



## Partnership Grant (New Oral History Projects) Request for Proposals

**This Grant is part of the “Humanities Grant Program,” an initiative funded by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.**

RFP Issued: January 15, 2021

Application Deadline: Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm

Applicant Eligibility: Organizations or Individuals

Project Period: This opportunity is for projects conducted between April 20, 2021 and October 31, 2021.

### **Access Assistance:**

HumanitiesDC endeavors to make its applications as open and accessible as possible. If you are unable to access any materials on our site, please contact Oral History Project Manager, Jasper Collier at [jcollier@wdchumanities.org](mailto:jcollier@wdchumanities.org). When contacting us, please include the following in your query:

- Nature of the accessibility issue.
- The web address of the content you are attempting to access
- Your preferred format for the content
- Your contact information

### **Award Amount:**

Applicants may request up to \$7,000 depending on the scope of their projects.

Applicants may submit one application for a DC Oral History Collaborative sponsored grant in FY2021.

Applicants must choose between the “New Projects,” “Extension,” or “Public Projects and Events” programs.

Please read this request for proposals in full before submitting an application.

### **Staff Contact:**

Jasper Collier – [jcollier@wdchumanities.org](mailto:jcollier@wdchumanities.org)

### **About HumanitiesDC:**

HumanitiesDC is the State Humanities Council for Washington, DC, and local affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Founded in 1980, the Humanities Council of Washington, DC (HumanitiesDC) aims to enrich the quality of life, foster intellectual stimulation, and promote cross-cultural understanding and



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appreciation of local history in all neighborhoods of the District through humanities programs and grants.

Diversity and inclusion are fundamental to the mission of HumanitiesDC. For 40 years HumanitiesDC has been committed to amplifying the wide-ranging voices and perspectives of the District. As a grantmaking organization, it is our responsibility to justly promote, encourage, and support our diverse community. To deepen our commitment to honoring our city's rich cultural heritage, HumanitiesDC has committed revisit our practices to ensure they are fair, equitable, diverse and inclusive.

### **About the DC Oral History Collaborative:**

The DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) is a partnership between HumanitiesDC and the DC Public Library. DCOHC was created in 2017 as an ambitious city-wide initiative aimed at documenting and preserving the history of Washington's residents and communities through oral history.

### **What is Oral History:**

"[Oral history is] distinguished from other forms of interviews by its content and extent. Oral history interviews seek an in-depth account of personal experience and reflections, with sufficient time allowed for the narrators to give their story the fullness they desire. The content of oral history interviews is grounded in reflections on the past as opposed to commentary on purely contemporary events."<sup>1</sup>

### **Summary:**

Help us preserve the unique stories of Washington, DC residents! This opportunity provides financial and capacity building resources to community organizations and individuals ("partners") interested in conducting oral history projects. Potential projects may focus on: neighborhoods, social organizations, political history, labor, faith-based groups, cultural trends, historic events, or other themes that lend themselves to oral history as a tool for research and preservation. Partnership proposals will be due in March and awarded projects will be announced in April.

Selected partners will be required to attend a three-session Oral History training workshop and will work in conjunction with staff and consultants from the DC Oral History Collaborative throughout the course of their projects.

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<sup>1</sup> From the Oral History Association, <http://www.oralhistory.org/>.



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### Funding Scope:

Successful applications will propose projects that explore Washington, DC's life, history and culture through interviews with the people who have lived it. Projects should have a theme, focus or research question they aim to illuminate and must commit to interviewing at least five people. The final product for each project will be a set of well documented recordings accompanied by: interview descriptions, narrator biographical statements, transcripts, legal release forms, time-stamped indexes, metadata forms, and narrator photographs necessary for inclusion in the DC Public Library's Special Collections.<sup>2</sup> The legal release form signed by each interviewee will assign copyright to the DC Public Library, however the interviewee will retain non-exclusive rights to copy, use, and publish their oral history in part or in full during their lifetime.

**Partnering with the DC Oral History Collaborative** – The Collaborative strives to make oral history and this funding opportunity as accessible as possible. Key to this is the participation of ALL project directors in regular check-in and information-sharing meetings, professional development and capacity-building workshops, and networking opportunities. Prior experience with oral history is not required and every awarded project director participates in a required oral history training workshop.

Directors of funded projects will work closely with the HDC staff to promote their events and activities. DCOHC team members at HDC and at DCPL are available to give advice and feedback on project activities and guide the preparation and delivery of the interviews and their accompanying documentation.

**Community share-back sessions** – Applicants must include plans to share back the stories they collect with the community through one or more public events during the grant period. These events may be virtual or in-person.

### Other Required Proposal Elements:

- Identification of the project's Washington, DC Ward(s) served.
- A letter of support from the project's fiscal sponsor, if different than the organization or individual carrying out the project.
- A description of the key personnel who will work on the project.
- A timeline of project activities and milestones covering the full grant cycle.
- A marketing strategy for the project.

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<sup>2</sup> A required training session will elaborate on suitable best practices regarding documentation and transcription among other topics. Either audio or video recordings are acceptable.



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- A budget (in a provided template), and a budget narrative.
- A detailed plan for complying with relevant provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Required for organizations with 15 or more full time employees.)

You will also be asked to provide expected audience data – this is for informational purposes only and is used for reporting to HDC’s funders.

### **Risk Management and Ongoing Monitoring:**

Applicants may also submit audited financial statements, a board list and structure, and bylaws to demonstrate their organization’s stability. These materials combined with the organization’s past performance on HumanitiesDC-funded projects will determine whether any eventual award is considered low, medium, or high risk, and will affect the level of ongoing monitoring of the award throughout the grant period.

HDC will assign a risk-level to an award when it is made and will share it with the grantee. The quantity and frequency of reports, check-ins, and site visits will be determined based on the risk-level.

### **Cash Match and or In-Kind Match Requirement:**

The DC Oral History Collaborative partnership grant opportunities do not require a cash match. Applicants are encouraged to supplement DCOHC funding with other sources.

### **Common Characteristics of Successful Proposals:**

- Will clearly identify the research question driving the oral history inquiry. This question will go beyond the importance of collecting and archiving stories. (e.g. “What stories about community gardening are important to preserve?” becomes “How did the practice of community gardening change or evolve as gentrification took hold in Washington?”)
- Will demonstrate a deep understanding of the subject matter to be explored and a connectedness to relevant communities that will lend itself to the recruitment of narrators (interviewees).
- Will not propose collecting oral histories that have already been recorded and archived.
- Will demonstrate that the narrators to be interviewed and their communities will be substantively engaged in the development of the project.

### **How to Apply:**



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The HumanitiesDC grants portal can be accessed at <http://grantapplication.wdchumanities.org>. Please be sure to review the grant qualifications, terms and conditions for the program you are interested in before beginning an application. If you or your organization have applied for a HumanitiesDC grant before, please DO NOT create a new account. If you are having trouble accessing your existing account, please email the Oral History Project Manager, Jasper Collier at [jcollier@wdchumanities.org](mailto:jcollier@wdchumanities.org).

All HumanitiesDC grant applications are accepted via an online grant portal. Applications must be successfully submitted by 11:59pm on the day of the deadline. Applicants will receive a confirmation email when their proposals have been successfully submitted. Applicants should contact the applicable HumanitiesDC staff member immediately should they encounter any technical issues or if they do not receive a confirmation email. Incomplete or late applications or applications failing to meet the guidelines or eligibility requirements will not be assigned to the evaluator panels nor will they be considered for funding. HumanitiesDC does not accept mailed, emailed or hand-delivered applications or required attachments. HumanitiesDC will accept reasonable accommodation requests from applicants with disabilities in advance of the application due date to assist them in submitting grant applications via mail, email, or hand-delivery. To make a request for reasonable accommodation contact Jasper Collier at [jcollier@wdchumanities.org](mailto:jcollier@wdchumanities.org) and allow 1-2 business days for the approval of the request.

### Eligibility Requirements (Organizations):

- Must be an IRS designated 501c3 non-profit organization.
- Must be registered with, and authorized to do business in, the District as either a “Domestic” entity (that is, an entity that was incorporated in the District) or a “Foreign” entity (that is, an entity that was incorporated in another state).
- Must register and comply with the regulatory requirements of the following agencies:
  - o District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) – Corporations Division (indicating an “active” business license status at the time of application and agreeing to maintain such status throughout the grant period).
  - o District of Columbia Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR).
  - o District of Columbia Department of Employment Services (DOES).
  - o United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- Must be able to obtain a certification of “Citywide Clean Hands” (CCH) from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue.



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- Must have a principal business office address that is located in the District of Columbia and is accessible to onsite review. **Post office boxes will not be accepted.**
- Must be in good standing with HumanitiesDC. Applicants with outstanding or delinquent reports or final products from previous HumanitiesDC grants must submit them completed and without deficiencies at least 30 days before the deadline for which they wish to apply.
- Prohibited applicants include: private clubs and organizations that prohibit membership based upon race, gender, color, religion, or any other classes identified in the District of Columbia Human Rights Act; for-profit (commercial) entities; political organizations; foreign governments; federal government entities; and District of Columbia government agencies.

### Eligibility Requirements (Individuals):

- Must be aged 18 years or older.
- Be a legal resident of the District of Columbia for at least one year prior to the application deadline and must maintain residency during the entire grant period.
- Have a permanent DC address as listed on proper identification or tax returns. **PO Boxes may not be used as a primary address.**
- Must not hold any open grants awarded or administered by HumanitiesDC at the time of the application deadline.
- Must be in good standing with HumanitiesDC. Applicants with outstanding or delinquent reports or final products from previous HumanitiesDC grants must submit them completed and without deficiencies at least 30 days before the deadline for which they wish to apply.
- All grant recipients are responsible for reporting their respective grant award(s) as income on federal and local tax returns (in accordance with applicable law) and are strongly encouraged to consult with a tax professional and the United States Internal Revenue Service.

### Eligibility Requirements (Applicable to both Organizations and Individuals):

- Must be either planning or executing a program (or representing an organization planning or executing a program if serving as a fiscal sponsor) that:
  - o adheres to the summary and description outlined in this RFP.
  - o has 100% of its geographic focus on Washington, DC or one of its neighborhoods.



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- will occur within the grant period
- will have residents of Washington, DC as its primary audience.

By submitting a proposal, applicants certify that they are in compliance with all relevant eligibility requirements. Awarded applicants may be asked at any time during the grant period to provide proof of eligibility. Any awardees found to be ineligible after the award date will be required to return all grant funds to HDC.

### **Fiscal Sponsorship:**

Organizations without 501c3 non-profit status may apply through an organization serving as a fiscal sponsor provided that the fiscal sponsor organization meets all eligibility requirements in this RFP. Individuals may also apply through a fiscal sponsor. Under this arrangement, the fiscal sponsor organization takes on all financial and legal obligations of the grant award. Fiscal sponsors may support no more than three grant programs at a time. Applicants applying through fiscal sponsors must use the fiscal sponsor's organization account within the HumanitiesDC grants portal to submit their application. If the fiscal sponsor does not have an account, an authorized official from the fiscal sponsor organization must create one.

During the grant period for projects awarded via fiscal sponsorship, the fiscal sponsor organization contact, and the project director will both be required to correspond with and submit information to HumanitiesDC's grants officers. Fiscal sponsors should not be involved in the overall planning or execution of project deliverables – if HumanitiesDC finds evidence during the grant period that the fiscal sponsor has attempted to exploit the fiscal sponsorship policy to improperly submit multiple applications for projects in which they have a considerable stake, the grant agreement may be terminated by HumanitiesDC.

### **Allowable Costs:**

100% of awarded grant funds must be applied to direct program costs. This may include salary, consulting fees, and/or honoraria for individuals working on the project, but cannot include indirect costs, overhead, rent, utilities, or administrative fees. Other disallowed expenses include: food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting, costs related to fundraisers and special events, expenses unrelated to the execution of the project, and funding to foreign or domestic government agencies.

### **Examples of Allowable Costs:**

- Transcription Services



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- Project supplies and equipment
- Venue rental fees
- Narrator honoraria
- Project transportation
- Equipment rental
- Marketing and promotion
- Project consultant fees

### **Examples of Disallowed Costs:**

- Office rent, overhead, and utilities
- General office supplies and equipment
- Food and beverages
- Costs associated with the production of visual or performing arts projects
- Projects designed to be attended or used by a limited audience such as an organization's membership

Applicants may contact HumanitiesDC's grants staff with questions regarding allowable costs. Grantees will be required to detail all expenses in interim and final reports.

### **Accessibility and ADA Compliance:**

All organizational applicants must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The ADA provides civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, services rendered by state and local government, places of public accommodation, transportation and telecommunication services. Organizations funded by HumanitiesDC must make reasonable accommodations to ensure that people with disabilities have equal physical and communications access as defined by federal law.

Applicant organizations with more than 14 full time employees must include, in their grant applications, a response to the "Accessibility" section of its grant application that includes the following information:

1. The process for formulating accessibility plans (e.g. creating an accessibility advisory committee, board and staff disability rights training, budgeting for reasonable accommodation requests, etc.).
2. The current process/status of an organization's physical accessibility. If the location is not barrier-free, include in the grant application a plan for project/program modification that ensures access in a barrier-free environment, when needed.





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3. The current progress/status of the organization's accessibility in presenting activities – communications access (e.g. TDD, large print, or brail materials; audio description or assistive listening devices, ASL interpreted programs, etc.) and marketing/advertising.

In addition to detailed plans for its compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C § 12101 et seq.), each applicant must demonstrate how the project will be inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible throughout the District of Columbia, beyond participants with disabilities. Successful applications will consider a broad definition of “accessibility” by addressing financial, geographic, demographic, cultural and developmental access. For more information, applicants may access the complete text of the ADA here: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/12101>. Note that neither HumanitiesDC nor the District of Columbia government represent that this link leads to the latest version of the subject law.

### **Technical Assistance Workshops:**

HumanitiesDC schedules at least four technical grants assistance workshops for prospective applicants prior to the deadline for each cycle. Several of these workshops may be conducted via live webinars. These workshops, led by HumanitiesDC grants staff, provide information on grant qualifications, grant writing best practices, and navigation of the online grants portal. HumanitiesDC staff will not write applications for prospective applicants but will provide feedback on drafts. To request feedback, applicants must send a request by email to the grants staff member listed on the RFP no less than two weeks before the deadline. The technical grants assistance workshops are free and open to the public, but applicants are strongly encouraged to register via Eventbrite before attending. As the workshops are scheduled, the dates, times, locations, and registration links will be available on our website at <https://www.wdchumanities.org>.

### **Application Review Process:**

Qualified applications are submitted to a review panel comprised of Washington, DC residents with backgrounds and/or experience in humanities programming or scholarship. These panelists score the proposals assigned to them based on an established rubric that closely aligns with the questions in the application. After the reading and scoring period, panelists convene in person to discuss the merits and deficiencies of the applications in their cohort and to finalize their rankings under the guidance of HumanitiesDC grants staff and board members. All panelists, staff and board members are expected to remain impartial as they undertake their respective parts in the evaluation process. HumanitiesDC requires that all involved recuse themselves from review of any application that presents a personal or professional conflict of interest, and panelists must sign a statement acknowledging that they will adhere to this policy.



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The rankings presented by the panelists are adjusted according to thematic, geographic, and audience diversity by the HumanitiesDC grants staff and a final slate of proposed projects are submitted to the HumanitiesDC board for approval.

### **Notification and Payment of Awards:**

HumanitiesDC will notify applicants of their status (funded or denied) no more than 45 days after the application deadline. Grant award recipients will receive an official grant award letter through the online system which will include a link to submit acceptance forms and to sign the grant conditions. Denied applicants will be given one week to request a summary of panelist comments.

For award recipients, the date of payment is subject to the availability of funds and the processing of required documentation. Awards are disbursed via direct deposit, and all awarded applicants are required to submit an ACH form which is made available through the online grants portal.

### **Additional Requirements and Information:**

- 1. Project directors working on each awarded partnership grant will be required to attend a series of oral history best practices training workshops these workshops are tentatively scheduled to be held on:**
  - a. Wednesday, April 28, 2021, 5:30-8:30pm**
  - b. Wednesday, May 5, 2021, 5:30-8:30pm**
  - c. Thursday, May 12, 2021, 5:30-8:30pm.**
2. The HDC grants staff will schedule several required check-in sessions with partnership project directors over the course of the project period.
3. All partnership projects must participate in joint marketing and communications campaigns with HumanitiesDC during the grant period.
4. Applicants will submit all interviews, legal releases, transcripts, and other documentation to the DC Oral History Collaborative at the end of the grant period. Each interview must be accompanied by a legal release assigning copyright to the DC Public Library. Interviewees retain the non-exclusive right to copy, use, and publish their oral histories.
5. Applicants will be expected to assign individuals to the following roles:
  - a. Organizational Sponsor – The chief executive or presiding board member of the applying or sponsoring non-profit organization. Applicants submitting proposals as individuals will list themselves as the Organizational Sponsor.



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- b. Project Director – The person who will guide the daily operations of the project.
- c. Project Bookkeeper – The person responsible for maintaining a record of expenses against the grant award. This person cannot be assigned to any of the other project roles.

### **Terms:**

1. Awardees agree to document all grant expenditures and provide a final report at the end of the project period using forms provided by HumanitiesDC.
2. Successful applicants will be awarded the full award at the beginning of the grant period but will be required to submit interim progress and budget reports. Failure to complete these reports according to the schedule may result in intervention on the part of grants staff up to and including a request to return disbursed funds.
3. Any changes to the scope or budget (greater than 15% in any one category) of a partnership project must be communicated to HumanitiesDC in writing.
4. Awarded applicants will sign grant conditions that constitute a legally binding contract between HumanitiesDC and the applicant's organization or fiscal sponsor. The signatory will be legally obligated to complete the project under the terms of the grant conditions.
5. Other expenses that cannot be attributed to this grant award include: food or drink of any kind, the production or materials for creative or performing arts projects, and fundraising or membership cultivation events.
6. All final products collected as part of this partnership grant opportunity will be collected by the DC Oral History Collaborative and made available to the DC Public Library for accession to their Special Collections. Oral history narrators will retain the rights with the DCOHC and the DCPL to retain copies, publicly distribute, and publish derivative works based on the interviews they provide.

### **Reporting and Close Out:**

Grantees will be required to close out their grants no later than 30 days after the end of the grant period. The financial portion of the final report consists of: a form comparing the original budget to actual expenditures, an itemized list of all expenditures against the grant, backup for all expenses (receipts, payroll, paid invoices, cancelled checks, etc.), and a timesheet (individual grantees only). The narrative report consists of evaluative an evaluative form for the project director. All these documents and forms are submitted in the HumanitiesDC



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grant portal. The last part of the report is the final product and any accompanying documentation. Final products are submitted to HumanitiesDC via a Dropbox file request link specific to the grantee.

Failure to submit the report and final products in-full and by the deadline may result in the grantee being made ineligible to receive future funding from HumanitiesDC. Failure to complete the project may require the grantee to return all awarded funds.