



Starting Right: A Basic Guide to Museum Planning (American Association for State and Local History)

By Gerald George, Carol Maryan-George

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Are you thinking of starting a museum? *Starting Right* has been helping non-professionals learn the basics of museum planning for nearly three decades. This fully-revised, third edition will help you understand what you are getting into, evaluate prospects, avoid pitfalls, and take advantage of many kinds of available help. Addressing current and perennial issues facing new museums, from digital technologies to fund raising concerns, *Starting Right* takes you step-by-step through the process of creating a sound plan for starting your museum.

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Editorial Review

Review

For anyone thinking of launching a museum, historical society, or similar organization, *Starting Right* is the place to begin. The authors are knowledgeable, the scope is comprehensive, the advice is sound, the writing is clear, and the examples and sample documents are models. *Starting Right* is also a useful tool for museum studies students, a meaningful guide for trustees of existing museums, and a helpful review for museum professionals. (G. Rollie Adams, President and CEO, The Strong)

A museum is "an organization for valuing and explaining real things." This volume on the practical tasks necessary to create such organizations was first published in 1986 by George and coauthor C. Sherrell-Leo, who improved it with a second edition in 2004. Now, taking advantage of current technology, writer/editor George and museum professional/archivist Maryan-George present a third edition with more improvements. Organized into ten chapters in four parts that cover all aspects of museum operations, this resembles an efficient recipe book written for ready understanding by interested amateurs and illuminated by frequent pithy examples and introductions of technical terms. Part 1, "The Big Questions," addresses what makes a good museum. In part 2, "Nuts and Bolts," practical considerations include funding and legal hurdles. Part 3 is titled "Alternatives," and part 4 is "Some Basic Documents." Rather than simply encouraging readers to become involved with the comprehensive tasks involved with starting a museum, the authors ask readers to think about each step to ensure their readiness to do the research, handle financial structuring, acquire collections of "real things," attract proper staff and reliable volunteers, fix up a building, and more. Chapters include extensive lists of helpful resources, providing information about each step in the creative process. Following the suggestions made in these accessible pages should help courageous museum builders "start right." Summing Up: **Recommended**. Lower-level undergraduates and above; general readers. (*CHOICE*)

About the Author

Gerald George is a professional writer and editor. He served as director of the American Association for State and Local History from 1978 to 1987.

Carol Maryan-George is an experienced museum professional and archivist who has held positions at numerous historic sites and museums, including Old Sturbridge Village and the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of African Art.

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