

There is a wide array of potential partners in your area for *Crossroads!* Consider some of these ideas:

Rural Economic Development and Community Sustainability

- National Rural Economic Development Agency [“the leading professional economic development resource for rural America”], <https://www.nreda.org/>
- National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC)
- National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (NRECA)
- Statewide Rural Electric Cooperative Associations
- Local EMCs [Electric Member Cooperative]
- National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC)

Agriculture Advocates and Special Interest Groups

- American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF): founded in 1919. The AFBF describes itself as “the voice of agricultural producers at all levels.” Members join at the county level, and have access to benefits including automobile, house, and crop insurance, as well as access to news and information and technical expertise. Each state has a Farm Bureau office. The Farm Bureau is also one of the most effective and active farm lobby groups. <http://www.fb.org>
- American Farmland Trust: founded in 1980 in the midst of the farm crisis. It exists to “Protect farmland, promote sound farming practices, and keep farmers on the land.” <https://www.farmland.org>
- Land Stewardship Project (LSP): founded in 1982 in the midst of the farm crisis. The LSP exists to “foster an ethic of stewardship for farmland, to promote sustainable agriculture and to develop healthy communities.” It involves working with “culturally and racially diverse rural and urban people [to] take practical steps that result in greater stewardship of the land, more family farmers, healthy food for all and resilient, racially just communities.” <http://landstewardshipproject.org>
- National Farmers Union (NFU): founded in 1902 as the Farmers Educational Cooperative Union, the NFU serves more than 200,000 members in thirty-three states. The NFU “believes that good opportunities in production agriculture are the foundation of strong farm and ranch families, and strong farm and ranch families are the basis for thriving rural communities. Vibrant rural communities, in turn, are vital to the health, security and economic well-being of our entire national economy.” <http://nfu.org>
- National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC): founded in 2009 when the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture (formed in 1994) and the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (formed in the mid-1980s) merged. The NSAC “gives voice to grassroots efforts across the country working to bring about real policy change for a more sustainable agriculture future.” <http://sustainableagriculture.net>
- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE): began in 1988 when the U.S. Congress passed the Agricultural Productivity Act but issued no appropriation to conduct the work. SARE has identified “3 Pillars of Sustainability”: 1) Profit over the long term; 2) Stewardship of our nation’s land, air and water; 3) Quality of life for farmers, ranchers and their communities. See SARE’s booklet, *What is Sustainable Agriculture?* (2010) and *The New American Farmer*, 2nd edition (2005). SARE’s mission is “to advance—to

the whole of American agriculture— innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education.” Between 2000 and 2004, SARE partnered with the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History to create a traveling exhibition, “Listening to the Prairie: Farming in Nature’s Image.” <http://www.sare.org/>

- U.S. Farm Stay Association (USFSA, aka Farm Stay US): a non-profit 501c6 trade association exists to “connect guests with farm and ranch stays throughout the United States.” Farm Stay US encourages its members to “offer an authentic look into the agricultural lifestyle of farming and ranching” and be “the face of our agricultural operation” which includes managing agricultural operations, and interacting with guests. <http://www.farmstayus.com>

Humanities Resources and Organizations

- State, regional, and local history museums
- Humanities Deans and Departments within the Humanities Colleges at private and public universities
- Local history rooms, newspaper clipping morgues, and special collections and archives at public libraries
- Special Collections and archives at local universities.
- Research centers focused on local and regional history at public and private universities.

Arts Organizations

- National Endowment for the Arts
- State Arts Councils
- Art non-profits at the state, regional, and local level
- Local arts networks
- Community Art Centers
- Art Museums

Historic Preservation and Heritage Designation Organizations

- Alliance of National Heritage Areas: formed in 1997, the ANHA is an alliance of National Heritage Areas and partner organizations that exist to sustain areas noted for their unique cultural and natural resources. <http://www.nationalheritageareas.us/>
- National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP): founded in 1949, the NTHP supports preservation of historic structures and raises awareness about endangered structures and places, including buildings in rural communities and barns on farms across the nation. It provides information on laws, policies, and programs useful to support rural preservation and adaptive reuse. <https://savingplaces.org/>
- State Historic Preservation Office
- State preservation trusts
- State, local, county, and city preservation organizations

Special Rural Interest Groups

- Barn Again! launched in 1986 through a partnership between Successful Farming magazine and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The program has encouraged the rehabilitation of hundreds of barns across the United States. Resources created to support the program include Mary Humstone, *Barn Again! A Guide to Rehabilitation of Older Farm Buildings* (Des Moines, Iowa: Meredith Corporation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1988), Michael J. Auer, *The Preservation of Historic Barns*, Preservation Brief #20 (October 1989), available at: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to->

preserve/briefs/20-barns.htm. Four Barn Aid how-to publications discuss barn foundations, increasing storage space in old barns to accommodate new machinery, painting barn exteriors, and repairing barn roofs.

- National Barn Alliance (NBA): The alliance exists to “provide national leadership for the preservation of America’s historic barns and rural heritage through education, documentation, conservation, and networking.” The NBA has had a website since 1996 and publishes a semi-annual newsletter and The Barn Journal blog.
<http://barnalliance.org>
- Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area: self-identifies as the place “where the story of American agriculture comes to life.” It contains 20,000 square miles in thirty-seven counties in northeastern Iowa. Silos and Smokestacks “preserves and tells the story of American agriculture and its global significance through partnerships and activities that celebrate the land, people, and communities of the area.”
<http://www.silosandsmokestacks.org>

Main Street/Economic Development Organizations

- Main Street associations
- Local and regional development and regional development organizations

Agricultural Extension Agencies (a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges)

- State Extension Office at the Land Grant University
- County extension offices which operate through Land Grant Universities
- Agricultural Experiment Stations which operate through Land Grant Universities

U.S. Department of Agriculture (national and state and county offices)

- USDA county offices manage soil and water conservation districts and oversee U.S. agricultural policies.
- County offices maintain aerial photographs from the 1930s Agricultural Adjustment Administration; and now maintain GIS satellite images. These offices often partner with faculty in Geo-Sciences at area universities, and they might be resources for local rural landscapes and the environment.
- Soil and Water Conservation Service; district offices at the county and regional level.
- Original maps from 1938 may be in the county office, or be digitized by local universities or by the USDA [need to find weblink to examples].

Environmental Organizations and Technical Expertise

- State, regional, and local Conservation trusts
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offices in proximity to hosts
- Sustainability officers in nearby suburban and urban communities

National Park Service

- Partnerships with national parks in your region

State Parks

- Historic and recreational parks in the state and region

State Departments of Agriculture

- Each state has a Department of Agriculture. If you want to pursue programming in local issues related to farming and agricultural land use, reach out to this department. Visit your state's department of agriculture to learn about centennial and sesquicentennial and even bicentennial farms and the families that have operated them in your state, among numerous other topics.
- Many states have rural economic development agencies

County and municipal governments

- Planning offices
- County and city parks -- Municipal Parks or MetroParks: Suburbs supported preservation of woodlands and agricultural lands during the early twentieth century. These exist now as park and conservation districts responsible for natural areas and historic farmsteads and farmland.
- County and city run historic sites and buildings (see Municipal Parks above, because many Park & Recreation Districts protect and preserve historic sites)
- City historic preservation committees

Regional Planning Commissions

- Some states have regional planning commissions--need to see what other states do!

Tourism and Economic Development Organizations

- State tourism associations
- State tourism departments
- Regional tourism associations
- Convention Visitors Bureaus
- Chamber of Commerce