

# PLACES

NSF AISL Award #1010776

# OF

# INVENTION

What kind of place stimulates **CREATIVE MINDS** and sparks a surge of **INVENTION** and **INNOVATION**?

## OVERVIEW

*Places of Invention*, a family-friendly exhibition under development by the Smithsonian's Lemelson Center at the National Museum of American History, will take visitors on a journey through time and place to meet people who lived, worked, played, collaborated, adapted, took risks, solved problems, and sometimes failed—all in the pursuit of something new.

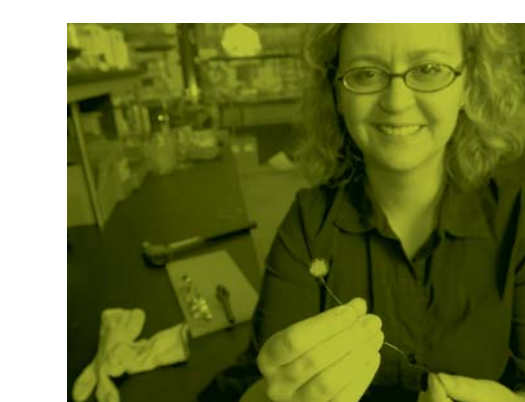
Featuring six communities that represent a fascinating array of people, places, time periods, and technologies—Hartford, Connecticut, late 1800s; Hollywood, California, 1930s; Medical Alley, Minnesota, 1950s; the Bronx, New York, 1970s; Silicon Valley, California, 1970s-80s; and Fort Collins, Colorado, 2010s—*Places of Invention* will show visitors what can happen when the right mix of inventive people, untapped resources, and inspiring surroundings come together.

## COLLABORATORS

The Lemelson Center is collaborating with 12 Smithsonian Affiliate museums and their community partners to document their local places of invention. Smithsonian Affiliations is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational, and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources.

The Lemelson Center is also working with exhibition design and production firm Roto Group LLC and museum evaluation firm Randi Korn and Associates, Inc. (RK&A). Thanks to the NSF grant, RK&A has conducted front-end evaluation, two phases of formative evaluation, and a process evaluation of the *Places of Invention* Affiliates pilot project. They will also work with RMC Research Corp. to conduct summative evaluation of the exhibition and companion website.

The Smithsonian's Lemelson Center is dedicated to exploring invention in history and encouraging inventive creativity in young people. The *Places of Invention* exhibition has been made possible by the generous support of the National Science Foundation and additional funding from Intel Corporation and the Wallace H. Coulter Foundation.



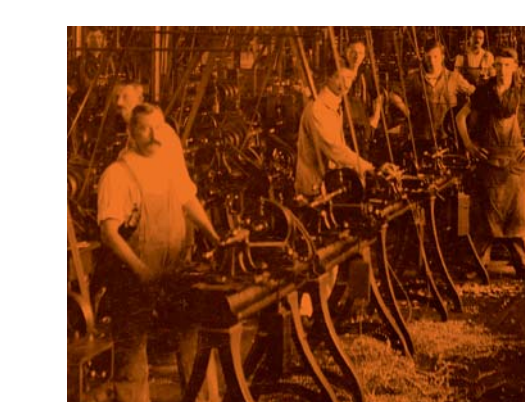
### FORT COLLINS

Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are being applied to sustainable clean energy innovations.



### HOLLYWOOD

Initiative and creativity drove Hollywood in its "Golden Age" with inventions in sound and color technologies for motion pictures.



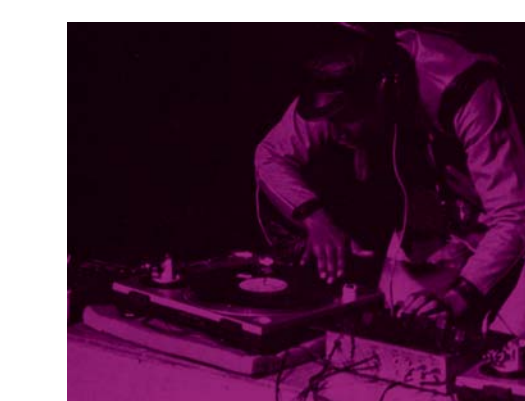
### HARTFORD

Networks and knowledge-sharing led to improvements in precision manufacturing, from guns to bicycles to sewing machines.



### MEDICAL ALLEY

Risk-taking and collaboration between heart surgeons and engineers helped the Twin Cities earn their reputation as a major center for medical innovations.



### THE BRONX

Early hip-hop pioneers and their technical innovations were characterized by adaptability and flexibility.



### SILICON VALLEY

Collaboration was essential to the technological advances behind the birth of the personal computer and Silicon Valley's enduring fame.