



HumanitiesDC

HISTORY
LITERATURE
LANGUAGES
ETHICS
PHILOSOPHY
ARTS APPRECIATION

Outline

- Introductions
- DCOHC Beyond the Archives Grant Program:
 - Purpose
 - Details and requirements
- Brief introductions to you and your projects
- Components of a successful application & common issues
- The Application
- Q&A

Who We Are



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HumanitiesDC: What we do

- HumanitiesDC “helps 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”
- To help fulfill this mission: “community-informed grantmaking to invest in local scholars, experts, and organizations, as well as engaging all residents through partnership-based public programming”
- In 2024 we expect to award \$1 million in grant funding across six programs
- Cycle I: opened December 11, 2023, closes February 20, 2024
- Cycle II: opens March 4, 2024, closes May 1, 2024

What are the Humanities?

Human stories allow us to navigate the complexities of our past, present, and future. The humanities help us learn from history and literature, empathize through language and comparative religion, and challenge our assumptions with philosophy and ethics. They are a compass for interpreting what humans make and exploring what makes us human.

- They help us understand...
 - Our story's past: history, anthropology, archaeology;
 - Our story's expressions: literature, linguistics, languages, arts history/theory/criticism;
 - Our story's values: ethics, philosophy, comparative religion, law.

What is Oral History?



<https://vimeo.com/498469325>

What is Oral History?

“The value of oral history lies largely in the way it helps to place people’s experiences within a larger social and historical context. The interview becomes a record useful for documenting past events, individual or collective experiences, and understandings of the ways that history is constructed. Because it relies on memory, oral history captures recollections about the past filtered through the lens of a changing personal and social context.” - Oral History Association (2018)

- In taking a life history approach, the oral historian seeks to document the narrator’s journey through life, from early childhood through the present moment. The goal is to probe the ways in which the narrator’s life story resounds with overtones and undertones of broader historical significance.
- Related to journalistic-style interviewing, storytelling, and sociological/anthropological research, but distinct in its depth, breadth, and approaches to subjectivity and informed consent.
- Oral history is a tool of the humanities – you can interview people about non-humanities topics too!

Importance of Oral History

- A way that culture and values are shared to strengthen community and inform new generations over time; a crucial part of individual and community identities
- An interdisciplinary, interview-based method of producing historical documents, for future generations to better understand the lived experience of history, and the many meanings that people make of these experiences
- A chance to deepen and complicate the written record of history
- A means of understanding the experiences that produce perspectives different from one's own
- Open to digressions, surprises, and unforeseen pathways in the conversation
- An art of relationships
- Easy to learn, but difficult to master



DC Oral History Collaborative

The DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) is a partnership between HumanitiesDC and the DC Public Library. It was created in 2017 as a city-wide initiative aimed at documenting and preserving the history of Washington's residents and communities through oral history. The Collaborative is a multi-faceted program that includes grantmaking, training, and public projects.

As a HumanitiesDC DCOHC grantee, you would receive access to the following:

- Access to training and workshops
- Become part of a network of community oral historians in DC connected by a listserv
- Potential for partnership programs and events featuring your oral history work

Beyond the Archives Grant

- Expand support for the humanities beyond academia and formal scholarship
- Provide resources to residents and community organizations to give public voice to stories and narratives that interest and represent them
- Spotlight *existing* oral histories and bring them out of the archives
- Possible projects include listening stations, short videos, podcasts, exhibits, curricula, websites, or written publications

2023 Beyond the Archives Project Example



Poet and educator Sami Miranda used archived oral histories with other DC poets active in the scene in the 90s to produce *It's Your Mug*, a documentary film about a legendary poetry open mic founded in 1994 at a Georgetown coffee shop

Who you are

- 30 seconds – name and organization affiliation (if any)
- Share out using your microphone or in the chat
- Tell us about the project you're considering.

Grant Details

- Up to \$12,000
- Project period: May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025
- Eligibility requirements: open to DC-based individuals, community groups (with one individual as primary grantee and point of contact), and non-profit organizations
- Individuals may choose to apply with a fiscal sponsor, but fiscal sponsors are not required.
- Approximately 4 awards available in 2024. In 2023, 67% of eligible Beyond the Archives applications received funding.

Grantee Requirements

- Grantees submit 2 reports:
 - Interim report due October 15, 2024
 - Final report due May 30, 2025
- Final report includes documentation of all grant expenditures and project evaluation
- Grantees attend a kick-off call for new awardees at the beginning of the grant period

Allowable/Unallowable Expenses



100% of awarded grant funds must be applied to direct program costs

The grant can fund...

- Project supplies and equipment
- Virtual or in-person spaces for public events
- Honoraria, wages, and stipends
- Project transportation
- Project publicity and promotion

The grant cannot fund...

- Recording new oral history interviews
- Indirect costs such as rent or utilities
- General office supplies
- Food, refreshments, hospitality or parties
- Costs related to fundraising
- Re-granting
- Funding to government agencies

Opportunity for Q & A



Components of a Successful Application

- **Humanities focus:** Project utilizes humanities to publicly explore human stories, culture, and experiences.
- **Oral History archives explained:** access to oral histories is explained and stories are identified. Clarify how you will gain access to the archive if necessary.
- **Strong Scholar or Community Expert Involvement:** project identifies an individual with significant knowledge of or experience with the topic area explored by the project. Scholar will support and shape the project as an advisory grounded in the topic area.
- **Detailed project narrative:** responses to questions should provide clear and detailed descriptions of the proposed project and activities, the audience experience and participation, achievable and realistic timeline with steps to project completion, and articulation of desired goals and outcomes.
- **Community Collaboration:** Community partners are identified and named in the application. The applicant articulates how community members will strengthen the project. Plans to conduct public outreach or seek public input are clearly outlined.

Common Application Issues

- Oral history archives and narrators not specifically identified
- Key personnel not specifically identified
- Humanities scholar is not identified or relevancy of her expertise is not clear to the reviewers
- Project narrative does not provide enough detail
- Timeline is not specific, does not fit within the grant period
- Community collaboration info is not specific – partners are not identified, or how they will contribute is not clearly explained

Weighted Review Criteria

Capacity and Personnel (30% of total score)

- Project Director has the experience and expertise necessary to bring the project to completion
- The Humanities Scholar or Community Expert has relevant qualifications for the proposed project Their role is clearly defined and lends legitimacy or intellectual authority to the project.
- Other team members and collaborators are clearly identified and explained as necessary.

Project depiction, feasibility, timeline, and goals (40% of total score)

- The applicant has provided a clear and detailed description of the proposed project, including how oral history recordings will be incorporated
- The audience's experience of and participation in the project is explained.
- The timeline is within the grant period and feasible.
- Achievable goals or impacts are described, and the applicant has a clear plan for assessing the project success.

Weighted Review Criteria

Community Collaboration (20% of total score)

- The proposal described an effective plan for reaching and engaging the project's target audience.
- The project will be inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible (defined broadly to include financial, geographic, demographic, cultural and developmental accessibility)

Budget (10% of total score)

- The applicant clearly describes how funds will be used, and all expenses are directly tied to the proposed project activities.
- Budgeted expenses are allowable

Application questions to review

[Link to Foundant Instructions for creating an account](#)

- **Individual vs. Organizational applicant:** should match the registration
- **Project Director:** will likely match the individual grantee info, or be the primary point person in an organization to manage the grant
- **Key personnel:** provide details that demonstrate team members have relevant experience to contribute to the project
- **Scholar:** must be identified in advance, and resume should show relevant expertise related to the project
- **Project narrative:** oral histories are specifically identified, and applicant explains how they will access to the interviews. Narrator voices and input are incorporated as possible. Assume the reader knows nothing about you or your proposed topic areas.
- **Community collaboration:** be as specific as possible. Successful applications identify the community partners with whom they will engage and offer explanations of how this collaboration will strengthen their projects.
- **Budget & narrative:** specific and detailed, a clear budget will show the reviewers that you know what you need to complete this project

Opportunity for Q & A





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