

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER TO WELCOME BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TERCENTENARY EXHIBIT IN DECEMBER 2005

Philadelphia, PA, March 24, 2005 – The National Constitution Center is proud to host the world premiere of the *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* exhibition, as part of the *Ben Franklin 300 Philadelphia* celebration. Featuring more than 250 priceless artifacts, engaging interactive devices, and hands-on family fun, the exhibition, on display December 15, 2005 through April 30, 2006, will be the centerpiece of the city's celebration of the famous Founding Father.

Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World will be only the second traveling exhibition featured at the Constitution Center since its opening in July 2003. (The Center's first traveling exhibit, *Lincoln: The Constitution and the Civil War*, will be on display June 10, 2005 through November 4, 2005.) At 8,000 square feet, the Franklin exhibition will completely fill the Center's changing exhibition space.

"The National Constitution Center is delighted to be such an integral part of the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary celebration," said Richard Stengel, Constitution Center President and CEO. "*Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* is not only a remarkable tribute to an icon of Philadelphia, but is also a perfect fit with the Constitution Center, since our museum is dedicated to his final and greatest achievement—the establishment of this nation's government."

The exhibit is also a perfect fit with the Constitution Center in terms of its design. Like the Center's permanent exhibits, *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* will incorporate a mix of interactive elements, artifacts, text, video and sound for a family-friendly, engaging experience. In addition, visitors to the exhibition can further their knowledge of Ben Franklin

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and the events that shaped the U.S. Constitution in the 18th century by taking in the Center's award-winning, multimedia theatrical presentation, "Freedom Rising," as well as several other elements of the permanent exhibition. Visitors can also see and touch a life-size bronze statue of Franklin himself in the Center's famous *Signers' Hall*, which features life-size—and lifelike—statues of the U.S. Constitution's 39 signers and 3 dissenters.

During the run of the exhibition, the Constitution Center will also feature an array of Franklin-themed programs, including a discussion with a group of Franklin biographers in January 2006, which will include Walter Isaacson and Gordon Wood, and other discussions about Franklin's diplomacy and his iconic autobiography. There will also be special family programs one weekend a month, as well as other special events and activities for visitors during the exhibition. The Center is also working with the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary to develop curriculum materials for educators, both for teaching about Franklin in the classroom and as preparation for student groups who are seeing the exhibition.

Admission to *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* is \$14 for adults; \$12 for children ages 4-12, seniors, college students, and active military personnel; and \$8.50 for groups of 20 or more. Admission to the National Constitution Center's award-winning exhibitions is also included.

The National Constitution Center is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and its relevance to Americans' daily lives. Opened on July 4, 2003, the museum dramatically tells the story of the U.S. Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". Also, serving as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional debate, the Center presents—without endorsement—programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6600 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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