

# A Public Health Memorial

Honoring Frontline Scientists and Medical Professionals

## The Smallpox Hospital Ruin

## A Physical and Digital Memorial

Roosevelt Island, New York City



Photograph by Max Touhey

# The Smallpox Hospital Ruin



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## A Fitting Memorial Site

### Location

The Ruin sits on Roosevelt Island, south of Cornell Tech and immediately north of Four Freedoms Park. It is within the shadow of the [United Nations and World Health Organization](#).

### Building History

Designed by renowned architect James Renwick, Jr., the building once served as a hospital for a devastating pandemic and as a nursing school for the frontlines. [It is hard to imagine a more fitting site to memorialize scientific advances and the frontline workers fighting viral and infectious disease.](#)

### A 'Landmark Ruin'

The gothic structure is our country's only landmark ruin. It is registered as a [federal, state and city landmark](#).

### Accessibility

The Ruin is [easily accessible from Manhattan and Queens](#), transportation options include tram, subway, ferry, bus, and car.

# A Garden Among Ruins

Memorial Design  
Competition



Digital rendering by Synoasis



## A Place for Reflection

### Memorial Design

Today, the interior of the Ruin has no roof or floor slabs. Sunlit, open interiors allow for a sensitive landscape, art, or architectural intervention to honor our scientist, heroes and those we have lost. Once completed, the memorial will be free and open to the public year-round.

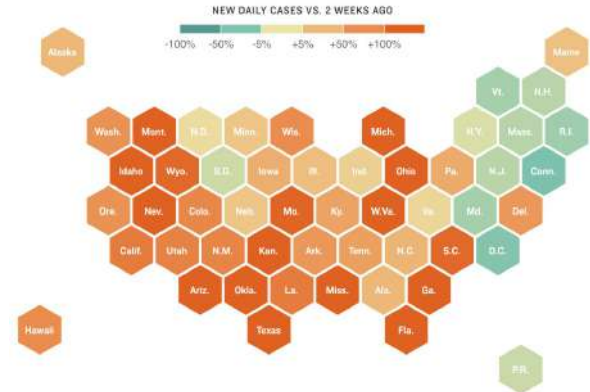
# Digital Engagement

## Educational Resource and Online Memorial

The online resources, targeted to grades K-12, will focus on advances around infectious disease and epidemics including COVID-19, smallpox, polio, HIV/AIDS, Ebola, and SARS and detail advances that have been made in the scientific and medical field across time, memorializing professionals.

Lesson plans, available in both English and Spanish, will analyze how epidemics have disproportionately affected low-income communities and neighborhoods of color.

The resource will focus on preventative actions, speaking to national and international response. Students will be engaged with written, video, and audio materials through deep observation, primary source learning, and persuasive writing.



# Timeline A Phased Approach

## TO DATE

- Received over \$1.2 M through REDC, public & private support
- Historic preservation team [completing stabilization drawings](#) to embark on memorial design competition
- Partnered with local NYC school to teach historic preservation class
- Developed [TheRuin.org](#)

## PHASE 1

- Continue capital fundraising
- Develop educational materials in partnership with Cornell/Tech, the World Health Organization
- Complete first phase of construction

## PHASE 2

- Maintain partnerships with NYC Health + Hospital, the Department of Education, Four Freedoms Park Conservancy
- Complete second phase of construction
- Launch beta site for digital memorial/ education site

## PHASE 3

- Complete third phase of construction and open to the public
- Final educational resource is launched
- Develop rich on-site programming as well as readily-available, Common Core materials



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# Thank you

## Contact Information



**Mission** Founded in 2019, the mission of Friends of the Ruin is **to excite interest** in the cultural value of New York City's historic Smallpox Hospital; **to engage the public** in dialogue about its potential for adaptive reuse as open space; and **to raise essential funds** to complete a restoration.

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