

Fact Sheet

Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino and FY 2026 Funding

Background

After 30 years of public advocacy from congressional leaders, community members, grassroots movements and business figures, Congress established the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino through bipartisan legislation Dec. 27, 2020. Since its inception, the museum has worked to illuminate the rich stories of Latinos in the United States through dynamic exhibits, educational programs, community engagement and a growing collection.

The museum's creation has deepened the Smithsonian's ability to tell a more complete American story—one that honors the profound contributions of Latinos to the nation's cultural, economic and civic life.

More than a future landmark in Washington, D.C., the National Museum of the American Latino will serve as a vibrant space for storytelling, reflection and discovery—celebrating the vital role Latinos play in shaping what it means to be American.

A Full-Fledged Museum

The National Museum of the American Latino is a fully established museum that has raised approximately \$70 million in private funding to support its development. It has collected and accessioned over 250 objects and visited more than 50 communities nationwide to gather stories and cultural themes for the museum.

It has hired staff across all essential areas to build a world-class facility and launched a national membership program to broaden its reach. Through active collaboration with other museums and organizations, it produces exhibitions, advances scholarly research, delivers public programs, develops digital content and manages its growing collections. These efforts have fostered trust and engagement with thousands of supporters across the United States.

Key milestones since 2022 include:

- Opening a 4,500-square-foot gallery and multipurpose learning lounge
- Welcoming more than 900,000 exhibition visitors
- Facilitating over 400 tours for more than 8,000 visitors
- Delivering over 45 programs to 53,000 attendees in 14 cities in 11 states and in Washington, D.C.
- Selling more than 60,000 children's books and educational games
- Facilitating 33 youth programs for more than 700 participants
- Traveling two touring exhibitions across the United States

In addition to unveiling a logo and brand identity in fall 2024, the museum launched Making History, a national tour to raise awareness, build relationships with history makers and storytellers, and inspire support for the museum's mission. In spring 2026, the museum will open its second exhibition, "Puro Ritmo! The Musical Journey of Salsa."

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

Congress established the National Museum of the American Latino by statute in 2020 and has allocated funding for it in the fiscal year (FY) 2025 budget, enabling it to operate as usual. Both the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino and the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum have been on the same path for federal appropriations and site selection. However, the FY26 President's Budget did not provide funding for the National Museum of the American Latino and suggests a return to the previous method of sharing collections, programs and educational content across the Institution to chronicle American Latino history and culture. Appropriations are essential for the National Museum of the American Latino to continue its operations. Submission of the President's Budget is the first step in the FY26 appropriations process, which now moves to Congress for deliberation and passage. No decisions will be made until Congress passes a final FY26 appropriation.

Next Steps

The next key milestones for the National Museum of the American Latino include securing continued federal appropriations and finalizing a permanent location for its future home on or near the National Mall.

The Smithsonian's Board of Regents has identified the Tidal Basin, an undeveloped parcel bordered by Raoul Wallenberg Place S.W., Maine Avenue S.W. and Independence Avenue S.W., as the preferred location based on site evaluation criteria and extensive stakeholder input. The land is currently under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service and requires congressional approval before the Smithsonian's Board of Regents can finalize this designation. This proposal remains under active consideration by Congress.

Supporters of the National Museum of the American Latino can donate or sign up for newsletter updates at latino.si.edu. Follow @USLatinoMuseum on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [X](#).

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