HumanitiesDC

HISTORY
LITERATURE
LANGUAGES
ETHICS
PHILOSOPHY
ARTS APPRECIATION

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT GRANT WORKSHOP – MARCH 2025

Outline

- Intro to HumanitiesDC
- General Operating Support Grant Program:
  - → Purpose
  - → Details and requirements
- Brief introductions of you and your organizations
- Reviewing the application
- Components of a successful application & common issues
- Q&A

Who We Are

Leah Gage
Community Grants Manager

- Oversees HumanitiesDC's grants portfolios;
- Main point of contact for GOS Grant

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Hillary Steen
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- Oversees HumanitiesDC's grants portfolios
- Additional point of contact for grant related questions

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Lois Nembhard
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- Oversees HumanitiesDC's Community Grants and Public Programs

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What We Do

At HumanitiesDC, we connect curious people with bold questions to the powerful stories of our vibrant city. We help build a community where all can engage in intellectual exchange, reflect on our connected stories and celebrate our various cultures.

- Public Programs – Community Journalism, Culture Series, DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC), Fellowships
- Community Grants - $1M to 60+ grantees across 8 wards

Cycle II applications now open! **Applications are due May 1, 2025, at 5:59 pm!**

Continuing Oral History Interviews Grant
$8k - 13k

General Operating Support Grant
$25k

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 past, through history, anthropology, & archaeology
- Our story's public expressions, through literature, language, and art history/theory/criticism
- Our story's meaning, through ethics, philosophy, comparative religion, and the law

Link to the National Endowment for the Humanities Definition

General Operating Support Grant

- Provides general operating support to ***DC humanities-focused non-profits*** with annual budgets of ***$2 million or less***
- Funding is unrestricted and intended to support an organization's general operations
- Up to $25,000
- Grant period: July 1, 2025, to April 30, 2026
- Not open to individuals or fiscal sponsors
- Approximately 12 awards available in 2025

Applicant Requirements

- Proof of active non-profit status and valid EIN
- Registered in Washington, DC with a physical DC address
- Total cash expenses under $2 million for previous fiscal year
- Must be in good standing with HumanitiesDC
- Cannot have a current CAH General Operating Support grant
- Humanities-focused mission and programming track-record

Are we a "humanities-focused non-profit"?

- Does our mission statement address the humanities directly?
- Do our primary activities help to build connections between or tell stories about Washington, DC and its residents?
- Does our work make connections or build empathy across communities through dialogue, discussion, and participation?
- Does our work preserve, share, and celebrate cultural identities, heritage, and tradition?
- Does the work you do help people explore careers in the humanities, or apply humanities concepts in their day-to-day life?
- Does the work you do help to document contributions to a humanities discipline?

Grantee Requirements

- Grantees submit 2 reports:
  Interim report due November 15, 2025
  Final report due May 30, 2026

- Final report includes documentation of all grant expenditures and an explanation of how funds supported the organization's work

Allowable/Unallowable Expenses

The grant can fund…

- Salaries
- Consulting fees
- Rent
- Utilities
- Information technology
- Administrative fees
- Other general operating expenses

The grant cannot fund…

- Food, refreshments, hospitality or parties
- Tuition and scholarships
- Debt reduction
- Re-granting
- Funding to foreign or domestic government agencies

2024 Grantees

STORY DISTRICT

Opportunity for intros and Q & A

Weighted Review Criteria

Organization Profile and Programming (50%)

- The applicant organization's mission has an explicit humanities focus; the organization's programming and/or track record includes the humanities as a significant part of their work.
- The applicant demonstrates that their programming is successful and responds to the needs and desires of its core audience.
- They describe how they define and measure success and demonstrate that their programming has been successful; if a new organization, they include an explanation for their program model and a plan for evaluation.
- The applicant's work plays an important role in the humanities landscape of DC.

Weighted Review Criteria (cont'd)

Community Outreach, Access, and Inclusion (50%)

- The applicant clearly defines and demonstrates an understanding of the community it serves.
- The applicant has programming and services that are inclusive and accessible. This includes, but isn't limited to, financial, geographic, demographic, cultural, and physical inclusion and accessibility.
- The applicant's leadership and staff represent its core audience and the community it serves. Or, the applicant offers a reasonable explanation for why it does not and/or includes plans to increase representation.
- The applicant describes effective methods to reach and engage its target community.

Application questions to review

Instructions to create account in grants portal

- **Humanities discipline**

- **Mission and Programming:** a detailed response that includes:
  - organization's mission
  - current and planned programs and initiatives
  - how the organization makes decisions about programming
  - how the organization defines and measures success
  - Optional work samples and links

- **Significance to DC:** an explanation of the organization's purpose and importance in and to the city

- **Financial Statement**: most recent audited financial statement (or annual financial statement if audit is not conducted)

Application questions to review

- **Community Outreach, Access, & Inclusion**: detailed response that covers:
  - the community you serve and how you ensure that you are reaching them
  - How your org is inclusive of and accessible to the community you serve
  - How your leadership and staff reflect this community

- **Budget Narrative**: a description of how the funds will support your organization, though projects need not be identified

Components of Successful Applications

- **Humanities focus is clear and well-explained:** Organization identifies a humanities discipline that is central to the mission; the organization has a proven track-record of work in the humanities in DC
- **Detailed and clear responses** that address each aspect of the question
- **Specific examples** to illustrate or demonstrate claims about the organization's work

Common Application Issues

- **Applicant does not read the RFP** or application questions ahead of time
- **Applicant does not provide sufficient detail** in written responses
- **Applicant waits until last minute** to submit

Opportunity for Q & A

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