

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CoSign expands its reach across the country and announces the next round of its nationally acclaimed program.

Cincinnati, OH - The American Sign Museum is proud to announce the next round of participating communities in the upcoming class of CoSign.

CoSign is a place-making program (developed by the American Sign Museum/The Haile/US Bank Foundation) that leverages the power of visual communication to deliver real and lasting change by revitalizing business districts. The program brings the idea to life by uniting artists, businesses, and signmakers together to create signage that reflects the character of a neighborhood.

For the second round of the national program CoSign welcomes:

- Beaverton Downtown Association from Beaverton, Oregon
- Downtown Cincinnati Inc. from Cincinnati, OH
- Village of Somerset from Somerset, OH

Participants from each community will attend the upcoming national workshop on October 29- 30 at the American Sign Museum in Cincinnati, OH. The two-day workshop is an intensive learning experience designed to educate the attendees on the patented CoSign process and prepare them to replicate the program back home.

CoSign has a number of new developments to announce that will influence and inspire the 2018/2019 program.

In early 2018, CoSign established a joint-venture partnership between the American Sign Museum and Kentucky-based design studio BLDG. The ASM will lend it's educational resources, industry knowledge and museum status while BLDG will lend it's design, strategy and project management capabilities.

"We learned a lot from the initial testing of the pilot program in Iowa City and Valley Junction, West Des Moines," says Cate Becker, National Project Director for CoSign and Partner of BLDG. "Since then, we've refined how the program operates, refreshed the brand and developed new collateral to assist with replication. It's really an exciting time as we're moving beyond our initial brand and exploring a new story about how CoSign is a design solution for communities; one that not only affects the built environment but is a purposeful and community-focused exercise that helps establish a collective identity for a neighborhood."

For the first time CoSign will expand beyond the Midwest and take place on the West Coast in Beaverton, OR. "The Beaverton Downtown Association (BDA) is extremely excited to be partnering with the American Sign Museum to further develop the creative identity of downtown Beaverton. Beaverton is the most diverse community in Oregon, and now our signage will be able to celebrate what makes our community unique.", states Kevin Teater, the BDA executive director.

CoSign serendipitously connected with Marketing Professor and AACSB Fellow Aparna Sundar from the University of Oregon. Dr. Sundar will work with the BDA to conduct a market research study on CoSign and has invited CoSign leadership to write a chapter in an upcoming book she is producing on the power of design to effect social change. Quote from Aparna, "CoSign's practical expertise in instituting transformation would be valuable to the research community. Signage has an important role in place-making, an area and topic that can benefit from understanding CoSign's current initiative."

The Village of Somerset - Winding Road Initiative received an Our Town Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for a project that focuses on a series of programs to catalyze community engagement and development in rural Appalachian Ohio. CoSign is one of four programs that will activate the Winding Road Trail.

Tod Swormstedt says, "This is the second time CoSign has been funded (or partially funded) by an NEA Our Town grant. It demonstrates the strength a program like CoSign has and provides a national resources that lends credibility and funding so the program can continue."

Lastly, CoSign will return to the City of Cincinnati and take place along the 600 - 900 block of Main Street, in the historic downtown business district. Andrew Naab, Retail Specialist with Downtown Cincinnati, Inc. will be managing the project locally. Naab says, "Downtown Cincinnati Inc. is elated to bring the CoSign Program to Cincinnati's Central Business District. Main Street is known for its diversity and eclectic mix of locally-owned, longstanding businesses, as well as serving as the headquarters for Procter & Gamble from 1935 – 1956. The CoSign Program is the perfect complement to this growing area. DCI specifically targeted participation in CoSign due to its focus on bringing communities together and cultivating civic pride."

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American Sign Museum

The American Sign Museum is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization founded in 1999 by Tod Swormstedt, former editor of Signs of the Times magazine. Its mission is "to celebrate the rich history of American signage through preservation and education." The museum is the premier resource for preserving historic signs and promoting the contributions the sign industry makes to commerce, culture and the American landscape.

Carol Ann + Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation

The Haile/U.S. Bank Foundation is an independent family foundation dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. The Foundation concentrates its efforts and resources on: Arts and Culture, Community Development, Education, and Human Services. The Foundation's work is intended to collaborate with and impact regional stakeholders and help lead the way to a strong and vibrant community.

BLDG

BLDG is a creative refuge that fosters the inspirational, the visionary and the uncommon. Where copious creatives challenge the norm, stand on the ceiling and change what's possible. Transformation is inevitable, ordinary is unacceptable.

Downtown Beaverton Association

The Beaverton Downtown Association was formed to enhance the community identity and heritage, foster a center of activity and ensure economic stability for the heart of downtown Beaverton. It's mission is to promote the preservation, history, culture, architecture and public use of Beaverton's traditional downtown area.

Downtown Cincinnati Inc.

Downtown Cincinnati Inc. (DCI) is a non-profit business organization with a mission to build a dynamic metropolitan center valued as the heart of the region. The organization was incorporated in 1994 and is funded by a Special Improvement District that includes all property within the boundaries of Eggleston Avenue on the east, Central Parkway on the north, Central Avenue on the west (including the Centennial buildings), and the river on the south (excluding the two stadiums). DCI provides leadership and advocacy for important issues that ensure long-term downtown vitality, and plays an important role in working with strong partners to improve the city.

Village of Somerset / Winding Road Project

Ohio's Appalachian Winding Road Initiative grows the creative economy in rural Appalachia and focus on creating artis driven community initiatives to enhance the livability and economic outlook for businesses and communities located along The Winding Road.