur due to mechanical difficulties, Museum emergencies, or unanticipated events beyond the National Postal Museum's control.

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