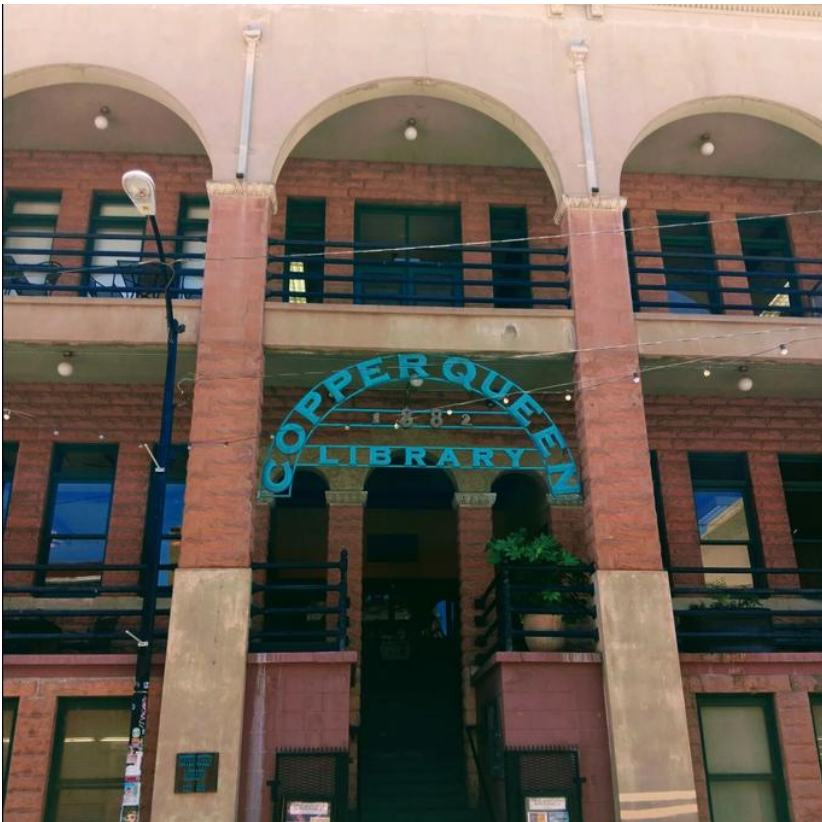


Copper Queen Library selected for inaugural Smithsonian Rural program

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The Copper Queen Library has been selected as one of just 16 libraries nationwide to participate in the Smithsonian Institution's inaugural Rural Library Cohort, a yearlong initiative that will bring free Smithsonian educational programming and community engagement opportunities to Bisbee and Cochise County.

The Copper Queen Library is excited to announce it has been selected as one of only 16 libraries across the United States to participate in the inaugural Smithsonian Rural Library Cohort, a new national program designed to bring Smithsonian educational programming, expertise, and community-engagement opportunities directly to rural libraries and the communities they serve.

The partnership will launch in September 2026 and is a 12-month collaboration that will give the Copper Queen Library access to Smithsonian programming, resources, and professional support at no cost. Throughout the year, the library will host at least 12 virtual Smithsonian programs for the community, bringing world-renowned educational opportunities to Bisbee and Cochise County.

The program was designed to strengthen the vital role rural libraries play in their communities by offering access to Smithsonian content and resources, while supporting community-driven projects such as local storytelling, youth engagement, community reads, and service-learning activities. “For nearly 180 years, the Smithsonian’s museums, research centers, and the National Zoo have served the country by preserving heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing resources. However, many Americans perceive the Smithsonian as simply a destination located in Washington, D.C. The Smithsonian’s Rural Initiative repositions the Institution as a public service available in local collaboration in all communities across the country. Central to this work is supporting organizations who play a trusted role in their community. Public libraries are incredibly important to the civic health of a small town, and we are thrilled to support the Copper Queen Library as a founding member of this program,” said Andy Mink, the Smithsonian’s Director of Rural Initiatives.

Participation in the Smithsonian Rural Library Cohort aligns with the Copper Queen Library’s commitment to lifelong learning, community connection, and expanding access to enriching programs for residents of all ages. Community members and library patrons are encouraged to visit copperqueenlibrary.com, sign up for the CQL’s weekly eNewsletter and follow the library on social media to be among the first to learn about upcoming Smithsonian events and opportunities.

“This is an incredible opportunity for our community,” said Jason Macoviak, Library Manager of the Copper Queen Library. “We are honored to be chosen for this national cohort and excited to bring new program experiences to Bisbee and the surrounding area.”