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WISCONSIN HUMANITIES COUNCIL GRANT GUIDELINES

The Wisconsin Humanities Council contributes to the quality of life of Wisconsin citizens by awarding grants for public humanities programs. Public humanities programs deepen our understanding of life, culture and society through reflection and conversation rooted in the study of history, literature and other branches of the humanities.

PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS (\$500)

The WHC encourages organizations that lack the resources needed to develop a mini or major grant proposal for a public humanities project to contact us. A proposal development grant pays \$500 for the services of humanities experts who consult with the applicant organization on the design of their project and offer advice on the preparation of a WHC grant proposal. Proposal development grants are ordinarily given to organizations that have little access to professional humanities experts, or who can demonstrate cultural or geographic isolation, limited staff size, or lack of experience in proposal preparation. Proposal development grants may not be used to pay for professional grant writing services.

Applicants for a proposal development grant should send the WHC a one- or two-page letter, stating

- the name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number of your organization and contact person and DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number (See page six of these guidelines for more information about DUNS numbers).
- a description of the public humanities project you have in mind (See the guidelines for mini and major grants for information on eligible projects.)
- how the project fits with the overall mission of your organization

- who you would hope to reach with the project (audience, participants, etc.)
- why your organization qualifies for a proposal development grant
- the name and institutional affiliation of the humanities expert who will help you develop your proposal, or a request that the WHC suggest such an expert

Deadlines and decision dates

Application letters may be submitted at any time. Decisions on proposal development grants will be made within two weeks of receipt of the request.

MINI-GRANTS (UP TO \$2,000)

The WHC awards grants of up to \$2,000 for projects that bring together community members and humanities experts in ways that use the knowledge and methods of the humanities to enrich individuals' lives and the civic life of communities.

Eligible projects must...

- ... be firmly rooted in the humanities, although they may also involve the sciences, social sciences, and the arts when humanities approaches are taken to these fields.
- ... involve humanities experts as active participants in project planning.
- ... emerge from a demonstrable community interest and show community support.
- ... be designed for a general audience (i.e. not a college or university audience).
- ... encourage reflection and invite thoughtful conversation.

Priority for mini-grant funding will be given to...

- ... proposals from organizations with annual budgets of less than \$1 million.
- ... projects that promise to reach participants who have limited access to cultural programs.
- ... projects built on collaboration among two or more organizations or institutions.

Weak proposals that are not accepted for funding often...

- ... do not involve a humanities expert as a key participant.
- ... involve a humanities expert whose expertise is not a good match with the topic of the project.
- ... are arts projects with humanities content that is "tacked on" rather than being true humanities projects in which the humanities are at the core of the project.
- ... lack sufficient detail about the subject matter of the project or what it will really look like to participants (for example, a proposal for a museum exhibit that does not include a script or other detailed information on its content).
- ... are missing parts of the application.

- ... request funds for items that are not explained in the proposal or are ineligible.
- ... request support for project activities that take place before, or less than two weeks after, the WHC's decision date.

Examples of creative projects that meet the guidelines include, but are by no means limited to...

- A series of community suppers designed to bring together residents for non-partisan civic dialogue, facilitated by a humanities expert, about issues of current concern
- Collaboration between a PK-12 teacher, an folklorist and museum educator to develop innovative humanities curricula on Hmong history and culture
- A book discussion program that brings together teachers and parents to read young adult literature as a way to share concerns about the challenges facing a community's youth
- An oral history project that collects the stories of people who have, in various ways, changed the face of their community, and that presents those stories to the community through a performance
- A thematically organized film series at which a humanities expert offers introductions to the films and leads an audience discussion afterward
- The research and production of an interpretive exhibit about Wisconsin's Native American history that is created through a collaboration between museum staff, K-12 teachers and their students, and a professor from a local college
- Planning, research, script review or other assistance from humanities experts that enriches the content of a media project such as a documentary or Website

(Media project applicants go to Special Guidelines for media projects.)

MINI-GRANTS (continued from pg. 2)

Who may apply

Any non-profit organization in the state of Wisconsin, or ad hoc group that is formed for the purpose of implementing an eligible public humanities project, may apply for funding. Ad hoc groups do not need to be incorporated or have formal tax-exempt status.

The money

All grants require matching funds that are equal to or greater than the amount requested from the WHC. Matching funds may be cash or in-kind. A budget narrative must describe the cash or in-kind sources of all matching funds.

Funds from the WHC may be requested for such reasonable project-related expenses as honoraria for humanities experts, per diem and travel expenses for project personnel, printing and publicity, telephone, facility rental, and materials necessary for the project.

Ineligible expenses include capital expenses, indirect or overhead costs, expenses related to fundraising, anything related to an archival project, museum acquisitions or staff salaries. (As defined by the WHC, staff salaries are the usual and customary payment to an individual for work performed for the sponsoring organization. If project personnel work for the sponsoring organization, and receive a regular salary regardless of grant funding, they should not use WHC funding to pay for that salary.)

Admission or registration fees maybe charged, however all anticipated income from fees must be shown in the budget as part of the matching funds and must be explained in the budget narrative. The WHC strongly encourages the use of scholarships, free admission days, and other flexible admission policies that make WHC-funded projects accessible to participants for whom a fee could present an obstacle.

Help with your proposal

Applicants are encouraged to contact WHC staff to discuss their project. Staff can advise applicants on project design and offer advice on the preparation of a competitive proposal. First-time applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a draft of their proposal for feedback. *Please note that drafts can only be reviewed if submitted at least two weeks in advance of a grant deadline.*

Deadlines and decision dates

Proposal must be received by:	Decision will be made no later than:
February 1	February 28
May 1	May 31
August 1	August 31
November 1	November 30



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MAJOR GRANTS (\$2,000-\$10,000)

The WHC awards grants of up to \$10,000 for projects that bring together community members and humanities experts in ways that use the knowledge and methods of the humanities to enrich individuals' lives and the civic life of communities.

Eligible projects must...

- ... be firmly rooted in the humanities, although they may also involve the sciences, social sciences, and the arts when humanities approaches are taken to these fields.
- ... involve humanities experts as active participants in project planning.
- ... emerge from a demonstrable community interest and show community support.
- ... be designed for a general audience (i.e. not a college or university audience).
- ... encourage reflection and invite thoughtful conversation.

Priority for major grant funding will be given to projects that...

- ... reach participants who have limited access to cultural programs.
- ... are built on collaboration among two or more organizations or institutions.
- ... use the humanities in innovative ways.
- ... seek to have a long term impact on participants and/or communities.
- ... promise participants an experience with the humanities that has depth and the potential to be transformative for individuals or communities.

Weak proposals that are not accepted for funding often...

- ... do not involve humanities experts as a key participants.
- ... involve humanities experts whose expertise is not a good match with the topic of the project.
- ... are arts projects with humanities content that is "tacked on" rather than being true humanities projects in which the humanities are at the core of the project.
- ... lack sufficient detail about the subject matter of the project or what it will really look like to participants.

- ... are missing parts of the application.
- ... request funds for items that are not explained in the proposal or are ineligible.
- ... request support for project activities that take place before, or less than two weeks after, the WHC's decision date.

Examples of creative projects that meet the guidelines include, but are by no means limited to...

- A series of community suppers designed to bring together residents for non-partisan civic dialogue, facilitated by a humanities expert, about issues of current concern
- Collaboration between a PK-12 teacher, an folklorist and museum educator to develop innovative humanities curricula on Hmong history and culture
- A book discussion program that brings together teachers and parents to read young adult literature as a way to share concerns about the challenges facing a community's youth
- An oral history project that collects the stories of people who have, in various ways, changed the face of their community, and that presents those stories to the community through a performance
- A thematically organized film series at which a humanities expert offers introductions to the films and leads an audience discussion afterward
- The research and production of an interpretive exhibit about Wisconsin's Native American history that is created through a collaboration between museum staff, K-12 teachers and their students, and a professor from a local college
- The production of a documentary or other media project that makes use of humanities experts to develop themes and enrich its content

(Media project applicants go to Special Guidelines for media projects.)

MAJOR GRANTS (continued from pg. 4)

Who may apply

Any non-profit organization in the state of Wisconsin, or ad hoc group that is formed for the purpose of implementing an eligible public humanities project, may apply for funding. Ad hoc groups do not need to be incorporated or have formal tax-exempt status.

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All grants require matching funds that are equal to or greater than the amount requested from the WHC. Matching funds may be cash or in-kind. A budget narrative must describe the cash or in-kind sources of all matching funds.

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Deadlines and decision dates

Proposal must be received by:	Decision will be made no later than:
April 15	June
August 15	October
December 15	February



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR WISCONSIN HUMANITIES COUNCIL GRANT APPLICANTS

WHAT IS A “HUMANITIES EXPERT”?

A humanities expert is ordinarily someone with a M.A. or Ph.D. in a humanities discipline (see list of [disciplines](#)) or who is otherwise well qualified to bring a humanities perspective to a project. Examples of individuals who are qualified in ways other than an academic degree in the humanities include museum curators and tribal elders, or individuals who are acknowledged cultural experts within their communities. In considering the suitability of a humanities expert for a particular project, the WHC looks for breadth and depth of knowledge that is relevant to the project. We also are concerned with experts’ ability to encourage the expression of, and reflection upon, multiple points of view and their ability to work with a public audience.

WHAT IS THE PROJECT PERIOD FOR A GRANT?

The project period of a grant begins after the WHC approves your grant proposal. The end date is determined by the applicant.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF GRANT PROPOSALS?

All WHC grant deadlines are for receipt of the proposal at the WHC office—not postmark date.

WHEN MAY WHC FUNDS BE SPENT?

WHC funds may only cover costs incurred or legally obligated during the project period (i.e. after a funding decision is made and before the applicant’s chosen project end date).

CAN THE WHC FUND ADVOCACY?

The WHC gladly funds projects that address public policy issues. However, we look for projects that employ experts in ways that bring diverse and balanced perspectives to such discussions. The WHC does not fund projects that advocate for a particular position.

WHAT ARE MATCHING FUNDS?

The WHC cannot pay for more than half of the cost of any project. Applicants are therefore required to show matching funds in an amount that is equal to, or greater than, the amount requested from the WHC. Matching funds may be cash and/or in-kind. Examples of in-kind match include the value placed on the use of facilities or time that individuals donate to a project. All applications must include a budget narrative that briefly describes the sources of all matching funds.

WHO MAKES WHC FUNDING DECISIONS?

Funding decisions are made by members of the board of the WHC. A complete [list of members](#) is available on our Website or from the WHC office. The WHC’s board is a diverse group of individuals from around the state who have expertise in a variety of academic disciplines and are involved with the humanities in many different ways. Six members are appointed by the Governor. The remaining members are elected.

WHAT IS A DUNS NUMBER?

All organizations that apply for funding from the WHC must have a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number, and include that number when submitting an application. No WHC grant funds may be awarded to an organization without a DUNS number.

For instructions on acquiring a DUNS number via telephone, visit the document located at this web site for information: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/duns_num_guide.pdf.

You may also acquire a DUNS number by visiting the website listed here: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>



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SPECIAL GUIDELINES FOR MEDIA PROJECTS

The WHC awards mini- and major grants to support the development, production and distribution of media projects that bring rich humanities content to large, diverse public audiences. To this end, the WHC requires that humanities scholars be involved in shaping the content of media projects at every stage. Scholars' participation should, for example, be included in activities such as research, the selection or review of content, review of treatments, outlines or scripts, evaluation of the final production, and public discussions once a project is distributed. Media projects include but are not limited to: film, video, television, radio, photography, CD, DVD, website productions, and print media publication.

Individual producers of media projects must contract with a Wisconsin non-profit organization or institution that will serve as the sponsoring organization. It need not be incorporated or have formal tax-exempt status. If an individual producer is a resident of Wisconsin, the project's content need not be specific to the state. Media producers from outside Wisconsin may apply if their project has some connection or relevance to Wisconsin and if a Wisconsin non-profit agrees to serve as their sponsoring organization.

The WHC will consider media proposals submitted for the following three phases of a media project. No project may receive grants for more than two of these three phases.

- 1) Development grants of not more than \$5,000 will support activities such as scholarly research, preparation of a treatment or script, and budget preparation. (See Research Grants for Large Projects for more details.)
- 2) Production grants of up to \$10,000 may support production expenses for projects that have secured or have documented commitments for all other funding (i.e. the WHC's grant funds will comprise the final production or publication funds necessary). Proposals requesting production funds must provide a distribution plan. That distribution plan must include one or more events (such as public screenings, broadcasts, lectures, readings, or exhibitions), or other opportunities (such as websites or distribution to libraries) through which the project will reach a significant public audience free of charge. Television or radio projects seeking production funds must be of a length, format and technical quality suitable for broadcast and/or webcast.
- 3) Distribution grants of up to \$5,000 should aid in the distribution of a media project to a substantial, diverse audience.

Media projects must use the [media grant application](#) form, use the special media project instructions, and submit work samples and other supporting materials as indicated in those instructions. Applicants may submit a media proposal to any of the WHC's mini- or major grant rounds, as appropriate to the amount being requested.