DC Oral History Collaborative and Extension Grants Workshop – January 11, 2024

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- The Grants Programs
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Who We Are

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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 grant programs, approximately 62 grants in total

- 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?

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 histories are tools within 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.

HumanitiesDC DCOHC grantees are considered members of the Collaborative!

Members Receive:
- Access to training and workshops
- Ongoing guidance and mentorship
- Become part of a network of community oral historians in DC connected by a listserv
- Access to the Their Story – an online oral history platform
- Potential for partnership programs and events featuring your oral history work

DC Oral History Collaborative Grant

- Eligibility: DC-based individuals, community groups, nonprofit organizations. Individuals and community groups can apply through a fiscal sponsor. See RFP for more details.

- Maximum Award: $8000 (plus $5000 for translation)

- Project Period: *April 15, 2024 – December 31, 2024

- Collection/documentation/preservation of at least 5 new oral history interviews, linked by a central research question or theme. Projects that explore Washington, DC life, history, and culture through interviews with the people who have lived it

- Ask yourself why oral history is the best approach for this research question

- Will fund approximately 14 projects in 2024

- Application due February 20, 2024

Link to RFP

DC Oral History Collaborative Extension

- Eligibility: Organizations or individuals who have previously received and successfully closed out a DCOHC grant with HumanitiesDC

- Maximum Award: $8000 (plus $5000 for translation)

- Project Period: *April 15, 2024 – December 31, 2024

- Allows former DCOHC grantees to continue working on their successfully completed oral history projects. Funds awarded under this grant program are for expenses associated with collecting additional oral history interviews and producing the required final products.

- Will fund approximately 6 projects in 2024

- Application due February 20, 2024

Link to RFP

Fiscal Sponsorship

- Individuals or community groups without 501(c)3 non-profit status must apply through a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that serves as a fiscal sponsor.

- Fiscal sponsors assume all financial and legal obligations:
  - Application submission
  - Funding acceptance
  - Interim and final report submissions

- No more than 10% of the grant award may be used to pay a fiscal sponsor

- Applicants applying through fiscal sponsors must use the fiscal sponsor's organization account within Foundant, our grants portal

- Eligibility requirements noted in RFP still apply to the fiscal sponsors

2023 Oral History Project Examples

How the Equal Rights Center Became a Powerful Force for Civil Rights is a project with Vision House that focuses on the collaborative work of the Equal Rights Center (ERC) and the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights (WLC) in advancing the cause of civil rights and equal opportunity in the District of Columbia. Vision House interviewed founding members and long-time board and staff members of the ERC and the WLC.

The Legacy of Anti-Racist Neighborhood Housing Organizing in Adams Morgan is a project with Vikram Surya Chiruvolu. Vikram is interviewing members of the Latino community and on creators and residents of low-income, deeply-affordable housing in Adams Morgan.

Who You Are

- Name
- Organization Affiliation (if any)
- Tell us a little about the project you're considering
    - Why is oral history the best project format?

Grant Requirements

- Attend a three-session, in-person oral history training workshop: April 17th, 19th, and 23rd (not required for Extension grantees)

- Interim report due August 15, 2024: explanation of funds spent and a brief overview of progress to date

- Final deliverables due January 30, 2025: audio or video media files, transcripts, indexes, metadata for each interview. These are ultimately housed in the People's Archive at the DC Public Library.

  Transcripts - word-by-word text of interview

  Indexes - time-coded summary of different segments

  Metadata - information such as date, place, names, length, etc.

Grant Requirements, Con't

- Final report due January 30, 2025: explanation of funds spent, documentation of all expenditures, and a project evaluation

- Past grantees have indicated an approximate range of **20-50 hours per oral history interview**
  - Attending trainings, conducting research and pre-interviews, scheduling and conducting interviews, editing transcripts, seeking narrator approval of transcripts, producing indexes, producing metadata, and administering the grant
  - We provide extensive assistance throughout the project!

Allowable/Unallowable Costs

The grant program CAN fund:

- Recording equipment
- Transcription
- Translation
- Virtual recording platforms
- Space rental
- Honoraria/Wages/Stipends/Salaries
- Project transportation
- Project publicity and promotion

The grant program CANNOT fund:

- Any non-program-related costs
- General office supplies
- Rent, overhead/indirect, utilities, restoration
- Food and beverages/entertainment/social activities/fundraisers
- Tuition and scholarships
- Debt reduction
- Re-granting
- Funding to government agencies
- Interpretive works like films, books, exhibits etc. Grantees interested in producing these types of projects should apply for a Beyond the Archives grant.

Q&A Break

Successful Applications

- Compelling project scope and contribution to DC history
- Explanation as to why oral history is the best format for project
- Ideas and explanations for community partners and team members
- Timeline seems reasonable
- Well-organized budget explanation
- DETAILED

- If an applicant remembers the above, lack of oral history experience isn't a big problem!

Common Application Issues

- No explanation of importance of project to DC history or why oral history is the best format
- Project scope is too broad
- Unclear description of narrator involvement and selection
- Budget is not justified in budget narrative
- Looks like application was written in a rush
- Timeline doesn't cover entire project's lifespan
- NOT DETAILED

Weighted Review Criteria

- <u>Capacity and Personnel</u> - 20%
The Project Director has the experience and expertise necessary to bring the project to completion. Other team members and collaborators are clearly identified and explained as necessary.

- <u>Project description, feasibility, and timeline</u> - 45%
The scope of the area of interest or research topic is clear. It is also clear that oral history is the ideal tool for the exploration of this inquiry. The applicant proposes to interview at least five people. Prospective narrators are identified where possible. The timeline is within the grant period and is feasible. The project is of significant value to the city of Washington, DC and its residents.

Weighted Review Criteria, Con't

- <u>Community Collaboration</u> - 25%

The applicant demonstrated how the project would be strengthened through collaboration and community involvement. Consider their description of the roles of project team members (including narrators), DC communities, and organizational partners in different aspects of the project's planning, development, and implementation. The applicant describes how the public will access, use, and engage with the content of the interviews.

- <u>Budget</u> - 10%

The applicant clearly describes how funds will be used, and all expenses are directly tied to the proposed project activities. Budgeted expenses are allowable. (Unallowable expenses include food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting, and funding to foreign or domestic government agencies. If the applicant is using a fiscal sponsor: no more than 10% of the grant can go to the fiscal sponsor.)

Key Application Questions

Foundant Instructions Here

Applicant Information
- Unique Entity Identifier required for organizations (see FAQ document for more info)
- Fiscal sponsors submit application on behalf of sponsored entity (and sign submitted application)
- Write about your passion in individual statement of interest

Capacity and Key Personnel
- Project director has direct work experience with oral history AND/OR experience/interest with project topic professionally or personally. They are the driver of the project activities and usually the point of contact.
- Don't necessarily need team members, but most projects benefit from this (so project director doesn't do everything themselves, community buy-in, etc.)

Key Application Questions, Con't

Project Narrative
- Explain WHY your project focuses on the chosen humanities discipline(s)
- Translation funds available (and explanation later in application)
- Details!

DCOHC New Project Questions
- Remember required training dates if chosen for funding
- Totally fine if you don't have any oral history/interviewing experience

DCOHC Extension Question
- Read through the note at bottom of section regarding funding request

Key Application Questions, Con't

Community Collaboration
- Projects don't need extensive community partnerships, but community members ideally should be involved in project beyond just being interviewed (connect project director to other narrators, general outreach, location scouting, etc.)

Budget
- DETAILS for budget narrative. Explain each budget category by line item, provide equations as needed for more complicated calculations (like salaries), think of how you want to record interviews and where they'd take place
- Can redirect funds as project progresses

Accessibility
- Required if organization has 15+ staff members

Q&A

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