



From Commemoration to Civic Legacy:

Building Lasting Connections Between Civic Commemoration, Education, and Communities

America 250 (A250) has inspired significant engagement across communities, cultural organizations, and public institutions, creating new opportunities for people to explore our nation's history and civic life. As partners look beyond the commemoration, there is an opportunity to ensure that the resources, knowledge, and relationships developed through A250 continue to create value for educators, students, and communities.



The success of A250 creates an opportunity to turn short-term engagement into lasting civic learning.



At the American Institutes for Research (AIR), we help turn engagement into lasting impact. Drawing on expertise in civic education, research, instructional materials, and partnership-building, we help strengthen educational resources, identify what works, and support collaboration across sectors so that A250 becomes not just a milestone celebration, but a lasting investment in civic learning.

Our approach is organized around four interconnected components: **Capturing What Worked, Translating into Learning, Building Partnerships**, and **Sustaining Engagement**, that help commissions move from one-time events and activities to long-term impact.

Together, these components provide a roadmap for documenting successes, transforming resources into educational assets, strengthening cross-sector collaboration, and creating the structures needed to ensure that the investments made through A250 continue to benefit communities well beyond 2026.



AIR's Interconnected Components



01: Capturing What Worked

The first step in building a lasting civic legacy is **documenting what was accomplished, who was engaged, what resources were created, and what impact was achieved**. Many A250 commissions are investing significant time and resources in events, programs, partnerships, and public engagement efforts. This phase focuses on evaluation, documentation, preservation, and reflection before valuable knowledge and momentum are lost.



02: Translating into Learning

A250 has generated a wealth of content, resources, artifacts, exhibits, stories, and public programs. The next step is **transforming these assets into meaningful learning opportunities that can be used in schools, museums, libraries, and community settings after the anniversary** concludes. This phase helps ensure that commemorative investments become enduring educational resources that support civic understanding, historical thinking, inquiry, and community engagement.



03: Building Partnerships

The strongest A250 initiatives often emerge from partnerships among schools, museums, libraries, archives, historical societies, community organizations, tribes, veterans' groups, businesses, and civic institutions. This phase focuses on **strengthening those connections and creating structures that encourage ongoing collaboration**. Supporting ongoing collaboration between schools and community organizations is identified as a critical component of sustaining momentum after A250.



04: Sustaining Engagement

The ultimate goal is ensuring that A250 serves as a catalyst for long-term civic learning and community engagement rather than a one-time celebration. This phase focuses on **creating the infrastructure, leadership structures, partnerships, and strategic plans needed to carry the work forward**. Sustained engagement transforms the momentum of A250 into an enduring civic legacy that continues to strengthen communities, support learning, and expand participation in civic life.

[Fill out this form](#) to connect with us and learn more about how AIR can help support your efforts to invest in civic learning.

About the American Institutes for Research

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