



FAQ for Participating Sites
Chicago Open Archives: Collecting and Connecting

What is it?

CAA is organizing *Chicago Open Archives: Collecting and Connecting*, a three day opportunity for Chicagoans interested in history and cultural heritage to connect with archives. This October event is a great opportunity to showcase your collections to a wider audience than is usually possible. Your institution can participate in *Chicago Open Archives* by offering an activity that highlights your collections and program, in the way that best suits your situation. Our inspiration cities, [Portland](#), [Sacramento](#), and [Cambridge](#), all report a fantastic response from visitors. Let's add Chicago to the list of cities that connects our communities with our collections in fun and inspiring ways!

When is it?

Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, October 8-10, 2015. Choose the date that best suits your institution when you complete the Intent to Participate form.

Where is it?

Members of the public will visit your institution to see collections and learn about the services and programs you offer. Institutions throughout Chicago and the suburbs should consider participating.

How can my institution get involved?

Sign up using the [Intent to Participate form](#). Prior to submitting the form, please discuss the following with the appropriate staff in your institution:

- Name of Institution (this will be listed on publicity)
- Address (this is the address that will be listed as the activity location)
- Address where you can receive publicity materials by mail (if different from activity location)
- Name, email address, and phone number of the person who will be the primary contact for your institution (required). You can also name a second contact (optional).
- Type of activity and a brief description. This description will be used on CAA's website. You will have an opportunity to review and revise it prior to publication. We are suggesting the following types of activities:
 - Show and Tell: staff will select items from the collections to share with visitors.

- Behind the Scenes: staff will give visitors a guided tour of closed stacks, a conservation area, or other space not usually open to researchers in order to share information about the breadth of collections, areas of expertise, and/or services offered by your institution.
 - Exhibit Plus: staff will give a tour of an exhibit or a short exhibit talk and provide details about the items/collections that enhance the exhibit experience for visitors.
 - Combination: visitors will receive a sampler; for example: show and tell combined with a behind the scenes tour.
 - Other: possibilities include film screenings, lectures, or author readings, on topics related to your collections.
- The approximate duration of the activity you have planned. We recommend, but do not require, that an activity be approximately 30 minutes.
 - The maximum number of visitors you can accommodate for the activity you have planned. For example, if you are offering a tour, what is the maximum number of visitors who can take the tour at one time? If the tour will be offered twice, specify number per tour or total of both tours.
 - Can you accept guests in the first-come, first-served style; or, do you require advance registration? Note: when registration is required, visitors will register through the CAA website and CAA will convey information to the primary contacts at sites.
 - If your institution charges an admission fee, will it apply to this activity?
 - Chicago Open Archives runs October 8-10. On which day will you offer your activity, and will you offer it during the day (10AM-4PM) or evening (5-7 PM)? CAA will work with you to confirm dates and exact times prior to publishing these details on our website.

By submitting the form, you are indicating a good-faith intention to offer the activity that you describe on the form and you agree to have your institution listed on the CAA website and other publicity materials. If you need to cancel your participation, CAA will remove your institution from the list of sites on our website, but we may be unable to make changes to any print materials.

Additional Information

CAA will coordinate the overall planning of *Chicago Open Archives: Collecting and Connecting* by recruiting institutions to participate, publicizing the event on the CAA website and local media outlets, providing printed materials such as posters to participating institutions, recruiting volunteers to assist your staff at the time of the event, and coordinating registration for sites that require advanced reservations from visitors. If we do not receive at least 15 Intent to Participate forms by June 15, 2015, CAA reserves the right to cancel *Chicago Open Archives: Collecting and Connecting* due to a low-level of participation. Please note that CAA is not responsible for providing financial assistance to participating sites, for visitors while they are at your site, for providing transportation for visitors, or for collecting institutional admission fees.

Timeline

- April 13: Sign up opens
- June 15: First deadline to sign up
- June 16-30: Sign up unavailable. CAA reviews existing Intent to Participate forms
- June 30-July 3: CAA sends an update to institutions that signed up by the 15 June deadline
- July 1-25: Sign up open; institutions that already signed up should not sign up again
- July 25: Final deadline to sign up
- August: Activity descriptions and details are finalized by the end of the month; CAA will send updates about deadlines and details to participating sites in the summer.
- September: activity descriptions and details posted on CAA website and registration for visitors opens; CAA will send updates about deadlines and details to participating sites in the summer.
- October 8-10: Chicago Open Archives

Do you have more questions?

If you have additional questions about participating in *Chicago Open Archives: Collecting and Connecting*, send an email to info@chicagoarchivists.org.