2022 Capacity Building Grant for Humanities Organizations

RFP Issued: April 25, 2022

Application Deadline: June 3, 2022 6:00 PM

Project Period: August 1, 2022 – January 31, 2023

Applicant Eligibility: Non-profit Organizations

Summary:
This grant opportunity will provide general operating support to Washington D.C.-based, humanities-focused non-profit organizations for the purposes of engaging in capacity building activities that will help strengthen the organizations.   With this support, organizations will be better positioned to continue producing high-quality humanities work for the benefit of the District and its residents.

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, then please contact the staff member listed below for support. 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:
Organizations may request up to **$25,000.** Applicants may receive only one grant from this program in this fiscal year. Please read this request for proposals in full before applying.

Staff Contact: Eli Yussuf, Grants Manager at eyussuf@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 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:

The Humanities encompass: "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]

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

What are Humanities Organizations:

For the purposes of this grant, a humanities organization is defined as having a mission explicitly connected to the humanities along with a track record of specifically working in the humanities, as opposed to a group that occasionally tackles or delves into humanities-based themes or activities. To apply for a capacity building grant, you must be one of the following types of organizations:

- Cultural and Ethnic Organizations: This category includes organizations dedicated to the study, preservation, and/or dissemination of the history and culture of ethnic groups.
- History Organizations: This category includes historical societies, historical preservation groups, historic houses, folklore/folklife organizations, place-based learning

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

organizations, cultural sustainability organizations, and other organizations with a historical focus.

- Humanities Museums: This category includes organizations that acquire, preserve, research, exhibit, and provide for the educational use of works of art or objects/artifacts that are related to the study of humanities content.
- Media, Journalism, and Documentary Organizations: Organizations that are committed to covering humanities themes about communities that are informed by the members of those communities, challenge predominant narratives, and/or nurture critical analysis of media.
- Literature Organizations: This category includes organizations that promote the study or appreciation of literature and poetry.
- Humanities Education: Organizations that offer programs, classes, seminars, and workshops in the humanities (which include but are not limited to literature, languages, history, philosophy, civic engagement, religious studies, art history and criticism, and interdisciplinary humanities programs). Literacy programs and English-language acquisition (ELL/ESL) programs are also eligible in this category.
- Libraries and Archives: These organizations include operating libraries and archives (excluding those that are purely science- and medicine-focused). Combination museum-libraries can be treated as museums or libraries.
- Consortiums, alliances, and collectives of above-named groups.

If your humanities organization does not fit into any of the above classifications, then please contact us to discuss your eligibility for a capacity building grant.

What is Building Capacity in an Organization?
Capacity building is an investment in the effectiveness and future sustainability of an organization. Capacity building is whatever is needed to bring an organization to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational stability or maturity, so it may more effectively and efficiently advance its mission into the future. Distinct capacity building projects, such as identifying a communications strategy, improving volunteer recruitment, ensuring thoughtful leadership succession, updating a nonprofit's technology, and improving how it measures its outcomes, all build the capacity of an organization to effectively deliver its mission.

If you have any questions about what a capacity building project might be, please contact us to discuss your eligibility for a capacity building grant.

What are we looking for?

- Description of the organization's mission, and central activities, with emphasis on its typical humanities programming.
- Description of the organizational capacity activities the funds would support if awarded.

Other Required Proposal Elements:

- Identification of the organization's target demographic, primary humanities discipline, and Washington, DC Ward(s) served.
- Listing of key personnel whose positions would be impacted by the grant award and their roles in the organization.
- A timeline for expenditure of the funds.
- A budget (in a provided template), and a budget narrative.
- A detailed plan for complying with relevant provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Cash Match Requirement: There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the activities proposed cost are more than the amount awarded in this grant applicants are strongly encouraged to share other secured and planned funding sources in the required 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 Eli Yussuf, Grants Manager – eyussuf@wdchumanities.org.

All HumanitiesDC grant applications are accepted via an online grant portal. Applications must be successfully submitted by 6:00 pm 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 please contact Eli Yussuf, Grants Manager – eyussuf@wdchumanities.org and allow 1-2 business days for the approval of the request.

Eligibility Requirements:

- 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:
    - 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).
    - District of Columbia Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR).
    - District of Columbia Department of Employment Services (DOES).
    - 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 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 an organization which, as a core part of its mission, produces public programs in the Humanities, as defined here by the amended National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965:
    - "The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study and interpretation of the following: 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 the 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."

- Must be an organization for which Washington, DC residents comprise most of its constituents.
- 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.
- Must have a valid DUNS number (https://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html). Organizations do not need to have a DUNS number to apply but will not be able to receive funding until one is obtained.
- 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:
Fiscal sponsorship arrangements are prohibited for this grant. All applicants must have established 501(c)3.

Allowable Costs:
This grant is intended to support capacity building efforts. Expenses related to these efforts may include salary, consulting fees, rent, utilities, information technology, or administrative fees. Prohibited expenses include food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting, and funding to foreign or domestic government agencies.

Applicants may contact Eli Yussuf, Grants Manager at eyussuf@wdchumanities.org with questions regarding allowable costs. Grantees will be required to detail all expenses in their 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.
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 staff will be available to guide prospective applicants through the application process and offer technical assistance when possible. Please see the ways in which HumanitiesDC Staff will offer assistance below.

- HumanitiesDC will have a FAQ sheet available on our website at https://humanitiesdc.org. Applicants will have three weeks at the beginning of the submission period to send questions to Eli Yussuf, Grants Manager at eyussuf@wdchumanities.orgno later than May 13, 2022. The FAQ sheet will be updated

on the website and shared with anyone that has submitted questions no later than May 16, 2022.
- A webinar will be held midway through the application period to address questions. The webinar is free and open to the public. Registration is recommended to attend, and additional information can be found on our website.
- Virtual office hours will be held to answer additional questions. Office hours are 20-minute one-on-one virtual sessions free and open to the public. Office hours will be offered May 23 – June 3, 2022. To schedule office hours please visit our website at https://humanitiesdc.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 or virtually 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 review.

If you, or someone you know, are interested in participating in a review process, please complete the application form on our website at www.humanitiesdc.org.

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 grant portal.

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 an interim report. Failure to complete this report on time 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. 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) 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:
Interim reporting:

- The interim report will be due **October 31, 2022.**
- Reporting will be completed through the grant portal.

Close out:

- Grantees will be required to close out their grants no later than 30 days after the end of the grant period or March 2, 2023.
- The required final report will consist of a narrative, evaluation sheet and financial form requesting a comparison between the original budget to actual expenditures. Also required: an itemized list of all expenditures against the grant, backup for all expenses (receipts, payroll, paid invoices, cancelled checks, etc.). Reporting will be completed through the grant portal.