

**Connecting a Region Through a Scalable
& Modular Panel Exhibition**

MOMENTS



THAT MADE US

Our story was never inevitable. We shaped it at every turn.



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THAT MADE US

Connecting a Region Through a Scalable & Modular Panel Exhibition

Moments That Made US (MTMU) is a free, customizable, print-on-demand exhibition exploring the ideals at the heart of the Declaration of Independence through moments in our history that have defined their meaning.



Statewide Partners



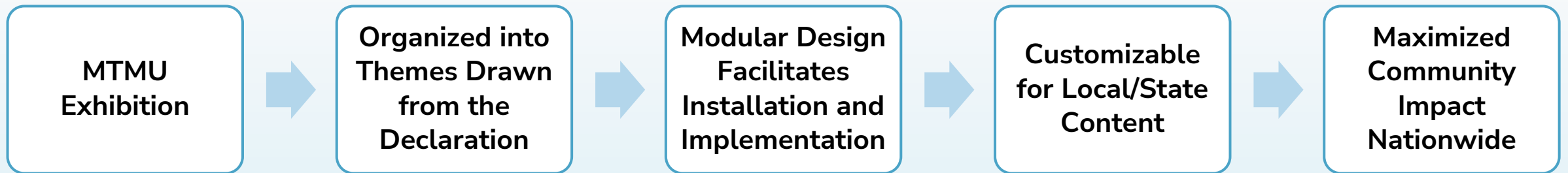
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The Problem(s)

- What does America250 look like in the West?
- How can organizations tell national stories that matter to local communities?
- What are the limitations of traveling exhibitions? Can we rethink them?
- How can field services staff provide tangible tools and resources to support smaller institutions best?
- How can institutions better partner to share resources?
- Time is ticking! How do we work better under hard time constraints?

The Solution: A Unique Value Proposition

An exhibition developed through a multi-state collaboration model that inherently incorporates unique and varied viewpoints and expertise, distributing the work of exhibition development across more stakeholders, and resulting in a product that is accessible to all, at no cost.



Key Project Features

- Collaboratively curated Declaration themes and national “moments”
- 26 ready-to-use branded panels (plus blank branded templates for adding local content)
- High-resolution images of significant American artifacts representing each “moment”
- Implementation guide with “how to” instructions, ideas for local artifacts, and suggested programming ideas
- Spanish language translations available



“Moment” panel



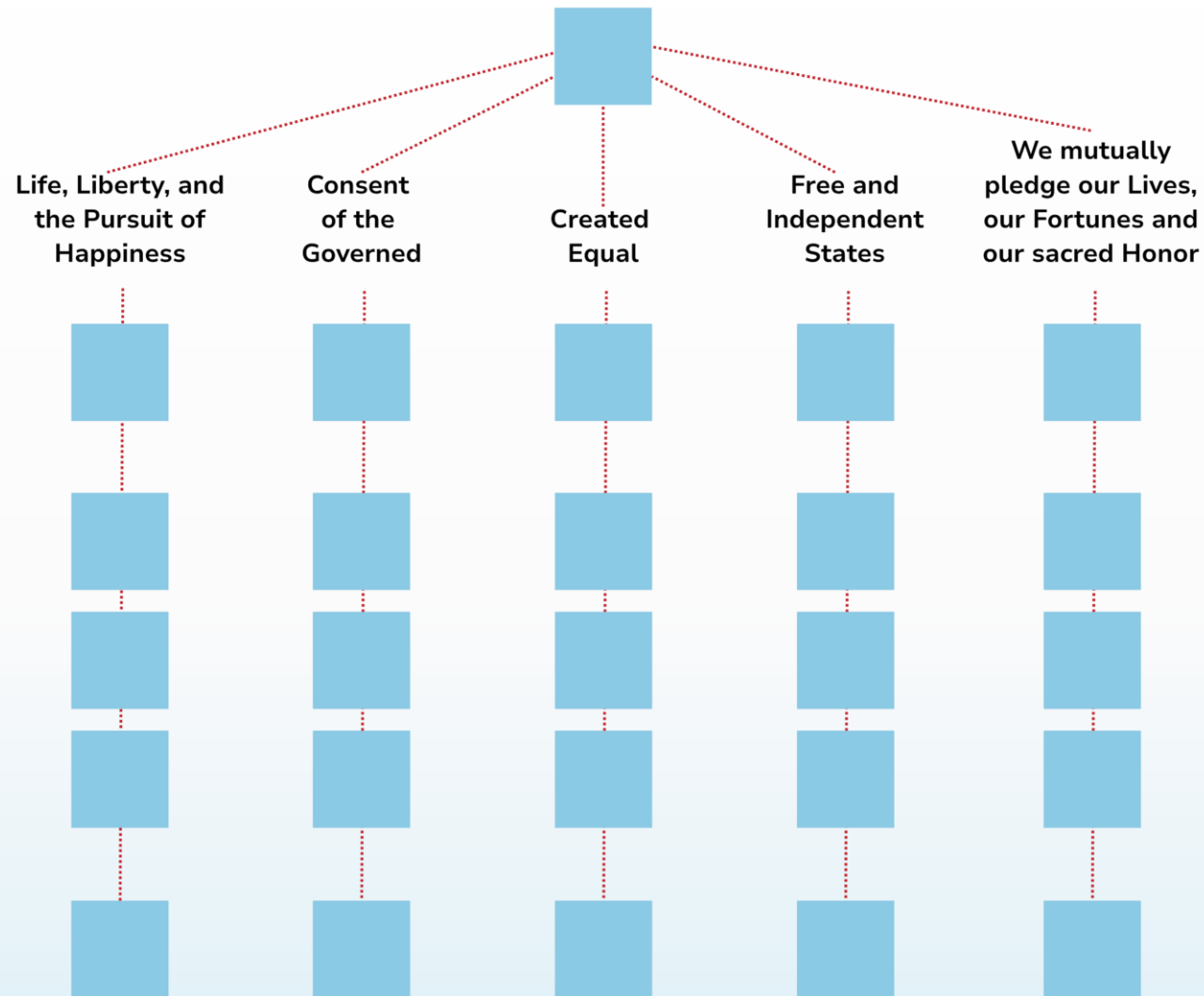
Blank panels for customization



Exhibition Content Plan

- National themes are the organizing principle and drawn from the text from the Declaration
- Moments represent a selection of “greatest hits” in US history
 - Selected moments span three centuries
 - Five of the 15 moments are from the Revolutionary War era (one under each theme)
 - Moments touches on a wide variety of topics including women, slavery, natural resources, and tribal history, among others.
- Users can add local, regional, or state content to augment the moments content provided within the exhibition





*An **opening panel** will introduce the exhibition and the five themes selected from the Declaration of Independence*

*Each **theme** will have its own establishing panel*

*Three “**moments**” panels under each theme will interpret our nation’s history through a Western states lens*

*Each theme will have a **reflection** panel for audience participation*

Declaration Theme #1 | Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

1. **1607: English Colonization:** Tobacco pipe fragments from Jamestown (c. 1608–1624)
2. **1849: Gold Rushes:** Assayer's scales from Fairbanks and Company, New York (c. 1860); Gold samples from Chaffee, Colorado (c. 1860)
3. **1956: Interstate Highways:** Gasoline pump from Golden, Colorado (1930s–1970s)

Declaration Theme #2 | Consent of the Governed

1. **1676: Bacon's Rebellion:** Iron grenade fragments from Jamestown (1676)
2. **1735: Freedom of the Press:** Pages from issues of *The New York Weekly Journal* (March 10, 1734; March 17, 1734; and June 16, 1735)
3. **1846: War with Mexico:** Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)

Declaration Theme #3 | Created Equal

1. **1848: Declaration of Sentiments:** Original printing of the *Declaration of Sentiments* (1848)
2. **1957: School Desegregation:** *The Pix*, Little Rock Central High School yearbook (1958)
3. **1990: Americans with Disabilities Act:** Frontier Horizon emergency procedures brochure in braille (1983)

Declaration Theme #4 | Free and Independent States

1. **1787: Constitutional Crisis:** *Various bills of early United States currency (1776, 1778, & 1779)*
2. **1970: Environmental Movement:** KILZUM insecticide (c. 1970); Sherwin-Williams insecticide (c. 1970); Insect spray with DDT (c. 1970)
3. **1975: Marriage Laws:** Certified copies of marriage licenses from the Boulder County Clerk (1975)

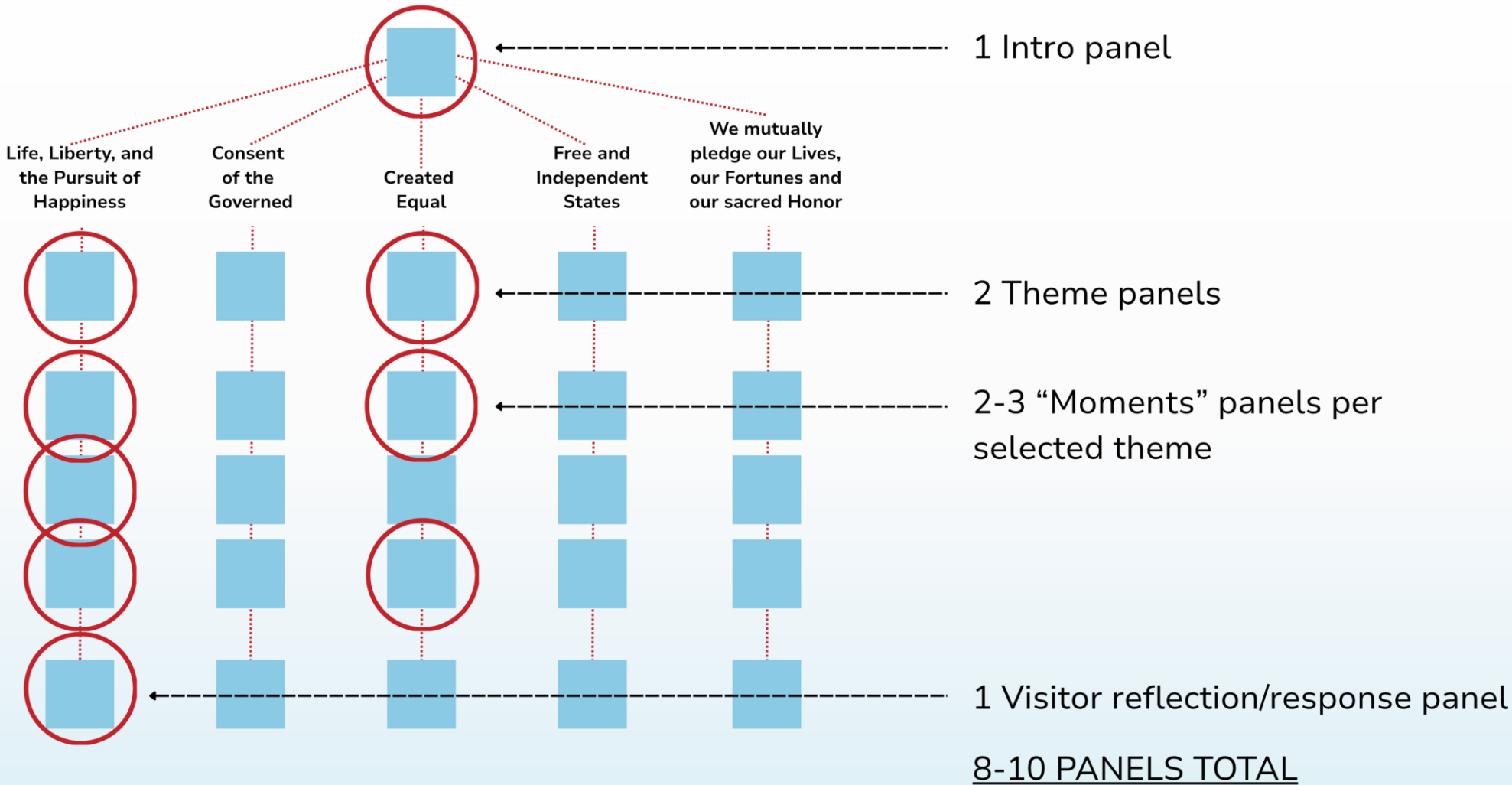
Declaration Theme #5 | We mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor

1. **1776: American Revolution:** General George Washington's spurs (1775)
2. **1863: Emancipation Proclamation:** "Men of Color: To Arms! To Arms! Now or Never" broadside (1863)
3. **1944: D-Day:** US Army M1 combat helmet (c. 1940)

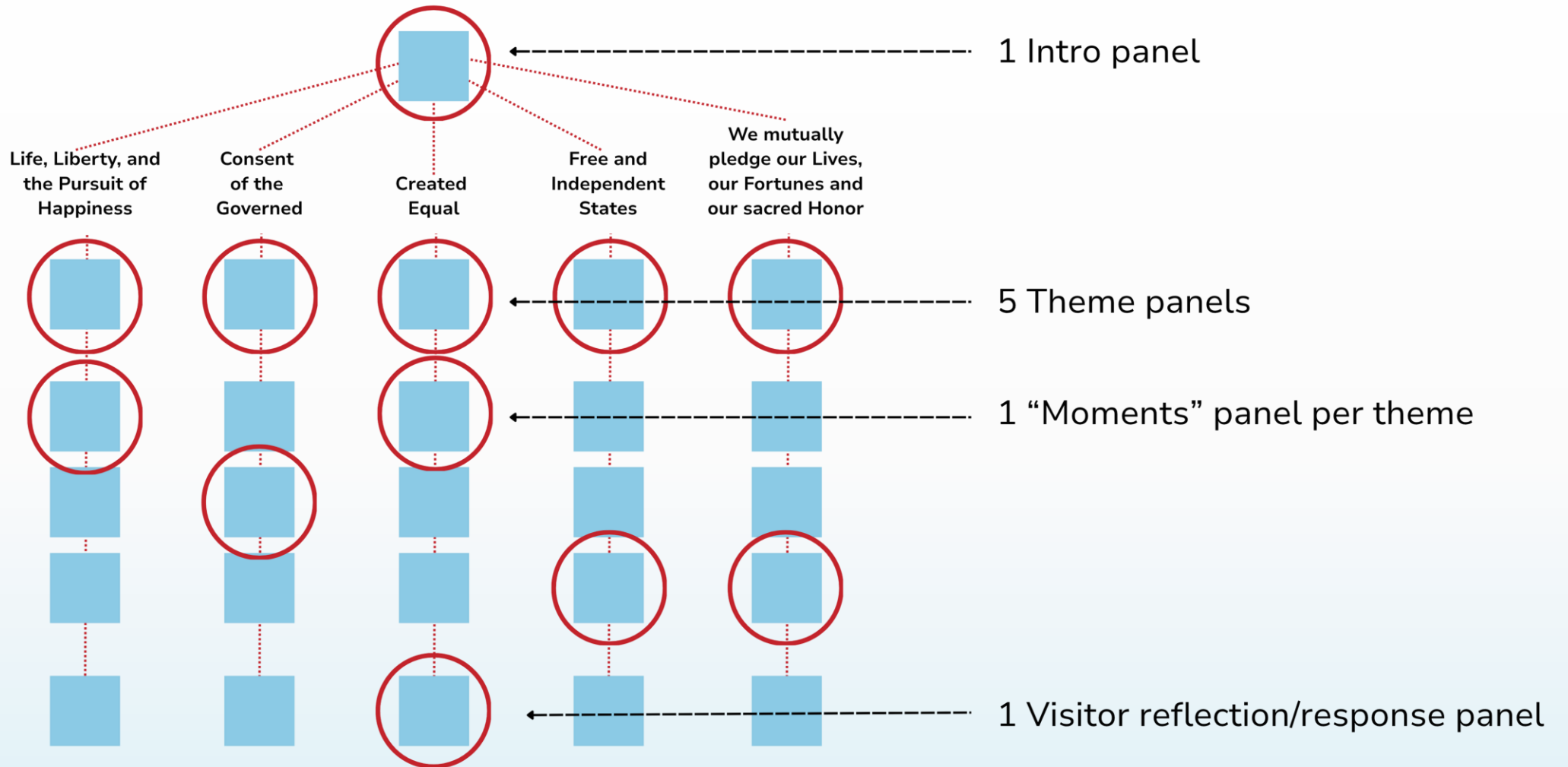
What if we don't have space to display all the panels?



Example 1: Choose fewer themes with more “moments” featured per theme

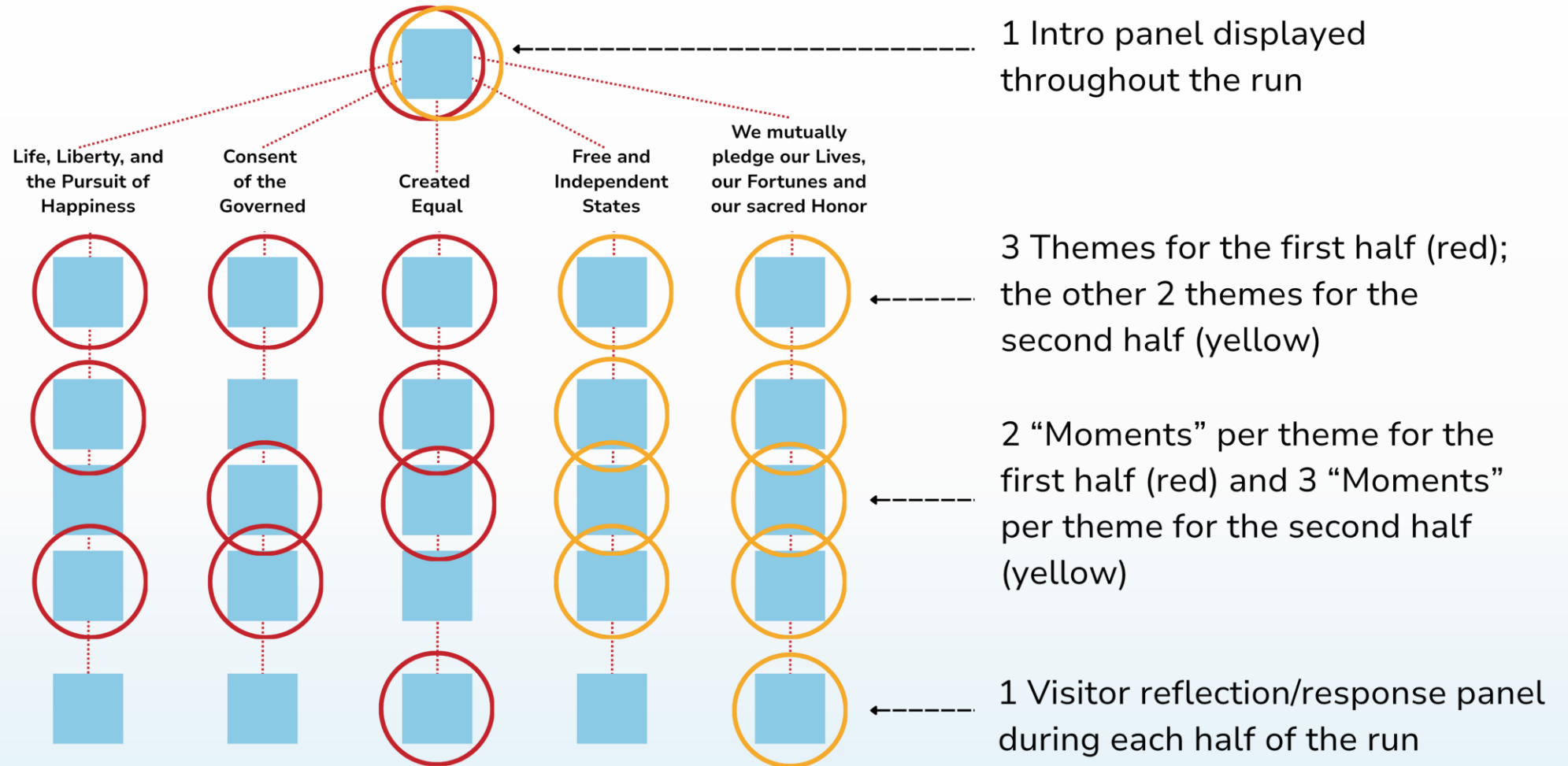


Example 2: Use all the themes but with fewer “moments” per theme



12+ PANELS TOTAL

Example 3: Rotate the content throughout the year



20+ PANELS TOTAL

Downloadable Materials

- All 26 ready-to-print panels (PDF)
 - One (1) intro panel
 - Five (5) theme panels
 - Fifteen (15) national “moments” panels
 - Five (5) visitor reflection panels
- Illustrator (.ai) & Canva templates and related graphic assets to help you create local “moments,” additional reflection panels, etc.
- Implementation guide, including:
 - Accessibility recommendations
 - More suggested panel groupings, local interpretation ideas, and object pairings
 - Evaluation suggestions and sample questions
 - Programming ideas
 - Press release template
 - Social media template
 - Flyer template

The Market Opportunities

Over the last several years, museums have shifted moderately towards creating more exhibitions in-house as compared to renting traveling exhibitions. This change may be partially due to disruptions caused by the pandemic, the rising cost of shipping, and insurance challenges.



Source: AAM 2024 National Snapshot of US Museums

- 50 states + Washington, D.C. + 5 US territories = thousands of organizations as potential users.
- Potential reach: millions of Americans every year.

Potential for Future Application

- Regional/collaborative approach supports curated broad content plus the **incorporation of localized stories** that resonate with local audiences
- An approach that can counter **commemoration fatigue** and diffuse the content burden for individual institutions
- **Less costly and more flexible/adaptable** than typical traveling exhibitions to fit target audience needs
- **Field services** staff see this model as a solution to provide direct, tangible support for small and especially volunteer-run museums

Next Steps & Opportunities for Engagement

Milestones:

1. Publicly announced the project in July with an information guide
2. Released a more detailed User's Guide and hosted a webinar to explain the concept and customization strategies
3. Full digital package, including exhibition files, logos, and fonts, forthcoming in January 2026.

Engagement Opportunities:

- Inquire about becoming a state rep to help promote and distribute
- Establish metrics of success for the concept and exhibition



*Scan here to express
interest!*

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Questions?