

# DOORS OPEN BALTIMORE

## 2025 OPEN HOUSE SITE GENERAL INFORMATION

Launched in 2014, Doors Open Baltimore, hosted by Baltimore Architecture Foundation, is an annual city-wide celebration of Baltimore's diverse cultural tapestry highlighting its vibrant neighborhoods, captivating architecture, and distinctive spaces that contribute to the city's exceptional charm.

### Event specifics

- DOB Open House Day: Saturday, October 25th
  - 10 am - 2 pm or 1 pm - 5 pm (depending on location)
- 40+ participating sites within Baltimore City
- Free of charge to participants

### Benefits of participation

- Boost your site's visibility and awareness for free – attracting guests directly to you
- A chance to share your mission and/or promote your business – tell your story
- Connect with the community
- Help both residents and tourists recognize the positive impact your business/organization has on Baltimore

### Doors Open Baltimore will provide you

- [Volunteers](#) to greet guests
- Outdoor banner
- Promotion in our newsletters and email blasts
- Website exposure: <https://www.doorsopenbaltimore.org/>
- Social media promotion and support

### **Expectations of your site**

- Hang banner prominently at your site the week of the event
- Stay open for full time slot, either 10 am - 2 pm or 1 pm - 5 pm (to be determined)
- Offer a unique and enjoyable experience for attendees
- Ensure your team is adequately staffed for the event
- Promote the event to your friends and followers with the provided kit

### **Ways to make your site shine**

- Is there a part of your site or activity that the public usually can't access?
- Think creatively; even if it's not your organization's main focus, there could be a unique aspect of your work that would captivate others
- What can you offer that will leave guests thinking, "Wow, that was awesome!" or "How interesting!" as they leave?
- Who do you need on hand to help share your story (staff, historians, volunteers, developers, architects, etc.)?
- Possible programming ideas for your site might include:
  - Mini guided tours (10-15 mins, unless participant specifically asks for longer and you have the staff to give them that individual that amount of attention)
  - Self-guided tour information
  - Guides available for Q&A
  - Printed materials
  - Interpretive signage and photos
  - Kids' activities and crafts
  - Participation from employees, clients, or customers
  - Food and beverage tastings, if applicable to your site

### **How you can help**

- Spread the word! As the event nears, share it with all your contacts.
- Assist us in recruiting volunteers. [A sign-up form](#) is available on the website.
- Do you have any partners who might be interested in [sponsoring the event](#)? Let us know!
- Share your feedback with us – what are we doing well, and where can we improve?

**[INTEREST FORM](#) DUE MAY 15, 2025**

**Questions? Looking to participate?**

**Please email Nathalie at [doorsopenbaltimore@gmail.com](mailto:doorsopenbaltimore@gmail.com)**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What are the criteria for determining which sites will be selected to participate in Doors Open Baltimore 2025?

- ★ Locations that are typically closed to the public, rarely visited, or have restricted areas, featuring notable architectural elements and/or historical, architectural, social, or cultural significance
- ★ Publicly accessible sites with unique or lesser-known stories to share
- ★ Sites that plan to provide interactive and engaging experiences for visitors during the event
- ★ Sites with well-preserved original features or successful adaptive reuse designs
- ★ Sites that reflect Baltimore's rich cultural diversity

### What are the participation guidelines?

- ★ Doors Open Baltimore hours will take place on **Saturday, October 25** from 10 am - 5 pm. Depending on its location, **your site will be designated as either a morning (10am-2pm) site or an afternoon (1-5pm) site**. Your site will be expected to stay open for the duration of your designated shift.
- ★ DOB will provide greeter volunteers at each building site to greet and count visitors, as well as provide general instruction and answer questions about the event. We recommend that you staff your site with individual(s) who can tell the story of your building, business, or activity.
- ★ At least one building representative must be on the premises from 9:30 AM until close or 12:30 pm until close, depending on your selected hours of operation. That person will be responsible for opening and closing the building.

### What is the process for site selection?

To have your building considered for participation, you must submit an [online interest form](#) by **5:00 PM on May 15, 2025**. The final list of participating buildings will be confirmed by the end of June 2025. If your building is selected, the primary contact will receive an approval notification via email or phone call.

### Is there a fee to participate in Doors Open Baltimore?

No, there is no fee to be a participating site. However, if you are interested in [sponsorship](#) or advertising opportunities to provide additional visibility for your site, please contact Katherine Somerville at [ksomerville@aiabalt.com](mailto:ksomerville@aiabalt.com).

### Must my building present a guided tour or program?

We ask that sites **offer some form of programming**, though there is a lot of flexibility in what that entails. Options can include guided or self-guided tours (ideally 15-20 minutes), docents for storytelling and Q&A, interactive activities, crafts, informative signage, historical photos, or any other way your site chooses to share its story.

**How can security be maintained at a site?**

You may limit public access to certain areas of your building as needed. Use signage, staff, or barriers such as ropes to restrict entry to private spaces. We recommend that, if you do not already have insurance coverage for visitors, you consider adding it.

**Is a building responsible for its own staffing?**

Doors Open Baltimore will provide volunteer greeters at each location. However, these greeters are not expected to assist with site programming. Please plan to designate at least one staff member to serve as the main contact. Additionally, **sites are responsible for staffing appropriately to support their planned programming.**

**How many visitors should a site expect?**

Based on participation in Doors Open Baltimore 2024, we anticipate approximately 2,000 total visitors in 2025. In 2024, **attendance ranged at each site from 50 visitors to over 250.** Attendance is not guaranteed and depends on many variables.

**How will the event be publicized?**

Doors Open Baltimore has partnered with WTMD, MPT, WYPR, Baltimore Banner, and Baltimore Magazine in the past. A printed program guide, the Doors Open Baltimore and Baltimore Architecture Foundation websites, and social media will all be additional vehicles for publicizing the program.

**Why should I participate?**

Participating offers a free opportunity to **increase your site's visibility** and attract visitors directly to you. It's a chance to share your mission, promote your business, and tell your unique story while **building connections with the community.** By taking part, you help both residents and tourists recognize the positive impact your business/building has on Baltimore, contributing to a stronger local economy and a thriving tourism scene. Showcasing the city's rich history, culture, and innovation helps shape a more positive and vibrant image of Baltimore.

**If my building is not a good fit for an open house, is there another way that I can participate in Doors Open Baltimore?**

The Doors Open event actually has three parts; in addition to the open houses, there is a kick off event and guided tours. **Guided tours** take place throughout the month of October and may be a good fit for sites that are smaller or require interpretation. Participants pre-register for tours and registration can be capped at a number that works for the site. Our kick off takes place in early October and is a **storytelling format.** We are always looking for people that are passionate about a building and willing to tell its story.