



IDAHO STATE  
**HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

# The Idaho State Historical Society Supporter Toolkit

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## INTRODUCTION

The Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) is committed to serving Idahoans across the state with exhibits, programming, grants, and scholarships. The ISHS appreciates your interest in highlighting the value that we bring to you through our work by sharing your experience with friends, family, and your community.

The ISHS created the Supporter Toolkit after Idahoans began asking how they could share that they had benefited from our services. The Toolkit is designed to help you celebrate your experience with the ISHS, including any personal or community successes that you achieved while engaging with the organization.

The ISHS Supporter Toolkit includes:

- The instructions manual you are currently reading
- Talking points to reference and/or copy when writing content for letters, emails, and social media posts
- Templates that can be used to draft letters
- Graphics for use on social media

**The ISHS Supporter Toolkit is not an advocacy tool.** It should NOT be used to lobby elected officials to take any measures, including voting on funding or policy. Please avoid using phrases that urge taking actions such as:

- “Increase funding for the Idaho State Historical Society”
- “Vote in favor/against (x)”
- “Please sponsor a bill that would do (x) to help the Idaho State Historical Society”

The Idaho State Historical Society appreciates your support. Our work is inspired by Idahoans like you who respect and cherish our shared history. If you have any questions or concerns while you are using the ISHS Supporter Toolkit, don’t hesitate to contact us at (208) 334-2682 or [information@ishs.idaho.gov](mailto:information@ishs.idaho.gov).



## THE ISHS GENERAL TALKING POINTS

- The Idaho State Historical Society was created in 1881 and established as a state agency in 1907 to preserve and promote Idaho's history.
- The ISHS is a system of cultural and historic resources that includes the Idaho State Museum, Idaho State Archives, Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Old Idaho Penitentiary, and Historic Sites Program.
- The Idaho State Historical Society preserves and provides access to irreplaceable state-owned historic collections, including prehistoric, historic, and state artifacts; photographs, maps, manuscripts, and architectural drawings; and territorial, county, city, and state government records. The ISHS is also a steward of and maintains 61 buildings, which include historic and significant structures.
- The Idaho State Historical Society serves more than 110,000 people each year through educational programs, inspiring exhibitions, fun events, genealogy and family history, research use, and technical assistance. Annually, over 15,000 school-aged children benefit from the ISHS programs and visits.
- The Idaho State Historical Society curates irreplaceable state-owned collections, including photographs, artifacts, manuscripts, microfilm, archaeological artifacts, publications, and government records.
- The Idaho State Museum serves more than 60,000 visitors and students annually.
  - The Museum has numerous learning opportunities including school field trips, traveling trunks, special changing exhibitions, National History Day in Idaho, and the Pioneer Village Interpretive Garden.
- The Old Idaho Penitentiary serves more than 75,000 visitors and students annually.
  - The Old Idaho Penitentiary has numerous learning opportunities including special events, school field trips, 30 historic buildings, programs, and special exhibits such as the J. Curtis Earl Memorial Exhibit.
- The Idaho State Archives and State Records Center provides information and understanding about Idaho history through access to essential government records and documents including newspapers, books, periodicals, oral histories, military records, maps, blueprints, photographs, microfilm/fiche, digital assets, and business and organizational records.
  - The State Records Center provides records management services to 36 agencies within state government and fulfills more than 4,000 requests annually.
- The State Historic Preservation Office fulfills the mandates of the National Historic Preservation Act including the National Register of Historic Places, Certified Local Government grants, Federal Historic Tax Credits, and Section 106 Review and Compliance. It oversees the Archaeological Survey of Idaho and its western repository and manages information about Idaho's archaeological and historic sites. The State Historic Preservation office manages and provides access to approximately 173,000 cultural resource-related documents, including survey reports, site, and project review files.

## ESTO PERPETUA AWARDS TALKING POINTS

The Esto Perpetua Award takes its name from the state's motto, "let it be perpetual." The Idaho State Historical Society has recognized people and organizations that have preserved and promoted Idaho's history through professional accomplishments, public service or volunteerism, and philanthropy.

Since the ISHS created the award in 1999, Esto Perpetua has recognized the inspiring local preservation efforts of more than 180 individuals and organizations throughout the state of Idaho. The work of an Esto Perpetua awardee reflects dedication, commitment, and passion for Idaho and its history.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING LETTERS

A letter highlighting the value of the Idaho State Historical Society is a great way to deliver a personal and purposeful message. A template letter has been included in this Toolkit. You can copy and edit the text to match what you want to convey or you may prefer to draft a letter from scratch. Whatever you choose, consider the following tips:

1. Before starting, think about why you are writing the letter. What do you want this reader to know or understand about the ISHS? Do you want the recipient to know, for example, about your time as a student participating in National History Day, a family discovery learned while viewing the Trailblazing Women of Idaho exhibit, the value of membership, or a grant you received for your community? Is there an event or opportunity that could pique the interest of your reader?
2. Open your letter with a greeting and the purpose for writing. For assistance with an opening, refer to the letter template or some of the talking points in this Toolkit. For additional data or information to demonstrate the impact of the ISHS, visit [history.idaho.gov](https://history.idaho.gov) or contact the [State Historical Society Offices](#).
3. Share in a way that elevates your own experience(s) and appreciation for the ISHS. This can be done by including details like dates, locations, or even people you met through the ISHS. Authenticity about your experiences and what you appreciate about the ISHS will resonate with readers and give them better insight into why the ISHS's exhibits, programming, grants, and its presence is essential in our state.

### BEFORE SENDING, CHECK:

- Spelling, throughout your letter
- Contact information for your letter, that you have listed the name and address of your reader correctly as well as your own information
- Tone and language, ensuring that both are appropriate for your message and reader
- Length, aim to keep your letter to a page or less

REMINDER: Please do not ask elected leaders to fund the ISHS or in any way support, or oppose, legislation related to the ISHS in your letters to them.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR EMAILING

Email can be an effective and efficient method for sharing your experience or support for the ISHS with friends, community members, and influencers. To help draft your email, consider some of these helpful tips for communicating about your experience and why you're sharing. We've also provided talking points designed to offer guidance or inspiration. For some, it may be easier to follow the structure of the letter template in this Toolkit, and if that's the case, simply copy and paste the contents into an email and make the personal adjustments that fit your experience.

1. Capture the reader's attention and encourage them to open your email with a captivating subject line. Nearly half of email recipients open an email based on the subject line. We suggest using a functional, descriptive subject line that lets the recipient know what to expect. Here are some examples:
  - Why My First Visit to the Museum Turned Me into a Member
  - How The ISHS Lincoln Exhibit Makes Important Connections
  - Fun, Local Experience for My Students at Rock Creek
  - How My Child Gained Confidence Through National History Day
  - Community Enhancement Grants Preserved Our Twin Falls History
2. Provide context as to why you are communicating. Expand on the email's subject line and set the stage for the reader to understand why they are receiving the message. If this is an acquaintance or someone who doesn't know you well, we suggest introducing yourself.
3. Use the body of the email to describe your experience with the ISHS and its significance in Idaho. Be authentic and incorporate a personal touch.
4. Include statistics, attachments, or links that spark further engagement (refer to some Talking Points or the [Agency Fact Sheet](#)). Where appropriate, link to specific ISHS website pages and/or social media where they can learn more about Idaho history and upcoming events or opportunities.

### BEFORE SENDING, CHECK:

- Subject line, make sure to look for and remove sensational language that might trigger spam filters
  - Examples: "You Won't Believe", "Click Here", using all caps, etc.
- Spelling, throughout your letter
- Contact information for your letter, that you have listed the name and address of your reader correctly
- Tone and language, ensuring that both are appropriate for your message and reader
- Length, aim to keep your email to a one-page letter or less
- That you have included your correct contact information

REMINDER: Please do not ask elected leaders to fund the ISHS or in any way support or oppose legislation related to the ISHS in your letters to them.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR INCLUDING THE ISHS GRAPHICS IN LETTERS AND EMAILS

When writing letters or emails supporting the Idaho State Historical Society, there is also an opportunity to include graphics or images to help illustrate your story or main point. The graphics in this Toolkit are available for use, as are images you may have captured of a historic site, exhibit, event, or the result of the ISHS grants or scholarships.

### TIPS FOR USING GRAPHICS IN LETTERS AND EMAILS:

- Include a description or context to help the reader understand what's being shared
- Credit or attribute images gathered from a digital collection or the Idaho State Archives
- Make sure the image resolution is good enough to display the image correctly, but not so large that it will cause problems for the reader. Use an attachment or link if possible

### IF YOU USE AN ISHS GRAPHIC, WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT:

- Add text or effects to the logo or images
- Modify colors or manipulate the design of logo or images

If you have questions about these instructions, need help finding a particular image, or are interested in requesting permission to use images from the ISHS's website, social media, or digital collections, email [archives.reproduction@ishs.idaho.gov](mailto:archives.reproduction@ishs.idaho.gov).

## INSTRUCTIONS TO INCLUDE THE ISHS GRAPHICS IN SOCIAL MEDIA

When posting your support for the Idaho State Historical Society, including graphics can help illustrate the message and increase engagement. Download the graphics in this Toolkit or use images you've captured at the ISHS's events and programs.



Find these at [history.idaho.gov/branding](https://history.idaho.gov/branding)

### ADDING GRAPHICS TO A POST ABOUT THE ISHS:

- Use a graphic or image that aligns with your support for the ISHS or highlights an ISHS event/program
- Clarify your personal message by adding a description or context in the post text
- Credit or attribute images gathered from a digital collection or the Idaho State Archives

### IF YOU USE A GRAPHIC OR PHOTOGRAPH PROVIDED BY THE ISHS, WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT:

- Add text or effects to the logo or images
- Adjust colors or manipulate the design of logos or images

### ADDITIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS:

- Be authentic; Tell YOUR story
- Tag the Idaho State Historical Society (@IDSTATEHISTORICALSOCIETY) or other appropriate accounts/users
- Use hashtags like #idaho, #history, #idahohistory, or #isupportidahohistory to increase visibility
- Tailor your post for the social media network and your audience
- If applicable, link to pages, events, or information that can lead to further learning (if needed, use free Internet tools like [bitly.com](https://bitly.com) to shorten long URLs)
- Understand that shared posts are public, and anyone can see them





The Idaho State Historical Society's mission is to preserve and promote Idaho history. We strive to honor our mission with our vision to make history essential and accessible through dynamic and gratifying services that inspire, enrich, and engage all Idahoans. Your commitment to supporting the ISHS and celebrating the value that we bring to your life is a critical component of our work and brings us closer to achieving our mission by connecting more Idahoans to the resources that honor our state's history.

**We can't thank you enough for using the ISHS Supporter Toolkit, we truly appreciate the time and effort put into sharing your experience.**

If you would like to support the ISHS in other ways, consider:

Following the Idaho State Historical Society social media accounts

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/idstatehistoricalsociety>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/idstatehistoricalsociety/>

Subscribing to Histor-E, the Idaho State Historical Society's Monthly electronic newsletter

- Sign up here: <https://history.idaho.gov/histor-e/>

Visiting one of our sites or exhibits:

- Idaho State Museum
- Idaho State Archives
- Old Idaho Penitentiary
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Franklin Historic Site
- Pierce Courthouse
- Rock Creek Station & Stricker Home Site
- Bishops' House

Submitting a nomination for the Esto Perpetua awards

Volunteering as a judge for the National History Day competition

The list of potential actions above is not exhaustive and we appreciate the unique contributions that every Idahoan makes to the ISHS. Visit our website at <https://history.idaho.gov> to find additional opportunities to volunteer, attend events, and more!

## LETTER TEMPLATE

Dear [Name],

I am writing to share my experience with the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS), which provides access to our state's cultural and historical resources through the Idaho State Museum, State Historic Preservation Office, Idaho State Archives, and statewide historic sites like the Old Idaho Penitentiary.

While the ISHS brings value to communities across our state, every Idahoan has their own personal story that demonstrates their appreciation for this essential state agency. The ISHS serves more than 110,000 people every year through exhibits, events, educational and entertainment programs, research, grants, scholarships, and more.

[Here, add a sentence or two describing a personal story about your interaction with the ISHS. Specifically, describe a recent visit to the ISHS's facilities, exhibits or participation in a program or event. Share your thoughts, feelings, and other relevant details you feel comfortable including.]

[Next, include what you want the recipient of your letter to know about the ISHS. For example, you might write about the significance of your local historical site, the impact an ISHS grant has had on your organization or community, the value of an ISHS program you attended, or your appreciation of the ISHS's services. You may want to reference the ISHS's "General Talking Points" for inspiration.]

I am so grateful that the ISHS helps make history accessible through its dynamic and exciting programming. Its work inspires, enriches, and engages Idahoans throughout the state. I hope you'll join me in celebrating this great resource and in supporting the ISHS's ongoing efforts to preserve and promote Idaho history.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Contact Information]