



DC Documentary (DC DOCS) Partnership Grant

RFP Issued: February 8, 2022

Application Deadline: Tuesday, March 22nd, 11:59pm ET

Project Period:

This opportunity is for projects conducted between May 3, 2022-February 21, 2023.

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 HumanitiesDC's grants team at grants@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 \$35,000 depending on the scope of their projects.

Applicants may submit one project application for this grant program in FY2022.

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

Staff Contact:

HumanitiesDC's grant staff – grants@wdchumanities.org

About HumanitiesDC:



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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 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 to revisiting our practices to ensure they are fair, equitable, and inclusive.

What are the Humanities?

Potential projects may focus on: “language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life.”¹

^[1] From the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965 via <http://www.neh.gov>

Summary

Washington, DC, as we know it today, has a treasured cultural legacy that spans generations. HumanitiesDC is committed to supporting projects that breathe life into the unique stories of our rich communities. To help us with this mission HumanitiesDC is seeking qualified partners for its DC DOCS program.

DC DOCS provides financial resources to established filmmakers interested in telling a humanities story about Washington, DC through a documentary feature (greater than 40 minutes long) or short film (capped at 40 minutes including credits). Proposals will describe the film project in detail including: the story summary, topic

¹ From the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965 via <http://www.neh.gov>



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summary, project stage and timeline, marketing strategy, and budget. Proposals should also provide a detailed list of public programming, such as film screenings, focus groups, or other film related programming, including an approach to marketing and evaluating the public program.

An eligible documentary film is defined as a nonfiction motion picture dealing creatively with cultural, artistic, historical, social, scientific, economic or other subjects. It may be photographed in actual occurrence, or may employ partial reenactment, stock footage, stills, animation, stop-motion or other techniques, as long as the emphasis is on fact and not on fiction. As DC DOCS grantees, final films, when completed, will be expected to be showcased through HumanitiesDC organized online or in person events or film festivals and be made available for non-commercial, educational use.

Prospective projects will:

- be led by mid-career or established filmmakers who can provide evidence of their past successes;
- be informed by one or more of the humanities disciplines;
- Have strong scholar or expert involvement in guidance of the film. Applicants must demonstrate the scholar has the appropriate expertise to serve in this role and that they are committed to working on the project throughout the grant cycle.
- demonstrate a deep connection to Washington, DC; and
- be innovative, unique, and of strong educational interest to a wide public audience.

Proposals are reviewed annually in March, with selected projects announced in early May. Applicants may request up to \$35,000, and projects should be conducted between May of the application year and February of the year following.

Other Required Proposal Elements:

- Identification of the project's target demographic, primary humanities discipline, and Washington, DC Ward(s) served.
- A letter of support from the project's fiscal sponsor, if different than the organization carrying out the project.
- A description of the key personnel who will work on the project.



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- A timeline of project activities and milestones covering the full grant cycle.
- A outreach and marketing strategy for the project.
- A description of how the project's performance will be evaluated.
- Audience participation estimates.
- 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.)**

Common Characteristics of Successful Applications:

- Will define a clear final product that will be useful to other public humanists and future researchers.
- Will provide an easily playable sample reel via URL that clearly demonstrates the filmmaker's experience-level and expertise.
- Will outline a strong production team.
- Will demonstrate a deep understanding of the subject matter to be explored and the expected primary audience for the project.

Cash Match Requirement:

There is no match requirement for this grant opportunity. However, if the project costs are more than the amount being awarded in this grant applicants are **strongly encouraged** to share other secured and planned funding sources in the Budget and Budget Narrative.

How to Apply:

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 grants team at grants@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



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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 the grants team at grants@wdchumanities.org and allow time for the approval of the request.

Eligibility Requirements(Organizations or Fiscal Sponsors):

- Must be a federally incorporated 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.
- Must be producing a project (or representing an organization producing a project if serving as a fiscal sponsor) that has 100% of its geographic focus on Washington, DC or one of its neighborhoods.
- Must be producing a project (or representing an organization producing a project if serving as a fiscal sponsor) that will occur within the grant period.
- 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 not hold any open grants awarded (including previous year DC Docs grant) or administered by HumanitiesDC at the time of the application deadline.



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- 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.

By submitting a proposal, applicants certify that they or their fiscal sponsors 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.

HumanitiesDC will endeavor to work primarily with the team conducting the project, however, because fiscal sponsor organizations have fiduciary and financial responsibility for the grants they support it will be necessary, at times, for representatives from the fiscal sponsor organization to review and sign off on financial documents or grant agreements.

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



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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:

- Project supplies and equipment
- Venue rental fees
- Speaker or scholar honoraria
- Project transportation
- Equipment rental
- Marketing and promotion
- Exhibit design or construction
- 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 quarterly 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:



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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.
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:

HumanitiesDC schedules technical grants assistance workshops for prospective applicants prior to the deadline for each cycle. 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



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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.

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 automated clearing house (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 an initial kickoff awards ceremony.
2. All projects will be supported by a member of the HDC grants team. This HDC consultant or staff member will be responsible for providing support and advice to project directors as well as ensuring that all project work is progressing smoothly.
3. All partnership projects must participate in joint marketing and communications campaigns with HumanitiesDC during the grant period.
4. Applicants will be required to submit the completed documentary short, as described in their application, to HumanitiesDC so it may be archived and shared with the public at a mutually agreeable time.



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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.
 - b. Project Director – The person who will guide the daily operations of the project.
 - c. Filmmaker – The person making the primary creative and/or artistic decisions regarding the film and its content (if different from the Project Director).
 - d. Humanities Scholar – A person with strong knowledge of both the project topic and the discipline or field.
 - e. 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 quarterly 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 25% 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 generated as part of this partnership grant opportunity will be collected by HumanitiesDC. Awarded grantees will retain shared, non-exclusive copyright to retain copies, publicly distribute, and publish derivative works based on the materials they collect.
7. As of this grant release, grantees (including anyone directly administering the project or program being funded) shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with District of Columbia Covid-19 requirements by either being: (a) fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as defined by the District of Columbia; or (b)



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qualifying for a vaccination exemption (as defined by the District of Columbia). Due to the changing nature of DC Government requirements please see the Mayor's Order here for the latest requirements <https://www.dcregs.dc.gov/Common/NoticeDetail.aspx?NoticeId=N112383>

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 an evaluative form for the project director. Grantees are required to submit any ancillary programming such as focus groups or film screenings. The project deliverables are submitted via an individual Dropbox file request link, while the remaining documents and forms are submitted in the HumanitiesDC grant portal.

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.