



2023 Capacity Building Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Issued: March 6, 2023

Application Deadline: May 2, 2023, at 5:59 PM

Project Period: July 3, 2023 – March 3, 2024. Funds must be spent during the project period (also known as the “grant period”).

Grant Type: Non-Program

Applicant Eligibility:

Humanities-focused, DC-based nonprofit organizations with budgets of \$2MM or less. These organizations must have a mission explicitly connected to the humanities along with a track record of specifically working in the humanities.

This does not include organizations that occasionally tackle or delve into humanities-based themes or activities. We use the following definition: "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 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.'" ([National Endowment for the Humanities \(NEH\)](#))

Applicants may apply for and receive only one program grant per year but could also receive one non-program grant (i.e., either a capacity building or a general operating support grant).

Summary:

This grant opportunity funds projects which help strengthen the capacity of humanities-focused nonprofit organizations to advance their mission and serve communities across DC. With this support, organizations will be better positioned to continue producing high-quality humanities work for the benefit of the District and its residents. Applicants will propose distinct capacity building projects, such as identifying a communications strategy, improving volunteer recruitment, ensuring thoughtful leadership succession, updating a nonprofit's technology, or improving how it measures its outcomes, that will build the capacity of their organization to effectively deliver its mission.

This opportunity is part of the Humanities Grant Program supported with funding from the District of Columbia Government through the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

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 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: The maximum award amount for the Capacity Building grant is \$25,000.

Staff Contact: Eli Yussuf, Grants Manager, at eyussuf@humanitiesdc.org

About HumanitiesDC:

Founded in 1980, HumanitiesDC is one of 56 state councils supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities to ensure the humanities are available to all. We believe the humanities (history, literature, language arts, ethics, philosophy, and arts appreciation) are a powerful tool to help all Washingtonians, and others connected to the District of Columbia, deepen their relationships with the city and each other through the sharing of unique and universal stories, the fostering of intellectual stimulation, and the promotion of cross-cultural understanding. By increasing understanding and appreciation, we help build more equitable, thriving, and rich communities in Washington DC. Every year, HumanitiesDC does this work by using community-informed grantmaking to invest in local scholars, experts, and organizations, as well as engaging all residents through partnership-based public programming.

Funding Scope:

We define capacity building as an investment in the effectiveness and future sustainability of an organization. Specifically, we fund distinct capacity building projects, examples of which include, developing a communications strategy, improving volunteer recruitment, ensuring thoughtful leadership succession, updating technology, and improving the measurement of outcomes. Applicants are encouraged to focus on one or two projects.

Cash Match Requirement:

There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the proposed activities cost more than the amount requested, applicants are strongly encouraged to describe other secured/planned funding sources in the Budget Narrative.

How to Apply:

All HumanitiesDC grant applications are accepted via an online grant portal, which can be accessed at <http://grantapplication.wdchumanities.org>. Applications must be successfully submitted by 5:59 pm on the day of the deadline.

If you or your organization have applied for a HumanitiesDC grant before, please DO NOT create a new account. Instead, log in to Foundant - our grants management portal - via your existing account, with your email address serving as your username. Please reach out to the Grants Manager listed above if you need assistance accessing your account.

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 the Grants Manager identified at the beginning of this document and allow 1-2 business days for a response.

Eligibility Requirements:

Organizations applying for this grant:

- Must be a DC-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization for which Washington, DC residents comprise most of its constituents.
- 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 have a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). UEI is a number issued by the System for Award Management (SAM) to identify businesses and other entities that do business with the federal government. The UEI has replaced the DUNS number as the authorized identifier for the federal government. Organizations do not need to have a UEI number to apply but will not be able to receive funding until one is obtained. [Click here for more information on UEI.](#)
- Must be able to obtain a certification of “Citywide Clean Hands” (CCH) from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue.
- 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.
- May be asked at any time during the grant period to provide proof of eligibility. Any awardees found ineligible after the award date must return all grant funds to HDC.
- By signing the conditions document and accepting the funds will be certifying that they comply with: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; (b) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; (c) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; (d) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act; (f) the Age Discrimination Act of 1973; (g) the Labor Standards under Sections 5i and 7g of the National Foundation of the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965; and (h) the regulations issued pursuant thereto by the National Endowment for the Humanities (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Chapter XI).”

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.

Fiscal Sponsorship:

Fiscal sponsorship arrangements are prohibited for this grant. All applicants must be 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations.

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.

Grantees will be required to document all expenses paid with HumanitiesDC funds 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 15 or more full time employees and/or applying for funding for events 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 braille 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:

Applicant support including grant workshops, Frequently Asked Questions, and office hours with HumanitiesDC staff are available. Details can be found on each grant page of our website, in [the Community Grants section](#).

Application Review Process:

- After the deadline, applications are reviewed for eligibility by staff. Ineligible applicants are notified immediately.
- Eligible applications are reviewed by a panel of Washington, DC residents with interest and/or experience in humanities programming or scholarship. Panelists receive training, scoring guides and tools to individually score the applications assigned to them. They then convene to discuss the applications, after which they finalize their scores, rankings and comments.
- The applications are organized by rank and a slate of the highest-ranked applications are provided to the HumanitiesDC board. The board affirms that the review process was followed and approves the slate for funding.
- Everyone involved in the review process is expected to remain impartial. 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.

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 (approved or denied) no more than eight weeks after the application deadline. Approved applicants will receive a grant award letter through Foundant, our online grant management portal, which will include a link to submit their Grant Acceptance Form. Awards are disbursed via direct deposit, and recipients are required to submit a W-9 form (available via the Grant Acceptance Form) prior to disbursement. Denied applicants may request a summary of panelist comments.

Grant Award Terms:

1. The full grant is awarded at the beginning of the grant period, as soon as funds are made available to HumanitiesDC for distribution.
2. Recipients agree to document all grant expenditures.
3. Any changes to the scope or budget (greater than 25% in any one budget category) must be requested in writing. Such changes are approved unless they either significantly alter or are unrelated to the original purpose of the grant proposal.
4. Awardees are required to submit an interim report as described below. Failure to complete this report on time may result in intervention on the part of HumanitiesDC up to and including a request to return disbursed funds.
5. Awardees are required to submit a final report as described below. Failure to do so satisfactorily might affect eligibility for future grants.
6. To receive the grant award, approved applicants must sign and submit a Grant Agreement Form that constitutes 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 Agreement Form.
7. 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:

Reporting will be completed through the grant portal. The interim report will be due **October 31, 2023**, and the final report will be due **April 2, 2024**. Grants managers will review reports and provide feedback within 30 days.

Close Out:

Grantees will be required to close out their grants by submitting their final report no later than 30 days after the end of the grant period, or **April 2, 2024**. Grantees risk losing eligibility for future grants if they fail to submit their reports and achieve a successful grant closeout.

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.).