

Dibner Award Nomination Form

The deadline for nominations is April 1. (For temporary and traveling exhibits the deadline is TWO months before closure.) After completing all three parts of this form, e-mail it to each member of the SHOT Dibner Prize Committee. The total size of this file should not exceed 1 Mb. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Part 1 Exhibit Information

Exhibit Title:

Showing at (location/museum name):

Exhibit website URL:

Opening Date (must be within the preceding two years):

Closing Date:

(Please notify SHOT office and Dibner Award Chair at least two months before this date)

Exhibit's objectives, purpose, and scope (150 words maximum):

Exhibit budget (specify both museum funds and donated funds)

Design costs:

Production costs:

Other costs:

Base area (Square feet or square meters):

Curators (please ensure that main exhibit contact is noted):

Mailing address:

E-mail address:

Phone:

Fax:

Name of nominator (if not the same as curator):

Affiliation:

Mailing address:

E-mail:

Phone:

Fax:

Part 2 – Suggestion of “Live” Exhibit Reviewers

Please suggest the names of appropriate exhibit reviewers—either historians of technology or museum professionals—in order of preference, preferably those who reside within easy travel distance of the exhibit. These reviewers must NOT be directly associated with the development or management of the exhibit itself, but they may be employed at the same institution. Live reviewers may discuss the exhibit with the curators if they wish to do so. The SHOT Dibner Prize committee will in all cases exercise its discretion in appointing reviewers for exhibits nominated for the prize.

Name of Reviewer #1:

Affiliation:

Mailing address:

E-mail address:

Phone:

Fax:

Name of Reviewer #2:

Affiliation:

Mailing address:

E-mail address:

Phone:

Fax:

Name of Reviewer #3:

Affiliation:

Mailing address:

E-mail address:

Phone:

Fax:

Part 3 Evaluation of the Exhibit

You may include up to 3000 words in your evaluative account, and include electronic images, subject to the 1 Mb file size restriction indicated above.

The goals of the SHOT Dibner Award for Excellence in Museum Exhibits in History of Technology are:

to recognize excellence in museums and museum exhibits that interpret the history of technology, industry, and engineering to the general public. Winning exhibits, in addition to being well designed and produced, should raise pertinent historical issues. Artifacts and images should be used in a manner that interests, teaches, and stimulates both the general public and historians.

You should therefore explain to the Dibner committee how the nominated exhibit meets the standard of 'excellence' specified for the Dibner Award. Please offer an honest and critical evaluation of the exhibit under the five headings below. You need not answer every single question, but please explain why you consider certain questions to be inapplicable to this exhibit. You are advised to restrict your comments to qualitative assessment and should only add quantitative data to what you cite in Part 1 if it provides further evidence of the exhibit's quality.

1. Eligibility: In what ways(s) does the exhibit seek to interpret the history of technology, industry, or engineering broadly defined? How broad or narrow a view of these areas does the exhibit present?
2. Audience: Is it clear for whom the exhibit is intended? How, and how well, does the exhibit engage the intended audience(s)? Have the exhibit designers made appropriate assumptions about the audiences' concerns and prior knowledge? What efforts have been made to gauge audiences' reactions to the exhibit, and what important information have these efforts yielded? What audiences other than those intended might find the exhibit interesting or informative?
3. Content: Are the objectives, purpose, and scope of the exhibit clearly communicated to visitors? Do the exhibit's objectives involve informing, expanding, or changing visitors' views in an appropriate way? How does the physical content of the exhibit - the artifacts, signage, labels, and so forth - work to convey these objectives? What explanatory methods are used to convey the content? What is the exhibit's historiographical context? How well is the historical research underpinning the exhibit represented? Will historians find the exhibit interesting, challenging, informative, and/or a spur to further thinking and research? Is any aspect of the exhibit's content particularly innovative or well-done?
4. Design: Is the exhibit's design appropriate to the exhibit's objectives? Are the artifacts well-chosen and displayed? What non-verbal elements are included in the exhibit, and how well do they work in conveying the objectives of the exhibit? How effectively do the exhibit's visual and spatial elements impact the visitor? Do electronic, audiovisual, and/or interactive elements add to or detract from the overall objective of the exhibit - are they easy to use, informative, and complementary to the other exhibit elements? How easily can visitors move through the exhibit? Will visitors' experience be significantly diminished if they move through the exhibit in ways other than intended by the designers?
5. Resources: What other materials are made available to the visitor (floor plan, exhibit guides, catalogs, brochure, bibliography, slides, films, videos, software, CD-ROMs, etc.)? Can a visitor understand the exhibit and its objectives without these materials? Are these materials and any

associated WWW resources useful for teaching and research outside the exhibit?

These evaluation criteria are based upon Thomas J. Schlereth, "Museum Exhibit Reviews," *Journal of American History* 76 (June 1989): 192-195.