

AMERICA'S 250TH
SOUTH DAKOTA



*Planning Guide for the 250th
Celebration Commemoration of the
United States in South Dakota.*

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Refer to this guide when planning thematic events, to access educational materials, for branding guidance, or to understand our commemoration. This document will be expanded periodically, so be sure to check for updates on our website.

Commission Members

Peggy Besch, Dept. of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Julie Breu, Local History Organizations

Caleb Finck, Tripp

Sec. David Flute, Dept. of Tribal Relations

Catherine Forsch, Historical Society Foundation

David Grabitske, State Historical Society

Kurt Hackemer, Board of Regents

Sec. James Hagen, Dept. of Tourism

Connie Hohn, Dept. of Military

Dr. Benjamin F. Jones, Chair and State Historian

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Shane Penfield, Lemmon

Sen. Tim Reed, SD Legislature

Sec. Kevin Robling, Dept. of Game, Fish, and Parks

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Rep. Tyler Tordsen, SD Legislature

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Support Staff

Calvin Bloemendaal, Dept. of Tourism

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Nick Harrington, Dept. of Game, Fish, and Parks

Jamie Hageman, SD State Historical Society

A message from our chair:

We have an opportunity to do something few people anywhere in the world, at any time in history, have ever done. To celebrate and commemorate the 250th anniversary of the republic in which we live.

From 1776 to today, the Declaration of Independence has provided the unifying idea that we and past Americans have aimed to achieve. It advances the central ideas that equality and individual rights are the ends for which our



government strives. In 1776, no government on earth expressed such aspirations. This idea is a powerful one that inspired Revolutionary soldiers and sailors, the citizens of the new nation, the American people since, and political movements abroad. The United States was unique in the world in 1776 and still today it remains one of the few nations where the people rule and individual rights are protected. Balancing forces us to constantly balance the tensions. Therefore, our domestic tranquility is often elusive.

South Dakota was founded by Civil War veterans. They understood the benefits of the Declaration and the tragedy of such strife, but sacrificed so much so that we today could enjoy the fruits of their service. But that tension remains and requires a knowledgeable and virtuous citizenry to make it work for the benefit of a future for all. Given this, it's fitting that we take this opportunity of the nation's 250th birthday to connect back to the Declaration of Independence, seek to understand its ideas, and renew our commitment by learning how as a nation we have lived it out over the past 250 years. It is fitting that we mark this milestone and appreciate the path traveled getting here. The America's 250th South Dakota Commission thank you in advance for your hard work and wish your community and organization all the best in your efforts to celebrate and commemorate our nation's Semiquincentennial.

-Dr. Benjamin F. Jones, State Historian and Director
of the South Dakota State Historical Society-

Who is America 250 SD?

Established by Governor Kristi Noem on July 6, 2023 with [Executive Order 2023-11](#), the America 250th South Dakota Commission was created to plan, encourage, develop, coordinate, and promote observances and activities to be held in South Dakota in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of our nation's beginning, in celebration of our present, and in anticipation of our promising future.

Our Mission:

Engage, Educate, and Unite South Dakotans to deepen their understanding of American History, South Dakota history, and the democratic process through education; increased engagement in our communities and civic affairs by coordinating a statewide celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

Our Duties:

To encourage, plan, develop, and execute programs, projects, and activities to **commemorate** the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

- To **encourage** private organizations, State and local governments to organize and participate in activities commemorating the Semiquincentennial of the United States.
- To **facilitate and coordinate** activities throughout South Dakota relating to the Semiquincentennial of the United States.
- To **serve as a clearinghouse** for the collection and dissemination of information about events and plans for the Semiquincentennial of the United States.
- To develop **recommendations** for State departments and the Governor for commemorating the Semiquincentennial of the United States.

National Partners

As a state partner at the national level, we support national level themes and events. The national website is a guide to upcoming America 250 programming and initiatives. See: America250.org

South Dakota's Themes for communities to align to:

Proving up the Declaration:

These should be educational events that illuminate how Americans have worked to make the ideals of the Declaration of Independence a reality. Events featuring or discussing the history of American Indian rights, women's suffrage, various minority communities, property rights, etc could all be examples of how Americans have striven towards the right of, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" while making sure that our society reflects that all people are, "created equal."

Preserving Local History

This kind of effort would focus on improving the historic nature of a specific place, building, neighborhood, or setting with the goal of restoring it to reflect its historic design or purpose.

Toward the Tricentennial

These kinds of actions invest in the nation's citizens who would be experiencing the nation's Tricentennial in 2076. Educational activities to children and young adults would be an example or creating things that could be enjoyed by people in 2076 such as artwork, poetry, historical books and essays, that would enhance their understanding of the nation's past.

America 250 SD Committees

State Commemorative

Mission: To develop ideas for state-level events. Encourage Gubernatorial and Legislative involvement. To assist and facilitate relationship building and opportunities to produce these events beginning in 2024.

Community Commemorative

Mission: To develop ideas for execution in individual counties and communities commemorating the Semiquincentennial of the United States. To originate templates for a model county celebration and suggest opportunities for America250 partnership and guidance to counties.

Education and Engagement

Mission: To cultivate concepts and ideas for education about commemorating the Semiquincentennial of the United States. To identify target audiences and corresponding opportunities to engage them in education and commemorative activities. To originate ideas for speaking events, books, artwork, music, web content and social platforms.

Partners

Are you interested in becoming a partner?
Follow the [link](#) on our website and fill out the form.

Partners Receive:

- Logo recognition on the SD America's 250th and SD Historical Society website linking to your organization's specific Semiquincentennial projects.
- Promotion of your special events in the new statewide Historical events calendar.
- Invitations to America's 250th SD and Historical Society events.

Partners Agree to:

- Identify and develop specific projects that help to support the mission of America 250 SD, or support a specific project of America250 SD.
- Include the America's 250th SD logo and website link on your website.
- Include the America's 250th SD logo on promotional items for your projects as provided by America250 SD in our style guide.

- Promote and create events as part of the America's 250th SD partnership as described in our planning guide.
- Share America's 250th SD communications and information with your employees and audiences.
- Promote fundraising for state and local events. Specific fundraising would be done by unique agreements or understandings.

Our Current Partners include:

[1881 Courthouse
Museum](#)

[South Dakota Society
DAR](#)

[The Center for
Western Studies at
Augustana University](#)

[Deadwood Historic
Preservation](#)

[Mary Chilton Chapter
DAR](#)

[Yankton County
Historical Society](#)

[Dacotah Prairie
Museum](#)

[Edith B. Siegrist
Vermillion Public
Library](#)

[West River History
Conference](#)

[Made By Us](#)

[Lake Norden Historical
Society](#)

[Easton Castle/O-TE-
LA Conservancy](#)

[The South Dakota
Military Heritage
Alliance](#)

[USS South Dakota
Memorial Foundation](#)

[South Dakota Board of
Education Standards](#)

[South Dakota
Humanities Council](#)

[Sioux Falls Airshow,
Inc](#)

[Crooks Veterans
Park](#)

Tribal Relations

America250 honors the unique government-to-government relationship between Tribal nations and the United States, and we commit to partnering with Tribal nations and organizations.

America's 250th SD will collaborate with Tribal organizations, nations, and communities to engage with America's complicated past, understand our present, and envision our future together as we build toward 2026 and beyond.

Community Resolutions

How can you participate?

Communities may participate in a number of ways. The America's 250th SD Executive Commission will be offering Semiquiencentennial participation following the application listed

below. It is our goal to make sure any community interested in participation is recognized. Also listed below are blank resolutions for Counties and Cities to develop their own committee to assist in planning events. Committee members under these resolutions will be part of the Community Commemoration Committee.

County Resolution:

RESOLUTION OF _____ COUNTY

RECOGNIZING AND APPROVING OF THE
_____ COUNTY

OFFICIAL AMERICA's 250th SD COMMITTEE

A resolution of _____ County, South Dakota, supporting the America's 250th SD committee for the United States semiquincentennial.

WHEREAS the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission (America 250) was established by Congress in 2016 to plan and orchestrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence; and

WHEREAS, Kristi Noem, Governor of South Dakota, created AMERICA's 250th SD to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of United States' history leading up to the 250th anniversary of the United States' founding;

WHEREAS, AMERICA's 250th SD has a mission to engage, educate, and unite South Dakotans to deepen their understanding of American history, South Dakota history, and the democratic process through education; increased engagement in our communities and civic affairs by coordinating a statewide celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States; and

WHEREAS, by adoption of America's 250th SD's mission, the Community Commemorative Committee is officially formed to achieve the goals of AMERICA's 250th SD.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of hereby endorses AMERICA's 250th SD and its mission; and

RESOLVED, the _____ County of officially establishes an AMERICA's 250th SD Committee made up of a diverse group of citizens to work with AMERICA's 250th SD on any and all activities. The participants of the _____ County Committee will be strictly voluntary roles and there will be no compensation for participation.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the legislative delegation and the AMERICA's 250th SD Committee.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 202_.

City Resolution

RESOLUTION OF _____ CITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

RECOGNIZING AND APPROVING OF _____ CITY
OF SOUTH DAKOTA

AN OFFICIAL AMERICA's 250th SD COMMUNITY

A resolution of _____ County, South Dakota, supporting the America's 250th SD committee for the United States semiquincentennial.

WHEREAS the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission (America 250) was established by Congress in 2016 to plan and orchestrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence; and

WHEREAS, Kristi Noem, Governor of South Dakota, created America's 250th SD to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of United States' history leading up to the 250th anniversary of the United States' founding;

WHEREAS, America's 250th SD has a mission to engage, educate, and unite South Dakotans to deepen their understanding of American history, South Dakota history, and the democratic process through education; increased engagement in our communities and civic affairs by coordinating a statewide celebration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States; and

WHEREAS, by adoption of America's 250th SD's mission, the Community Commemorative Committee is officially formed to achieve the goals of America's 250th SD.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the _____ city of South Dakota hereby endorses America's 250th SD and its mission; and

RESOLVED, the _____ city of South Dakota officially establishes an America's 250th SD Committee made up of a diverse group of citizens to work with America's 250th SD on any and all activities. The participants of the _____ city of South Dakota Committee will be strictly voluntary roles and there will be no compensation for participation.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the legislative delegation and the America's 250th SD Committee.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 202_.

State and Community Events

Walk 250 miles to 2026!

250 miles in one year by 2026. Along the way, participate in challenges to earn special prizes. For example, walk 150 miles in Deadwood to support the town's 150th anniversary, or walk 80 miles for the Battleship SD Memorial in remembrance of 80 years since WWII.

Library Book Program:

As part of our goal to deepen South Dakotan knowledge of our history. Join our special America 250 SD Library book program. In our monthly e-newsletter, we will announce a book of recommendation for each subject we aim to encourage education and promotion of local libraries. These subjects include the American Revolution, South Dakota History, Native American History, Historical Figures, Civics, and many more! Stay tuned for more details!

From the Vault: Ideas from the Bicentennial Commission (Coming soon!)

Essay Contest; "What America Means to me"

SDREA- 'A Flag on every SD Farm'

Photo Contest: 'Rural Scenes in SD'

State Logo and Branding Guidelines

(Click on image below to access file)



South Dakota - America 250
Logo and Branding Guidelines

Useful Links and Historical Resources

[America's 250th SD](#)

[State Historical Society](#)

[Historical Society Calendar of Events](#)

[SD Digital Archives](#)

[Library Archive](#)

[Chronicling America](#)

[SD State Library](#)

[Liberty Fund](#)

[The Museum of the American Revolution](#)

[The American Battlefield Trust](#)

Notes

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