



2026 Oral History Interviewing – DC Oral History Collaborative Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Issued: December 8, 2025

Application Deadline: February 18, 2026 at 5:59 pm

Project Period: May 1, 2026 - January 31, 2027. Funds must be spent during the project period (also known as the “grant period”).

Maximum Award Amount: \$8,000 (plus an additional \$5,000 may be requested to translate transcripts)

Applications must be submitted online [at this link](#).

About HumanitiesDC:

Washington, DC, is a vibrant city rich in history, full of curious minds asking bold questions and sharing powerful stories. These narratives help us navigate the complexities of our past, present, and future. Through history, literature, language, religion, philosophy, and ethics, the humanities guide us in learning from our experiences, empathizing with different perspectives, and challenging our assumptions. Through storytelling and research, the humanities are a compass for interpreting what humans make and exploring what makes us human. Since 1980, HumanitiesDC has been one of 56 state councils supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, dedicated to making the humanities accessible to all. Through HumanitiesDC community grants and public programs, we celebrate, elevate, and connect the voices that bring our city to life.

Access and Equal Opportunity

Persons needing reasonable accommodations to access HumanitiesDC applicant support materials or applications may contact the staff person listed below to request assistance. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be received at least 10 business days before the application due date. HumanitiesDC staff will respond to requests for reasonable accommodations within 5 business days.

Staff Contact: Hillary Steen, Community Grants Manager, grants@humanitiesdc.org, 202.770.3077 x812

Applicant Eligibility:

DC-based individuals, community groups, and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Community groups must designate an individual to be the primary point of contact for the grant application and grant agreement. Fiscal sponsorships are allowed for all applicants who are eligible to apply (see *Fiscal Sponsorship* and *Eligibility Requirements* sections for more details).

Summary of Grant Opportunity:

Help us preserve the unique stories of Washington, DC residents! This grant opportunity funds community organizations and individuals to conduct oral history projects that are then formally archived in the DC Public Library. Grantees will receive extensive training and guidance on how to conduct oral history interviews and what is involved in archiving them. We welcome applicants who have never conducted oral history interviews as well as those who are already experts!

Potential projects may focus on neighborhoods, social organizations, political history, labor, faith-based groups, cultural trends, historic events, or other themes that lend themselves to oral history as a tool for research and preservation. Projects must be thematically focused on Washington, DC and have a theme, focus, or research question that applicants aim to illuminate.

Your research topic can be based on a project you've worked on in other capacities, or it can be a brand-new project. If you want to continue an oral history project that was previously funded by HumanitiesDC, we encourage you to apply for a *Continuing Oral History Projects - DC Oral History Collaborative* Grant in Cycle II.

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. This is also part of the DC Oral History Collaborative, a partnership between HumanitiesDC and the DC Public Library.

What is Oral History:

"[Oral history is] distinguished from other forms of interviews by its content and extent. Oral history interviews seek an in-depth account of personal experience and reflections, with sufficient time allowed for the narrators to give their story the fullness they desire. The content of oral history interviews is grounded in reflections on the past as opposed to commentary on purely contemporary events." - [Oral History Association](#)

About the DC Oral History Collaborative:

The DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) documents, preserves, and celebrates the lived experiences of all Washington, DC residents and communities through oral history. The Collaborative accomplishes this by providing training, mentorship, resources, programs, and funding to current and aspiring oral historians. Interviews that are conducted as a result of this grant are archived in the [People's Archive](#) at the DC Public Library.

Interest Area:

The interest area is the core of a DC Oral History Collaborative project. It is the research question or topic you hope to explore through the interviews you conduct. Interest areas go beyond just an interest in a historical topic. Think about previous research that has been done already on this topic, and approach the interest area as a way to fill in gaps of understanding, explore existing knowledge from a new angle, or even reassess history. What is missing in the historical record? How can people's

memories of an event or time period add to our understanding of it?

Here is an edited example of an interest area from a HumanitiesDC grantee:

I aim to capture the stories embedded in...quilts and dolls, the histories sewn into each stitch, and the ways [Black women artists] use their artistry to build community, resist erasure, and sustain intergenerational connections. By amplifying their voices, this project affirms that quilting and doll-making are not just artistic practices but technologies of survival, innovation, and cultural resistance. [...] Oral history provides a means to honor their legacy in their own words, centering their voices in a way that written records or visual documentation alone cannot fully capture.

Funding Scope:

Successful *Oral History Interviewing* projects:

- Propose interviews connected to DC's communities, cultures, or histories.
- Clearly identify the interest area driving the oral history inquiry, with the question going beyond the importance of collecting and archiving stories (e.g. "What stories about community gardening are important to preserve?" becomes "How did the practice of community gardening change or evolve as gentrification took hold in Washington?")
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of the subject matter and a connectedness to relevant communities that will lend itself to recruiting and actively engaging narrators
- Do not propose collecting oral history interviews that have already been recorded and archived in the DC Public Library. We encourage all applicants to review [DigDC](#), the online repository of DCOHC interviews, before submitting an application.
- Only request funding for collecting and archiving new oral history interviews. Grantees may budget a small portion of funds to host a small event to share the collected oral history interviews with narrators, but this grant is not for hosting public events, creating podcasts, or editing videos. See below for more allowable and unallowable costs.

Grantee Requirements and Deliverables:

- Attending an in-person, three-session oral history training workshop on **May 4, 11, and 18, 2026**, at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library in downtown DC. This workshop will occur in the evening.
- Interviewing at least 5 people over the 8-month project period.
- Providing deliverables that are necessary for the DC Public Library archives, including an audio or video file of the interview recording, transcripts, indexes, release forms, and metadata. The release form will assign copyright of the oral history interviews to the DC Public Library, but the narrator will retain non-exclusive rights to copy, use, and publish their oral history in part or in full during their lifetime. All grantees will be trained in how to conduct oral history interviews and create these deliverables.

Translation Enhancement Funds:

A limited pool of funds (\$5,000) is available for translating oral history transcripts. The People's Archive only accepts English language oral history transcripts, so interviews that need to be translated into English have priority for these funds. However, applicants may also request the enhancement to translate English transcripts into a language to make them more accessible to the narrators' communities. A request for a translation enhancement will neither negatively nor positively affect the competitiveness of an applicant's overall proposal. Acceptance of an applicant's proposal does not guarantee the acceptance of the applicant's request for a translation enhancement. HumanitiesDC does not provide recommendations for translators or translating companies.

Weighted Review Criteria:

Applications are reviewed and weighted based on the criteria below. The review process is explained in the *Application Review Process* section of this RFP.

- Project Description - 35%
The interest area is focused and specific about what the applicant hopes to learn from narrators' memories and reflections on the past. The applicant also demonstrates why oral history is the ideal tool for the exploration of this topic.
- Contribution to DC History - 25%
The applicant demonstrates the importance of capturing these preserved stories for future researchers, residents, and the general public. The research topic might be hyperlocal or small in scope, but the interviews provide important human context to the history of DC and its residents.
- Community Collaboration - 30%
The applicant demonstrates how the project would be strengthened through collaboration and community involvement. A recruitment plan for finding narrators is explained. If they are not already connected, the applicant describes why they chose to interview members of this particular community and how they will build these connections.
- Capacity and Personnel - 10%
The Project Director demonstrates their motivation to carry the project to completion. This may be displayed through past experiences, connection to the community of inquiry, any research already completed, or other demonstrated passion for the topic area. If other team members and collaborators are identified, their involvement is clearly explained. An individual's role in different aspects of the project's planning, development, and/or implementation is explained.

Eligibility Requirements:

Please direct questions or concerns about eligibility requirements to the staff contact listed on page 1. Individuals, community groups, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for this grant.

Individuals applying for these grant opportunities must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a full-time resident of DC as demonstrated by a physical home address located in the District of Columbia
- Provide proof of the above two requirements through a current driver's license, passport, or other documentation for proof of age and proof of residency (i.e., current utility bill or bank statement)

Organizations applying for this grant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is registered and authorized to do business in Washington, DC with a physical mailing address in the District. DC residents should comprise most of its constituents.
 - The organization must be registered as either a "Domestic" entity (an entity that was incorporated in the District) or a "Foreign" entity (an entity that was incorporated in another state).
 - The Organization must have its principal physical business office address located in the District of Columbia. Applicants shall not use Post Office boxes.
- Register and comply with the regulatory requirements of the following agencies:
 - Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP)
 - 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)
- Agree that by signing the conditions document and accepting the funds, they will comply with: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which provides that grant recipients must take adequate steps to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to grant-related programs, activities and services); (b) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin); (c) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex); (d) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities); (f) the Age Discrimination Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination against those 40 years or older); (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)."

All applicants (organizations and individuals) applying for these grant opportunities must:

- Obtain a certification of "[Citywide Clean Hands](#)" from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue. Applicants are encouraged to review the requirements before applying to ensure they can get this certificate. If an applicant is chosen for funding, they must submit the certification alongside the Grant Agreement Form. The

certification must be dated no more than 30 days before it is submitted, and must be submitted to HumanitiesDC within 2 weeks of their award notification.

- Not appear on the [DC Government's Excluded Parties List](#) per the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement.
- Be in good standing with HumanitiesDC
 - Note: a HumanitiesDC grantee that has failed to comply with HumanitiesDC policies (e.g., grant reporting) may not be in "good standing" and may be ineligible to receive additional funds.
- Be able to provide proof of eligibility at any time during the grant period. Any awardees found ineligible after the award date must return all grant funds to HumanitiesDC.
- Submit the application through our [grants portal](#).

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.

Note on Submitting Multiple Applications:

If you are applying for the *Oral History Interviewing* grant, you may also apply for the *Community Culture and Heritage* or *Visions – Projects & Events* grant. However, grantees may only receive one grant in Cycle I. If both applications are chosen for funding by the reviewers, the applicant must choose which award to accept. You may not apply for a *Visions – Projects + Events* grant if you are also applying to *Community Culture and Heritage*.

For Current HumanitiesDC Grantees:

Current grantees may apply for 2026 funding even if they have not yet closed out an open grant. However, if they are approved for 2026 grant funding, any open grants -must be fully closed out and the grantee must remain in good standing before any new funds are distributed (interim and final reports submitted and approved, project has been completed, and all funds are spent or returned to HumanitiesDC). HumanitiesDC reserves the right to subtract any unspent or unaccounted for 2025 grant spending from new grant distribution.

Fiscal Sponsorship:

A fiscal sponsor is a non-profit organization that assumes financial and legal obligations for an individual or organization. In the case of HumanitiesDC's community grants, individuals and community groups without 501(c)3 non-profit status are eligible for the *Oral History Interviewing* grant and are not required to apply through a fiscal sponsor.

Fiscal sponsors must be registered in DC and may support no more than three HumanitiesDC grants at a time. Applicants applying through fiscal sponsors must use the fiscal sponsor's organization account within the HumanitiesDC [grants portal](#) to submit their application. If the fiscal sponsor does not have an account, an authorized official from the fiscal sponsor organization must create one. HumanitiesDC

will work primarily with the team conducting the project. However, because fiscal sponsor organizations have fiduciary and financial responsibility for their supported grants, it will be necessary for representatives from the fiscal sponsor to review and sign off on funding applications, financial documents, and grant agreements. No more than 10% of the grant award may be used to pay a fiscal sponsor.

Please note that the sponsored organization/individual must meet all eligibility requirements noted in this RFP - except for the 501(c)(3) requirement. For example, sponsored entities must be located in DC and cannot owe taxes to the DC government.

Allowable Expenses:

100% of awarded grant funds must be applied to direct program costs related to collecting and archiving oral history interviews. This may include salary, consulting fees, honoraria/stipends, recording equipment/platforms, transcription services, space and equipment necessary to complete the project, and any other project or program-related expenses. Grantees will be allowed to update their budgets during the project period - including after the required oral history trainings - and more guidance will be provided.

Unallowable expenses include an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project. **Grantees will be required to document - through materials such as receipts, paid invoices, credit card or bank statements, payroll reports, and cancelled checks - all expenses paid with HumanitiesDC funds in their final reports.**

Cash Match Requirement:

There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the proposed activities cost more than the amount requested, applicants will be asked to describe other secured/planned funding sources in the application that will enable the proposed project to be completed.

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 must provide the following information in their application to demonstrate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C § § 12101 et seq.):

1. The process of 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 progress/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, interpreted performances, etc.) and marketing/advertising.

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.

Accessibility:

We ask all applicants – even those who are not required to provide the information noted in the above *ADA Compliance* section – to demonstrate how grant-funded programming and services will be inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible throughout DC. Successful applications will consider a broad definition of “accessibility”, such as financial, geographic, demographic, cultural, and/or developmental access.

Technical Assistance for Applicants:

HumanitiesDC will host general information sessions about all grant opportunities, as well as workshops specific to each grant program. Virtual sessions will be recorded and available on our website, and in-person sessions will occur throughout DC. One-on-one office hours with staff will be available. Applicants may also submit draft applications for review by staff. Details can be found in the [Community Grants](#) section of our website.

How to Apply:

HumanitiesDC grant applications are accepted via our online grants portal, which can be accessed [at this link](#). 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 into the grants portal with your existing account, with your email address serving as your username. Please contact the Grants Manager listed above if you need help accessing your account. More detailed instructions about the grants portal are found on our website.

HumanitiesDC will consider reasonable accommodation requests from applicants with disabilities to assist them in submitting grant applications via mail, email, or hand delivery. This request must be made at least 10 business days before the application deadline. To make a request for reasonable accommodation, please contact the Grants Manager identified at the beginning of this document.

Applicants will receive a confirmation email when their proposals are 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 considered for funding.

Application Review Process:

- HumanitiesDC staff review all submitted applications for eligibility. Ineligible applicants are notified immediately and are allowed to appeal our decision.
- Eligible applications are reviewed by community members who have experience in humanities programming and/or scholarship in DC and understand the role that HumanitiesDC plays in the city. Reviewers are trained by HumanitiesDC staff. They read and evaluate their assigned applications and convene for a group discussion. They then finalize their comments and individual scores, which are collated and averaged. Applications are funded based on the average scores they receive.
- Everyone involved in the review process is expected to remain impartial. HumanitiesDC requires that reviewers recuse themselves from the review of any application that presents a personal or professional conflict of interest.
- If you, or someone you know, are interested in being a grant reviewer, please [review the information on our website](#) to learn how to apply. You may be both an applicant and a grant reviewer, but you will not review applications for the same grant program you apply to.

Notification and Payment of Awards:

HumanitiesDC will notify applicants of their status (approved or denied) approximately eight weeks after the application deadline. Grant awards are approved and certified in the [grants portal](#) and via DocuSign. Awards are disbursed via direct deposit within a month after the acceptance form is correctly submitted. The full grant is typically awarded at the beginning of the grant period. If funding is not available at the beginning of the grant period, grants might be awarded in installments. Denied applicants may request a summary of grant reviewer comments.

HumanitiesDC reserves the right to change or rescind grant opportunities if we do not receive sufficient funds and/or if other unexpected situations occur. HumanitiesDC may accept or deny all applications submitted for funding if that is determined to be in the best interest of the organization.

Grant Award Terms:

1. See *Grantee Requirements and Deliverables* section above
2. Grantees take on all financial and legal obligations of the grant award.
3. Grantees agree to document all grant expenditures.
4. Any changes to the scope, budget (greater than 25% in any one budget category), or project period must be requested in writing in advance.
5. Grantees 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.

6. Grantees are required to submit a final report as described below. Failure to do so satisfactorily might affect eligibility for future grants.
7. 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.

Required Reports and Deliverables:

The required final reports are submitted through the [grants portal](#). Grants managers will review reports and provide feedback within 60 days.

- The interim report will be due **September 15, 2026**. This report includes an explanation of funds spent and a brief overview of progress to date. Before this report deadline, all grantees will have one-on-one meetings with the Community Grants Manager and DCOHC Senior Manager to discuss projects. Additional check-in meetings may be scheduled for later in the project period.
- The final report will be due on **March 3, 2027**, which is 30 days after the end of the grant period. This report includes an explanation of funds spent, documentation of all expenditures, and a project evaluation.
- All oral history-specific deliverables are due on **March 3, 2027** as well.

Close Out:

Grants are successfully closed when HumanitiesDC grant managers determine all grant requirements have been met, interim and final reports have been successfully completed, and all grant funds have been spent or returned to HumanitiesDC. Failure to achieve a successful grant closeout may result in loss of eligibility for future HumanitiesDC grants.



2026 Continuing Oral History Projects – DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Issued: March 3, 2026

Application Deadline: May 1, 2026 at 4:59 pm

Project Period: July 1, 2026 - March 31, 2027. Funds must be spent during the project period (also known as the “grant period”).

Maximum Award Amount: \$8,000 (plus an additional \$5,000 may be requested to translate transcripts)

Applications must be submitted online [at this link](#).

About HumanitiesDC:

Washington, DC, is a vibrant city rich in history, full of curious minds asking bold questions and sharing powerful stories. These narratives help us navigate the complexities of our past, present, and future. Through history, literature, language, religion, philosophy, and ethics, the humanities guide us in learning from our experiences, empathizing with different perspectives, and challenging our assumptions. Through storytelling and research, the humanities are a compass for interpreting what humans make and exploring what makes us human. Since 1980, HumanitiesDC has been one of 56 state councils supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, dedicated to making the humanities accessible to all. Through HumanitiesDC community grants and public programs, we celebrate, elevate, and connect the voices that bring our city to life.

Access and Equal Opportunity

Persons needing reasonable accommodations to access HumanitiesDC applicant support materials or applications may contact the staff person listed below to request assistance. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be received at least 10 business days before the application due date. HumanitiesDC staff will respond to requests for reasonable accommodation within 5 business days.

Staff Contact: Hillary Steen, Community Grants Manager, grants@humanitiesdc.org, 202.770.3077 x812

Applicant Eligibility:

Applicants must adhere to BOTH major requirements for this grant:

1. Applicants must propose a continuation of an existing or previous DC Oral History Collaborative/Oral History Interviewing grant that was closed out successfully. Projects that were originally funded between 2017 and 2025 are allowed to continue. Applicants can be DC-based individuals, community groups, or 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. Community groups must designate an individual to be the primary point of contact for the grant application and grant agreement. Fiscal sponsorships are allowed for all applicants who are eligible to apply (see *Fiscal Sponsorship* and *Eligibility Requirements* sections for more details). And,
2. At least one project team member completed the full Oral History 101+ Workshop that all new DCOHC grantees must attend at the beginning of the project period. The team member may

have joined this workshop in any previous year between 2017 and 2025.

Summary of Grant Opportunity:

Help us preserve the unique stories of Washington, DC residents! This grant opportunity funds former DCOHC/Oral History Interviewing grantees to continue working on their successfully completed oral history projects. Funds awarded under this program are for expenses associated with collecting additional oral history interviews and producing the required final products that are formally archived in the DC Public Library.

Potential projects may focus on neighborhoods, social organizations, political history, labor, faith-based groups, cultural trends, historic events, or other themes that lend themselves to oral history as a tool for research and preservation. Projects must continue to be thematically focused on Washington, DC and have a theme, focus, or research question that applicants aim to illuminate.

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. This is also part of the DC Oral History Collaborative, a partnership between HumanitiesDC and the DC Public Library.

About the DC Oral History Collaborative:

The DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) is a partnership between HumanitiesDC and the DC Public Library. It documents, preserves, and celebrates the lived experiences of all Washington, DC residents and communities through oral history. The Collaborative accomplishes this by providing training, mentorship, resources, programs, and funding to current and aspiring oral historians. Interviews that are conducted as a result of this grant are archived in the [People's Archive](#) at the DC Public Library.

Interest Area:

The interest area is the core of a DCOHC project. As you may remember, this is the research question or topic you hope to explore through the interviews you conduct. Interest areas go beyond just an interest in a historical topic. They are ways to fill in gaps of understanding, explore existing knowledge from a new angle, or even reassess history. Applicants may directly copy their interest area from their previous application, or they may lightly edit what they previously wrote.

Funding Scope:

Successful *Continuing Oral History Projects* proposals:

- Clearly describe the project's original research question, theme, and/or scope; how the original project will be extended; and how the project's continuation will contribute to that research question, theme, and/or scope. Please note that the reviewers may be unaware of your original project.
- Support collection of oral history interviews for an on-going oral history project that was previously funded by HumanitiesDC.
- Identify at least five new narrators to be interviewed during the grant period. Grantees typically end up interviewing between 5-10 people.
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of the subject matter and a connectedness to relevant communities that will lend itself to recruiting and actively engaging narrators.

- Do not request funding for major public projects such as events, podcasts, or films. Grantees may budget a small portion of funds to host a small, semi-private event to share the collected interviews with narrators and their community, but most of the funds must go towards collecting and archiving interviews. See below for more allowable and unallowable costs.

Grantee Requirements and Deliverables:

- Interviewing at least 5 people over the 8-month project period.
- Providing deliverables that are necessary for the DC Public Library archives, including an audio or video file of the interview recording, transcripts, indexes, release forms, and metadata. The release form will assign copyright of the oral history interviews to the DC Public Library, but the narrator will retain non-exclusive rights to copy, use, and publish their oral history in part or in full during their lifetime.

Translation Enhancement Funds:

Applicants may request an enhancement of up to \$5,000 to translate oral history transcripts. The People's Archive only accepts English language oral history transcripts, so interviews that need to be translated into English have priority for these funds. However, applicants may also request the enhancement to translate English transcripts into a language that makes them more accessible to the narrators' communities. A request for a translation enhancement will neither negatively nor positively affect the competitiveness of an applicant's overall proposal. Acceptance of an applicant's proposal does not guarantee the acceptance of the applicant's request for a translation enhancement. HumanitiesDC does not provide recommendations for translators or translating companies. Translation enhancement funds can only be used for translation purposes.

Weighted Review Criteria:

Applications are reviewed and scored based on the criteria below. The review process is explained in the *Application Review Process* section of this RFP.

- Project Description and Timeline - 40%
The interest area is focused and specific about what the applicant hopes to learn from narrators' memories and reflections on the past. The applicant clearly describes why they want to conduct and archive additional interviews. The timeline is within the grant period and feasible.
- Contribution to DC History - 15%
The applicant demonstrates the importance of capturing these preserved stories for future researchers, residents, and the general public. The research topic might be hyperlocal or small in scope, but the interviews provide important human context to the history of DC and its residents.
- Community Collaboration - 25%
The applicant demonstrates how the project would be strengthened through collaboration and community involvement. A recruitment plan for finding narrators is explained.
- Capacity and Personnel - 10%
The Project Director demonstrates their motivation to carry the project to completion. This may be displayed through past experiences, connection to the community of inquiry, any research already completed, or other demonstrated passion for the topic area. If other team members and collaborators are identified, their involvement is clearly explained. An individual's role in different aspects of the project's planning, development, and/or implementation is explained.

- **Budget - 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 an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project.) If the applicant is using a fiscal sponsor: no more than 10% of the grant can go to the fiscal sponsor.

Eligibility Requirements:

Please direct questions or concerns about eligibility requirements to the staff contact listed on page 1. This grant opportunity funds former DC Oral History Collaborative/Oral History Interviewing grantees to continue collecting and archiving oral history interviews for their successfully completed oral history projects. Eligible applicants must include at least one team member who completed a 3-part spring oral history training workshop for grantees. This grant does not support newly devised oral history projects; funding is intended to support collection of new oral history interviews for an ongoing project. This grant also does not support public projects that are based on oral history interviews, such as films or podcasts.

Individuals applying for these grant opportunities must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a full-time resident of DC as demonstrated by a physical home address located in the District of Columbia
- Provide proof of the above two requirements through a current driver's license, passport, or other documentation for proof of age and proof of residency (i.e., current utility bill or bank statement)

Organizations applying for this grant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is registered and authorized to do business in Washington, DC with a physical mailing address in the District. DC residents should comprise most of its constituents.
 - The organization must be registered as either a "Domestic" entity (an entity that was incorporated in the District) or a "Foreign" entity (an entity that was incorporated in another state).
 - The Organization must have its principal physical business office address located in the District of Columbia. Applicants shall not use Post Office boxes.
- Register and comply with the regulatory requirements of the following agencies:
 - Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP)
 - 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)
- Agree that by signing the conditions document and accepting the funds, they will comply with: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which provides that grant recipients must take adequate steps to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive the

language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to grant-related programs, activities and services); (b) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin); (c) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex); (d) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities); (f) the Age Discrimination Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination against those 40 years or older); (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).”

All applicants (organizations and individuals) applying for these grant opportunities must:

- Obtain a certification of “[Citywide Clean Hands](#)” from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue. Applicants are encouraged to review the requirements before applying to ensure they can get this certificate. If an applicant is chosen for funding, they must submit the certification alongside the Grant Agreement Form. The certification must be dated no more than 30 days before it is submitted, and must be submitted to HumanitiesDC within 2 weeks of their award notification.
- Not appear on the [DC Government’s Excluded Parties List](#) per the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement.
- Be in good standing with HumanitiesDC
 - Note: a HumanitiesDC grantee that has failed to comply with HumanitiesDC policies (e.g., grant reporting) may not be in “good standing” and may be ineligible to receive additional funds.
- Be able to provide proof of eligibility at any time during the grant period. Any awardees found ineligible after the award date must return all grant funds to HumanitiesDC.
- Submit the application through our [grants portal](#).

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.

Note on Submitting Multiple Applications:

Eligible applicants may apply to both the *Continuing Oral History Projects* grant and the *General Operating Support* grant. If chosen for funding for both opportunities, you may choose to accept both. If you were chosen for funding in Cycle I in 2026, you are ineligible to apply for *Continuing Oral History Projects*.

For Current HumanitiesDC Grantees:

Current grantees may apply for 2026 funding even if they have not yet closed out an open grant. However, if they are approved for 2026 grant funding, any open grants must be fully closed out and the grantee must remain in good standing before any new funds are distributed (interim and final reports submitted and approved, project has been completed, and all funds are spent or returned to HumanitiesDC). HumanitiesDC reserves the right to subtract any unspent or unaccounted for 2025 grant spending from new grant distribution.

Fiscal Sponsorship:

A fiscal sponsor is a non-profit organization that assumes financial and legal obligations for an individual or organization. In the case of HumanitiesDC's community grants, individuals and community groups without 501(c)3 non-profit status are eligible for the *Continuing Oral History Projects* grant and are not required to apply through a fiscal sponsor.

Fiscal sponsors must be registered in DC and may support no more than three HumanitiesDC grants at a time. Applicants applying through fiscal sponsors must use the fiscal sponsor's organization account within the HumanitiesDC [grants portal](#) to submit their application. If the fiscal sponsor does not have an account, an authorized official from the fiscal sponsor organization must create one. HumanitiesDC will work primarily with the team conducting the project. However, because fiscal sponsor organizations have fiduciary and financial responsibility for their supported grants, it will be necessary for representatives from the fiscal sponsor to review and sign off on funding applications, financial documents, and grant agreements. No more than 10% of the grant award may be used to pay a fiscal sponsor.

Please note that the sponsored organization/individual must meet all eligibility requirements noted in this RFP - except for the 501(c)(3) requirement. For example, sponsored entities must be located in DC and cannot owe taxes to the DC government.

Allowable Expenses:

100% of awarded grant funds must be applied to direct program costs related to collecting and archiving oral history interviews. This may include salary, consulting fees, honoraria/stipends, recording equipment/platforms, transcription services, space and equipment necessary to complete the project, and any other project or program-related expenses. Grantees will be allowed to update their budgets during the project period, and more guidance will be provided.

Unallowable expenses include an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project. **Grantees will be required to document - through materials such as receipts, paid invoices, credit card or bank statements, payroll reports, and cancelled checks - all expenses paid with HumanitiesDC funds in their final reports.**

Cash Match Requirement:

There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the proposed activities cost more than the amount requested, applicants will be asked to describe other secured/planned funding sources in the application that will enable the proposed project to be completed.

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 must provide the following information in their application to demonstrate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C § § 12101 et seq.):

1. The process of 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 progress/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, interpreted performances, etc.) and marketing/advertising.

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.

Accessibility:

We ask all applicants – even those who are not required to provide the information noted in the above *ADA Compliance* section – to demonstrate how grant-funded programming and services will be inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible throughout DC. Successful applications will consider a broad definition of “accessibility”, such as financial, geographic, demographic, cultural, and/or developmental access.

Technical Assistance for Applicants:

HumanitiesDC hosted general information sessions about all grant opportunities, and you may find a recorded session and slides [on our website](#). We also hold workshops specific to each grant program. Virtual sessions are recorded and available on our website, and in-person sessions occurred throughout DC. One-on-one office hours with staff are available. Applicants may also submit draft applications for review by staff. Details can be found in the [Community Grants](#) section of our website.

How to Apply:

HumanitiesDC grant applications are accepted via our online grants portal, which can be accessed [at this link](#). 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 into the grants portal with your existing account, with your email address serving as your username. Please contact the Grants Manager listed above if you need help accessing your account. More detailed instructions about the grants portal are found on our website.

HumanitiesDC will consider reasonable accommodation requests from applicants with disabilities to assist them in submitting grant applications via mail, email, or hand delivery. This request must be made at least 10 business days before the application deadline. To make a request for reasonable accommodation, please contact the Grants Manager identified at the beginning of this document.

Applicants will receive a confirmation email when their proposals are 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 considered for funding.

Application Review Process:

- HumanitiesDC staff review all submitted applications for eligibility. Ineligible applicants are notified immediately and are allowed to appeal our decision.
- Eligible applications are reviewed by community members who have experience in humanities programming and/or scholarship in DC and understand the role that HumanitiesDC plays in the city. Reviewers are trained by HumanitiesDC staff. They read and evaluate their assigned applications and convene for a group discussion. They then finalize their comments and individual scores, which are collated and averaged. Applications are funded based on the average scores they receive.
- Everyone involved in the review process is expected to remain impartial. HumanitiesDC requires that reviewers recuse themselves from the review of any application that presents a personal or professional conflict of interest.
- If you, or someone you know, are interested in being a grant reviewer, please [review the information on our website](#) to learn how to apply. You may be both an applicant and a grant reviewer, but you will not review applications for the same grant program you apply to.

Notification and Payment of Awards:

HumanitiesDC will notify applicants of their status (approved or denied) approximately ten weeks after the application deadline. Grant awards are approved and certified in the [grants portal](#) and via DocuSign. Awards are disbursed via direct deposit within a month after the acceptance form is correctly submitted. The full grant is typically awarded at the beginning of the grant period. If funding is not available at the beginning of the grant period, grants might be awarded in installments. Denied applicants may request a summary of grant reviewer comments.

HumanitiesDC reserves the right to change or rescind grant opportunities if we do not receive sufficient funds and/or if other unexpected situations occur. HumanitiesDC may accept or deny all applications submitted for funding if that is determined to be in the best interest of the organization.

Grant Award Terms:

1. See *Grantee Requirements and Deliverables* section above
2. Grantees take on all financial and legal obligations of the grant award.
3. Grantees agree to document all grant expenditures.
4. Any changes to the scope, budget (greater than 25% in any one budget category), or project period must be requested in writing in advance.
5. Grantees 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.
6. Grantees are required to submit a final report as described below. Failure to do so satisfactorily might affect eligibility for future grants.
7. 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.

Required Reports and Deliverables:

The required final reports are submitted through the [grants portal](#). Grants managers will review reports and provide feedback within 60 days.

- The interim report will be due **November 15, 2026**. This report includes an explanation of funds spent and a brief overview of progress to date. Before this report deadline, all grantees will have one-on-one meetings with the Community Grants Manager and DCOHC Senior Manager to discuss projects. Additional check-in meetings may be scheduled for later in the project period.
- The final report will be due on **April 30, 2027**, which is 30 days after the end of the grant period. This report includes an explanation of funds spent, documentation of all expenditures, and a project evaluation.
- All oral history-specific deliverables are due on **April 30, 2027** as well.

Close Out:

Grants are successfully closed when HumanitiesDC grant managers determine all grant requirements have been met, interim and final reports have been successfully completed, and all grant funds have been spent or returned to HumanitiesDC. Failure to achieve a successful grant closeout may result in loss of eligibility for future HumanitiesDC grants.



2026 Beyond the Archives - DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Issued: March 3, 2026

Application Deadline: May 1, 2026, at 4:59 PM

Project Period: July 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027. Funds must be spent during the project period (also known as the “grant period”).

Maximum Award Amount: \$12,000

Grant type: Program

Applications must be submitted online [at this link](#).

About HumanitiesDC

Washington, DC, is a vibrant city rich in history, full of curious minds asking bold questions and sharing powerful stories. These narratives help us navigate the complexities of our past, present, and future. Through history, literature, language, religion, philosophy, and ethics, the humanities guide us in learning from our experiences, empathizing with different perspectives, and challenging our assumptions. Through storytelling and research, the humanities are a compass for interpreting what humans make and exploring what makes us human. Since 1980, HumanitiesDC has been one of 56 state councils supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, dedicated to making the humanities accessible to all. Through HumanitiesDC community grants and public programs, we celebrate, elevate, and connect the voices that bring our city to life.

Access and Equal Opportunity

Persons needing reasonable accommodations to access HumanitiesDC applicant support materials or applications may contact the staff person listed below to request assistance. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be received at least 10 business days before the application due date. HumanitiesDC staff will respond to requests for reasonable accommodations within 5 business days.

Staff Contact: Leah Gage, Community Grants Manager, grants@humanitiesdc.org, 202.770.3077 x815

Applicant Eligibility:

DC-based individuals, community groups, and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Community groups must designate an individual to be the primary point of contact for the grant application and grant agreement. Fiscal sponsorships are allowed for all applicants (see *Fiscal Sponsorship* section for more details).

Summary:

Help us showcase the unique stories of Washington, DC residents by highlighting their oral histories in public settings beyond the archive! This grant opportunity funds community organizations and individuals to produce public humanities projects from existing oral history collections in any archive. Potential projects may focus on neighborhoods, social organizations, political history, labor, faith-based groups, cultural trends, historic events, or other themes that draw on one or more collections of oral histories. All projects must be thematically



focused on Washington, DC and must benefit District residents. Potential projects may include exhibitions, performances, listening stations, written research, film/video, curricula for K-12 and higher education, websites, and computer applications based on and directly using existing oral history collections. Selected grantees will work with staff from the DC Oral History Collaborative throughout their projects.

Note: this grant does not cover the cost of collecting new oral history interviews. Applications that do not identify an existing collection to be interpreted will not be considered.

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.

What is Oral History:

"[Oral history is] distinguished from other forms of interviews by its content and extent. Oral history interviews seek an in-depth account of personal experience and reflections, with sufficient time allowed for the narrators to give their story the fullness they desire. The content of oral history interviews is grounded in reflections on the past as opposed to commentary on purely contemporary events." - [Oral History Association](#)

About the DC Oral History Collaborative:

The DC Oral History Collaborative (DCOHC) documents, preserves, and celebrates the lived experiences of all Washington, DC residents and communities through oral history. The Collaborative accomplishes this by providing training, mentorship, resources, programs, and funding to current and aspiring oral historians. Interviews that are conducted with funding from the *Oral History Interviewing* or *Continuing Oral History Projects* grants are archived in the [People's Archive](#) at the DC Public Library.

Funding Scope:

This grant funds individuals, community groups, and nonprofits who propose projects that bring existing oral history interviews about Washington, DC's life, history and culture out of libraries, archives, and personal collections into the public view. While projects may connect to national or global issues, the primary theme and audience must be DC-based. Proposals must identify which oral history collections will be used to create the public project, where they can be found, and how they will be accessed. This grant does not fund the collection of new oral histories.

Projects must include a humanities scholar or community expert who is knowledgeable about the proposed subject matter to inform the project design, implementation, and/or evaluation. Humanities scholars may have formal training and academic experience in the humanities and/or lived experience through their personal or community heritage as a culture bearer, public humanities practitioner, or community historian. The Project Director may serve as the Humanities Scholar, but this should be explained in the application.

Successful projects will demonstrate how the targeted community will benefit from the project and be actively involved in its creation. Projects must be inclusive, equitable, and publicly accessible to DC residents. Each project will conclude in a final product intended for public consumption, such as a written publication, short film, website,



lesson plan, event, tour, or exhibit. Successful projects will be innovative, unique, and/or of strong interest to a public audience.

Weighted Review Criteria

Applications are reviewed and scored based on the criteria below. The review process is explained in the *Application Review Process* section of this RFP.

- **Project Description, Feasibility, and Timeline - 25%**
The applicant has provided a clear and detailed description of the proposed project and its activities, including how oral history interviews will be incorporated. Narrators and archive(s) are identified, and the applicant demonstrates how narrators' voices will be represented in the project. 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.
- **Connection to DC - 25%**
The applicant demonstrates the project's significance to the DC community. There is a strong thematic connection to Washington, DC broadly, or to specific communities, neighborhoods, or stories.
- **Public Engagement - 25%**
There is a clear and effective plan for the project to reach and engage 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); if a project is geared more for a particular demographic rather than the general public, this reasoning is clearly explained.
- **Capacity and Personnel - 15%**
The Project Director is capable of directing the project, as demonstrated by experience and how their role is defined in the application. The Humanities Scholar or Community Expert has relevant qualifications for the proposed project, and their role is clearly defined and lends legitimacy or intellectual authority to the project. If other team members and collaborators are identified, the reasoning for their involvement is explained.
- **Budget - 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 an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project. If the applicant is using a fiscal sponsor: no more than 10% of the grant can go to the fiscal sponsor.)



Eligibility Requirements

Please direct questions or concerns about eligibility requirements to the staff contact listed on page 1. Individuals, community groups, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for this grant.

Individuals, community groups, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for this grant. Individuals applying for these grant opportunities must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a full-time resident of DC
- Provide proof of the above two requirements through a driver's license, passport, or other documentation for proof of age and proof of residency (i.e., current utility bill or bank statement)

Organizations applying for this grant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is registered and authorized to do business in Washington, DC with a physical mailing address in the District. DC residents should comprise most of its constituents.
 - The organization must be registered as either a "Domestic" entity (an entity that was incorporated in the District) or a "Foreign" entity (an entity that was incorporated in another state).
 - The Organization must have its principal physical business office address located in the District of Columbia. Applicants shall not use Post Office boxes.
- Register and comply with the regulatory requirements of the following agencies:
 - Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP)
 - 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)
- Agree that by signing the conditions document and accepting the funds, they will comply with: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which provides that grant recipients must take adequate steps to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to grant-related programs, activities and services); (b) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin); (c) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex); (d) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities); (f) the Age Discrimination Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination against those 40 years or older); (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)."

All applicants (organizations and individuals) applying for these grant opportunities must:



- Obtain a certification of “[Citywide Clean Hands](#)” from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue. Applicants are encouraged to review the requirements before applying to ensure they can get this certificate. If an applicant is chosen for funding, they must submit the certification alongside the Grant Agreement Form.
- The certification must be dated no more than 30 days before it is submitted, and must be submitted to HumanitiesDC within 2 weeks of their award notification.
- Not appear on the [DC Government’s Excluded Parties List](#) per the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement.
- Be in good standing with HumanitiesDC
 - Note: a HumanitiesDC grantee that has failed to comply with HumanitiesDC policies (e.g., grant reporting) may not be in “good standing” and may be ineligible to receive additional funds.
- Not have been awarded a HumanitiesDC grant in Cycle I of 2026.
- Be able to provide proof of eligibility at any time during the grant period. Any awardees found ineligible after the award date must return all grant funds to HumanitiesDC.
- Submit the application through our [grants portal](#).

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.

Note on submitting multiple applications

If you are applying for the *Beyond the Archives* grant, you are not permitted to also apply for the *Continuing Oral History Projects* grant. However, eligible applicants are permitted to apply to the *General Operating Support* grant.

For Current or Former HumanitiesDC Grantees

Current grantees who received funding in 2025 may apply for the *Beyond the Archives* grant even if they have not yet closed out an open grant. However, if they are approved for 2026 grant funding, any open grants must be fully closed out and the grantee must remain in good standing before any new funds are distributed (interim and final reports submitted and approved, project has been completed, and all funds are spent or returned to HumanitiesDC). HumanitiesDC reserves the right to subtract any unspent or unaccounted for 2025 grant spending from new grant distribution.

Grantees awarded funding in Cycle I of 2026 are not eligible to apply for the *Beyond the Archives* grant.

Fiscal Sponsorship:

A fiscal sponsor is a non-profit organization that assumes financial and legal obligations for an individual or organization. In the case of HumanitiesDC’s community grants, individuals and community groups without 501(c)3 non-profit status are eligible for the *Community Culture & Heritage* grant and are not required to apply through a fiscal sponsor.



Fiscal sponsors must be registered in DC and may support no more than three HumanitiesDC grants at a time. Applicants applying through fiscal sponsors must use the fiscal sponsor's organization account within the HumanitiesDC [grants portal](#) to submit their application. If the fiscal sponsor does not have an account, an authorized official from the fiscal sponsor organization must create one. HumanitiesDC will work primarily with the team conducting the project. However, because fiscal sponsor organizations have fiduciary and financial responsibility for their supported grants, it will be necessary for representatives from the fiscal sponsor to review and sign off on funding applications, financial documents, and grant agreements. No more than 10% of the grant award may be used to pay a fiscal sponsor.

Please note that the sponsored organization/individual must meet all eligibility requirements noted in this RFP - except for the 501(c)(3) requirement. For example, sponsored entities must be located in DC and cannot owe taxes to the DC government.

Allowable Expenses:

100% of awarded grant funds must be applied to direct program costs. This may include salary, consulting fees, honoraria/stipends, recording equipment/platforms, transcription services, space and equipment necessary to complete the project, and any other project or program-related expenses. Grantees will be allowed to update their budgets during the project period, and more guidance will be provided. Grantees are not permitted to use grant funds to collect new oral history interviews.

Unallowable expenses include an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project. **Grantees will be required to document - through materials such as receipts, paid invoices, credit card or bank statements, payroll reports, and cancelled checks - all expenses paid with HumanitiesDC funds in their final reports.**

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There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the proposed activities cost more than the amount requested, applicants will be asked to describe other secured/planned funding sources in the application that will enable the proposed project to be completed.

ADA Compliance:

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1. The process of 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 progress/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.
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- HumanitiesDC staff review all submitted applications for eligibility. Ineligible applicants are notified immediately and are allowed to appeal our decision.
- Eligible applications are reviewed by community members who have experience in humanities programming and/or scholarship in DC and understand the role that HumanitiesDC plays in the city. Reviewers are trained by HumanitiesDC staff. They read and evaluate their assigned applications and convene for a group discussion. They then finalize their comments and individual scores, which are collated and averaged. Applications are funded based on the average scores they receive.
- Everyone involved in the review process is expected to remain impartial. HumanitiesDC requires that reviewers recuse themselves from the review of any application that presents a personal or professional conflict of interest.
- If you, or someone you know, are interested in being a grant reviewer, please [review the information on our website](#) to learn how to apply. You may be both an applicant and a grant reviewer, but you will not review applications for the same grant program you apply to.

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HumanitiesDC will notify applicants of their status (approved or denied) approximately ten weeks after the application deadline. Grant awards are approved and certified in the [grants portal](#) and via DocuSign. Awards are disbursed via direct deposit within a month after the acceptance form is correctly submitted. The full grant is typically awarded at the beginning of the grant period. If funding is not available at the beginning of the grant period, grants might be awarded in installments. Denied applicants may request a summary of grant reviewer comments.

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1. Grantees take on all financial and legal obligations of the grant award.
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4. Grantees 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. Grantees 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.

Reporting:

The required final reports are submitted through the [grants portal](#). Grants managers will review reports and provide feedback within 60 days.

- The interim report will be due **November 15, 2026**. This report includes an explanation of funds spent and a brief overview of progress to date.
- The final report will be due on **April 30, 2027**, which is 30 days after the end of the grant period. This report includes an explanation of funds spent, documentation of all expenditures, and a project evaluation.

Close Out:

Grants are successfully closed when HumanitiesDC grant managers determine all grant requirements have been met, interim and final reports have been successfully completed, and all grant funds have been spent or returned to HumanitiesDC. Failure to achieve a successful grant closeout may result in loss of eligibility for future HumanitiesDC grants.



2026 Community Culture & Heritage Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Issued: December 8, 2025

Application Deadline: February 18, 2026 by 5:59 pm

Project Period: May 1, 2026 - April 30, 2027. Funds must be spent during the project period (also known as the “grant period”).

Maximum Award Amount: \$10,000

Applications must be submitted online [at this link](#).

About HumanitiesDC:

Washington, DC, is a vibrant city rich in history, full of curious minds asking bold questions and sharing powerful stories. These narratives help us navigate the complexities of our past, present, and future. Through history, literature, language, religion, philosophy, and ethics, the humanities guide us in learning from our experiences, empathizing with different perspectives, and challenging our assumptions. Through storytelling and research, the humanities are a compass for interpreting what humans make and exploring what makes us human. Since 1980, HumanitiesDC has been one of 56 state councils supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, dedicated to making the humanities accessible to all. Through HumanitiesDC community grants and public programs, we celebrate, elevate, and connect the voices that bring our city to life.

Access and Equal Opportunity:

Persons needing reasonable accommodations to access HumanitiesDC applicant support materials or applications may contact the staff person listed below to request assistance. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be received at least 10 business days before the application due date. HumanitiesDC staff will respond to requests for reasonable accommodations within 5 business days.

Staff Contact: Leah Gage, Community Grants Manager, grants@humanitiesdc.org, 202.770.3077 x815

Applicant Eligibility:

DC-based individuals, community groups, and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Community groups must designate an individual to be the primary point of contact for the grant application and grant agreement. Fiscal sponsorships are allowed for all applicants who are eligible to apply (see *Fiscal Sponsorship* and *Eligibility Requirements* sections for more details).

Summary of Grant Opportunity:

Calling all local historians, culture-bearers, and humanists who wish to capture and preserve the culture and

narratives of their local communities through public humanities projects! Help to illuminate the culture and narratives of your local DC community through grassroots public humanities projects. The *Community Culture & Heritage* grant aims to cultivate grassroots interpretations of DC history and culture by funding projects focused on DC culture, recording the memories and experiences of long-time Washingtonians, and/or capturing the unfolding stories of newer residents for future generations. Examples of these projects include, but are not limited to, short videos or films, panel discussions, educational materials or lesson plans, walking tours. Ultimately, we are seeking creatively designed projects that will be completed by the end of the project period.

In Spring 2027, grantees will present their projects at an annual Community Showcase event hosted by HumanitiesDC. This public, community-based event is an opportunity to connect with other *Community Culture & Heritage* grantees and share your work with the greater DC humanities community.

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.

Funding Scope:

Community Heritage & Culture projects must include a thematic connection to Washington, DC society, culture, history, and/or its residents. While projects may connect to national or global issues, the primary themes and intended target audience should be DC-based. Successful projects will demonstrate how the targeted community will benefit from the project and be actively involved in its creation. Projects must be inclusive, equitable, and publicly accessible to DC residents. By the end of the grant period, each project will conclude with a final product intended for public consumption, such as a written publication, documentary short film, website, lesson plan, event, tour, or other public product. Successful projects will be innovative, unique, and/or of strong interest to a public audience. *Community Culture & Heritage* grantees showcase their projects annually in an event hosted by HumanitiesDC, to be held in Spring 2027. Projects must be rooted in one or more humanities disciplines. We use the following definition of the humanities: “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 \(NEH\)](#))

Projects must also include a humanities scholar or community expert who is knowledgeable about the proposed subject matter to inform the project design, implementation, and/or evaluation. Humanities scholars may have formal training and academic experience in the humanities and/or lived experience through their personal or community heritage as a culture bearer, public humanities practitioner, or community historian. In some cases, it may make sense for the Project Director to also serve as the Humanities Scholar, but this should be explained in the application.

Weighted Review Criteria:

Applications are reviewed and weighted based on the criteria below. The review process is explained in the *Application Review Process* section of this RFP.

- Project Description, Feasibility, and Timeline - 25%
The applicant has provided a clear and detailed description of the proposed project and its activities. The timeline for completing the public-facing project is within the grant period and feasible. There is a clear connection to the humanities. Achievable goals or impacts are described, and the applicant has a clear plan for assessing the project success.
- Connection to DC - 25%
The applicant demonstrates the project's significance to the DC community. There is a strong thematic connection to Washington, DC broadly, or to specific communities, neighborhoods, or stories.
- Public Engagement - 25%
There is a clear and effective plan for the project to reach and engage 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); if a project is geared more for a particular demographic rather than the general public, this reasoning is clearly explained.
- Capacity and Personnel - 15%
The Project Director is capable of directing the project, as demonstrated by experience and how their role is defined in the application. The Humanities Scholar or Community Expert has relevant qualifications for the proposed project, and their role is clearly defined and lends legitimacy or intellectual authority to the project. If other team members and collaborators are clearly identified, the reasoning for their involvement is explained. An individual's role in different aspects of the project's planning, development, and/or implementation is explained.
- Budget - 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 an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project. If the applicant is using a fiscal sponsor: no more than 10% of the grant can go to the fiscal sponsor.)

Eligibility Requirements:

Please direct questions or concerns about eligibility requirements to the staff contact listed on page 1. Individuals, community groups, and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for this grant.

Individuals applying for these grant opportunities must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a full-time resident of DC as demonstrated by a physical home address located in the District of

Columbia

- Provide proof of the above two requirements through a current driver's license, passport, or other documentation for proof of age and proof of residency (i.e., current utility bill or bank statement)

Organizations applying for this grant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is registered and authorized to do business in Washington, DC with a physical mailing address in the District. DC residents should comprise most of its constituents.
 - The organization must be registered as either a "Domestic" entity (an entity that was incorporated in the District) or a "Foreign" entity (an entity that was incorporated in another state).
 - The Organization must have its principal physical business office address located in the District of Columbia. Applicants shall not use Post Office boxes.
- Register and comply with the regulatory requirements of the following agencies:
 - Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP)
 - 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)
- Agree that by signing the conditions document and accepting the funds, they will comply with: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which provides that grant recipients must take adequate steps to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to grant-related programs, activities and services); (b) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin); (c) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex); (d) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities); (f) the Age Discrimination Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination against those 40 years or older); (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)."

All applicants (organizations and individuals) applying for these grant opportunities must:

- Obtain a certification of "[Citywide Clean Hands](#)" from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue. Applicants are encouraged to review the requirements before applying to ensure they can get this certificate. If an applicant is chosen for funding, they must submit the certification alongside the Grant Agreement Form.
- The certification must be dated no more than 30 days before it is submitted, and must be submitted to HumanitiesDC within 2 weeks of their award notification.

- Not appear on the [DC Government’s Excluded Parties List](#) per the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement.
- Be in good standing with HumanitiesDC
 - Note: a HumanitiesDC grantee that has failed to comply with HumanitiesDC policies (e.g., grant reporting) may not be in “good standing” and may be ineligible to receive additional funds.
- Be able to provide proof of eligibility at any time during the grant period. Any awardees found ineligible after the award date must return all grant funds to HumanitiesDC.
- Submit the application through our [grants portal](#).

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.

Note on Submitting Multiple Applications:

If you are applying for the *Community Culture and Heritage* grant, you may also apply for the *Oral History Interviewing* grant. However, grantees may only receive one grant in Cycle I. If both applications are chosen for funding by the reviewers, the applicant must choose which award to accept. You may not apply for a *Visions – Projects & Events* grant if you are also applying to the *Community Culture and Heritage* grant program.

For Current HumanitiesDC Grantees:

Current grantees may apply for 2026 funding even if they have not yet closed out an open grant. However, if they are approved for 2026 grant funding, any open grants -must be fully closed out and the grantee must remain in good standing before any new funds are distributed (interim and final reports submitted and approved, project has been completed, and all funds are spent or returned to HumanitiesDC). HumanitiesDC reserves the right to subtract any unspent or unaccounted for 2025 grant spending from new grant distribution.

Fiscal Sponsorship:

A fiscal sponsor is a non-profit organization that assumes financial and legal obligations for an individual or organization. In the case of HumanitiesDC’s community grants, individuals and community groups without 501(c)3 non-profit status are eligible for the *Community Culture & Heritage* grant and are not required to apply through a fiscal sponsor.

Fiscal sponsors must be registered in DC and may support no more than three HumanitiesDC grants at a time. Applicants applying through fiscal sponsors must use the fiscal sponsor’s organization account within the HumanitiesDC [grants portal](#) to submit their application. If the fiscal sponsor does not have an account, an authorized official from the fiscal sponsor organization must create one. HumanitiesDC will work primarily with the team conducting the project. However, because fiscal sponsor organizations have fiduciary and financial responsibility for their supported grants, it will be necessary for representatives from the fiscal

sponsor to review and sign off on funding applications, financial documents, and grant agreements. No more than 10% of the grant award may be used to pay a fiscal sponsor.

Please note that the sponsored organization/individual must meet all eligibility requirements noted in this RFP - except for the 501(c)(3) requirement. For example, sponsored entities must be located in DC and cannot owe taxes to the DC government.

Allowable Expenses:

100% of awarded grant funds must be applied to direct program costs. This may include salary, consulting fees, honoraria/stipends, recording equipment/platforms, transcription services, space and equipment necessary to complete the project, and any other project or program-related expenses. Grantees will be allowed to update their budgets during the project period, and more guidance will be provided.

Unallowable expenses include an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project. **Grantees will be required to document - through materials such as receipts, paid invoices, credit card or bank statements, payroll reports, and cancelled checks - all expenses paid with HumanitiesDC funds in their final reports.**

Cash Match Requirement:

There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the proposed activities cost more than the amount requested, applicants will be asked to describe other secured/planned funding sources in the application that will enable the proposed project to be completed.

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 that are applying for funding for public events must provide the following information in their application to demonstrate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C § § 12101 et seq.):

1. The process of 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 progress/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, interpreted performances, etc.) and marketing/advertising.

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.

Accessibility:

We ask all applicants – even those who are not required to provide the information noted in the above *ADA Compliance* section – to demonstrate how grant-funded programming and services will be inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible throughout DC. Successful applications will consider a broad definition of “accessibility”, such as financial, geographic, demographic, cultural, and/or developmental access.

Technical Assistance for Applicants:

HumanitiesDC will host general information sessions about all grant opportunities, as well as workshops specific to each grant program. Virtual sessions will be recorded and available on our website, and in-person sessions will occur throughout DC. One-on-one office hours with staff will be available. Applicants may also submit draft applications for review by staff. Details can be found in the [Community Grants](#) section of our website.

How to Apply:

HumanitiesDC grant applications are accepted via our online grants portal, which can be accessed [at this link](#). 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 into the grants portal with your existing account, with your email address serving as your username. Please contact the Grants Manager listed above if you need help accessing your account. More detailed instructions about the grants portal are found on our website.

HumanitiesDC will consider reasonable accommodation requests from applicants with disabilities to assist them in submitting grant applications via mail, email, or hand delivery. This request must be made at least 10 business days before the application deadline. To make a request for reasonable accommodation, please contact the Grants Manager identified at the beginning of this document.

Applicants will receive a confirmation email when their proposals are 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 considered for funding.

Application Review Process:

- HumanitiesDC staff review all submitted applications for eligibility. Ineligible applicants are notified immediately and are allowed to appeal our decision.
- Eligible applications are reviewed by community members who have experience in humanities programming and/or scholarship in DC and understand the role that HumanitiesDC plays in the city. Reviewers are trained by HumanitiesDC staff. They read and evaluate their assigned applications and convene for a group discussion. They then finalize their comments and individual scores, which are collated and averaged. Applications are funded based on the average scores they receive.
- Everyone involved in the review process is expected to remain impartial. HumanitiesDC requires that reviewers recuse themselves from the review of any application that presents a personal or professional conflict of interest.
- If you, or someone you know, are interested in being a grant reviewer, please [review the information on our website](#) to learn how to apply. You may be both an applicant and a grant reviewer, but you will not review applications for the same grant program you apply to.

Notification and Payment of Awards:

HumanitiesDC will notify applicants of their status (approved or denied) approximately eight weeks after the application deadline. Grant awards are approved and certified in the [grants portal](#) and via DocuSign. Awards are disbursed via direct deposit within a month after the acceptance form is correctly submitted. The full grant is typically awarded at the beginning of the grant period. If funding is not available at the beginning of the grant period, grants might be awarded in installments. Denied applicants may request a summary of grant reviewer comments.

HumanitiesDC reserves the right to change or rescind grant opportunities if we do not receive sufficient funds and/or if other unexpected situations occur. HumanitiesDC may accept or deny all applications submitted for funding if that is determined to be in the best interest of the organization.

Grant Award Terms:

1. Grantees take on all financial and legal obligations of the grant award.
2. Grantees agree to document all grant expenditures.
3. Any changes to the scope, budget (greater than 25% in any one budget category), or project period must be requested in writing in advance.
4. Grantees 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. Grantees 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.

Reporting:

The required interim and final reports are submitted through the grants portal. Grants managers will review reports and provide feedback within 60 days.

- Grantees will have a required interim check-in call with grants managers between **October 1 and November 15, 2026**. During this interim call, grantees are expected to provide an update of progress-to-date and describe any expenses as well as changes to the project scope. Questions will be provided to grantees in advance; calls must be completed by November 15, 2026.
- The final report will be due on **May 30, 2027**, which is 30 days after the end of the grant period. This report includes an explanation of funds spent, documentation of all expenditures, and a project evaluation.

Close Out: ☐

Grants are successfully closed when HumanitiesDC grant managers determine all grant requirements have been met, interim and final reports have been successfully completed, and all grant funds have been spent or returned to HumanitiesDC. Failure to achieve a successful grant closeout may result in loss of eligibility for future HumanitiesDC grants.



2026 Visions - Projects & Events Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Issued: December 8, 2025

Application Deadline: February 18, 2026 at 5:59 pm

Project Period: May 1, 2026 - April 30, 2027. Funds must be spent during the project period (also known as the “grant period”).

Maximum Award Amount: \$25,000

Applications must be submitted online [at this link](#).

About HumanitiesDC:

Washington, DC, is a vibrant city rich in history, full of curious minds asking bold questions and sharing powerful stories. These narratives help us navigate the complexities of our past, present, and future. Through history, literature, language, religion, philosophy, and ethics, the humanities guide us in learning from our experiences, empathizing with different perspectives, and challenging our assumptions. Through storytelling and research, the humanities are a compass for interpreting what humans make and exploring what makes us human. Since 1980, HumanitiesDC has been one of 56 state councils supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, dedicated to making the humanities accessible to all. Through HumanitiesDC community grants and public programs, we celebrate, elevate, and connect the voices that bring our city to life.

Access and Equal Opportunity

Persons needing reasonable accommodations to access HumanitiesDC applicant support materials or applications may contact the staff person listed below to request assistance. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be received at least 10 business days before the application due date. HumanitiesDC staff will respond to requests for reasonable accommodations within 5 business days.

Staff Contact: Hillary Steen, Community Grants Manager, grants@humanitiesdc.org, 202.770.3077 x812

Applicant Eligibility:

DC-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Interested individuals must apply through a DC-based nonprofit fiscal sponsor (see *Fiscal Sponsorship* and *Eligibility Requirements* sections for more details).

Summary of Grant Opportunity

Help us create exciting public humanities programs for the people of Washington, DC! The *Visions – Projects & Events* grant opportunity funds the creation or continuation of projects that connect the public

with humanities research, knowledge, and/or ideas. Applicants are encouraged to think creatively about how they engage the public. These interpretations can include but are not limited to: feature-length documentary films, documentary shorts, festivals or conferences, publications and curricula, tours and exhibits, digital humanities projects, and archive creation. All projects must be thematically focused on Washington, DC and must benefit District residents.

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.

Funding Scope:

Visions – Projects & Events projects must have a thematic connection to Washington, DC society, culture, history, and/or its residents. Although projects may be connected to national or global issues, the primary themes and audience are DC-based. These funds can support ongoing or time-limited projects. Successful projects will demonstrate how targeted communities will benefit from the project. Projects must be inclusive, equitable, and publicly accessible to DC residents. Collaboration with other partners is encouraged but not necessary.

Projects must be rooted in one or more humanities disciplines. We use the following definition of the humanities: “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 \(NEH\)](#))

Projects must also include a humanities scholar or community expert who is knowledgeable about the proposed subject matter to inform the project design, implementation, and/or evaluation. Humanities scholars may have formal training and academic experience in the humanities and/or lived experience through their personal or community heritage as a culture bearer, public humanities practitioner, or community historian. In some cases, it may make sense for the Project Director to also serve as the Humanities Scholar, but this should be explained in the application.

Project examples include:

- Walking tours with local experts that explore the various layers of a community;
- Dialogues around civic engagement;
- Exhibitions with a humanities theme as it relates to DC residents;
- Feature-length or short documentary film that tells a humanities story about DC*;
- Execution of an event, conference, festival, or other gathering for DC residents**;
- Humanities-focused publications and curricula;
- Development or enhancement of archives, websites, and other digital humanities projects.

*Applications for documentary films must describe the topic summary, project stage and timeline, marketing strategy, and a detailed list of public programming. All completed films must be made available for non-commercial, educational use.

**Events, conferences, festivals, or other gatherings should create networking opportunities for humanities professionals, a platform for scholars and local experts, and/or a space for people wanting to explore a humanities-based topic or area of interest. Additionally, they must be open to the public and include some portion of free or affordable-programming.

Weighted Review Criteria:

Applications are reviewed and weighted based on the criteria below. The review process is explained in the *Application Review Process* section of this RFP.

- Project Description, Feasibility, and Timeline - 25%
The applicant has provided a clear and detailed description of the proposed project and its activities. The timeline is within the grant period and feasible. There is a clear connection to the humanities. Achievable goals or impacts are described, and the applicant has a clear plan for assessing the project success.
- Connection to DC - 25%
The applicant demonstrates the project's significance to the DC community. There is a strong thematic connection to Washington, DC broadly, or to specific communities, neighborhoods, or stories.
- Public Engagement - 25%
There is a clear and 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); if a project is geared more for a particular demographic rather than the general public, this reasoning is clearly explained.
- Capacity and Personnel - 15%
The Project Director is capable of directing the project, as demonstrated by experience and how their role is defined in the application. The Humanities Scholar or Community Expert has relevant qualifications for the proposed project, and their role is clearly defined and lends legitimacy or intellectual authority to the project. If other team members and collaborators are identified, their roles in different aspects of the project's planning, development, and/or implementation are explained.
- Budget - 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 an organization's general operation expenses, food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies, and any other expenses unrelated to the direct execution of the project.) If the applicant is using a fiscal sponsor: no more than 10% of the grant can go to the fiscal sponsor.

Eligibility Requirements:

Please direct questions or concerns about eligibility requirements to the staff contact listed on page 1. Only DC-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Interested individuals or community groups must apply through a DC-based nonprofit fiscal sponsor.

Organizations applying for this grant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is registered and authorized to do business in Washington, DC with a physical mailing address in the District. DC residents should comprise most of its constituents.
 - The organization must be registered as either a “Domestic” entity (an entity that was incorporated in the District) or a “Foreign” entity (an entity that was incorporated in another state).
 - The Organization must have its principal physical business office address located in the District of Columbia. Applicants shall not use Post Office boxes.
- Register and comply with the regulatory requirements of the following agencies:
 - Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP)
 - 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)
- Agree that by signing the conditions document and accepting the funds, they will comply with: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which provides that grant recipients must take adequate steps to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to grant-related programs, activities and services); (b) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin); (c) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex); (d) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities); (f) the Age Discrimination Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination against those 40 years or older); (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).”
- Obtain a certification of “[Citywide Clean Hands](#)” from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue. Applicants are encouraged to review the requirements before applying to ensure they can get this certificate. If an applicant is chosen for funding, they must submit the certification alongside the Grant Agreement Form. The certification must be dated no more than 30 days before it is submitted, and must be submitted to HumanitiesDC within 2 weeks of their award notification.
- Not appear on the [DC Government’s Excluded Parties List](#) per the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement.
- Be in good standing with HumanitiesDC

- Note: a HumanitiesDC grantee that has failed to comply with HumanitiesDC policies (e.g., grant reporting) may not be in “good standing” and may be ineligible to receive additional funds.
- Be able to provide proof of eligibility at any time during the grant period. Any awardees found ineligible after the award date must return all grant funds to HumanitiesDC.
- Submit the application through our [grants portal](#).

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.

Note on Submitting Multiple Applications:

If you are applying for the *Visions – Projects & Events* grant, you may also apply for the *Oral History Interviewing* grant. However, grantees may only receive one grant in Cycle I. If both applications are chosen for funding by the reviewers, the applicant must choose which award to accept. You may not apply for a *Visions – Projects & Events* grant if you are also applying to *Community Culture and Heritage*.

For Current HumanitiesDC Grantees:

Current grantees may apply for 2026 funding even if they have not yet closed out an open grant. However, if they are approved for 2026 grant funding, any open grants must be fully closed out and the grantee must remain in good standing before any new funds are distributed (interim and final reports submitted and approved, project has been completed, and all funds are spent or returned to HumanitiesDC). HumanitiesDC reserves the right to subtract any unspent or unaccounted for 2025 grant spending from new grant distribution.

Fiscal Sponsorship:

A fiscal sponsor is a non-profit organization that assumes financial and legal obligations for an individual or organization. In the case of HumanitiesDC’s community grants, individuals and community groups without 501(c)3 non-profit status are ineligible for the *Visions – Projects & Events* grant unless they apply through a fiscal sponsor.

Fiscal sponsors must be registered in DC and may support no more than three HumanitiesDC grants at a time. Applicants applying through fiscal sponsors must use the fiscal sponsor’s organization account within the HumanitiesDC [grants portal](#) to submit their application. If the fiscal sponsor does not have an account, an authorized official from the fiscal sponsor organization must create one. HumanitiesDC will work primarily with the team conducting the project. However, because fiscal sponsor organizations have fiduciary and financial responsibility for their supported grants, it will be necessary for representatives from the fiscal sponsor to review and sign off on funding applications, financial documents, and grant agreements. No more than 10% of the grant award may be used to pay a fiscal sponsor.

Please note that the sponsored organization/individual must meet all eligibility requirements noted in this RFP - except for the 501(c)(3) requirement. For example, sponsored entities must be located in DC and cannot owe taxes to the DC government.

Allowable Expenses:

100% of awarded grant funds must be applied to direct program costs. This may include salary, consulting fees, honoraria/stipends, recording equipment/platforms, transcription services, space and equipment necessary to complete the project, and any other project or program-related expenses. Grantees will be allowed to update their budgets during the project period, and more guidance will be provided.

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Cash Match Requirement:

There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the proposed activities cost more than the amount requested, applicants will be asked to describe other secured/planned funding sources in the application that will enable the proposed project to be completed.

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 that are applying for funding for public events must provide the following information in their application to demonstrate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C § § 12101 et seq.):

1. The process of 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 progress/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, interpreted performances, etc.) and marketing/advertising.

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.

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We ask all applicants – even those who are not required to provide the information noted in the above *ADA Compliance* section – to demonstrate how grant-funded programming and services will be inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible throughout DC. Successful applications will consider a broad definition of “accessibility”, such as financial, geographic, demographic, cultural, and/or developmental access.

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HumanitiesDC will host general information sessions about all grant opportunities, as well as workshops specific to each grant program. Virtual sessions will be recorded and available on our website, and in-person sessions will occur throughout DC. One-on-one office hours with staff will be available. Applicants may also submit draft applications for review by staff. Details can be found in the [Community Grants](#) section of our website.

How to Apply:

HumanitiesDC grant applications are accepted via our online grants portal, which can be accessed [at this link](#). 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 into the grants portal with your existing account, with your email address serving as your username. Please contact the Grants Manager listed above if you need help accessing your account. More detailed instructions about the grants portal are found on our website.

Applicants will receive a confirmation email when their proposals are 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 considered for funding.

Application Review Process:

- HumanitiesDC staff review all submitted applications for eligibility. Ineligible applicants are notified immediately and are allowed to appeal our decision.
- Eligible applications are reviewed by community members who have experience in humanities programming and/or scholarship in DC and understand the role that HumanitiesDC plays in the city. Reviewers are trained by HumanitiesDC staff. They read and evaluate their assigned applications and convene for a group discussion. They then finalize their comments and

individual scores, which are collated and averaged. Applications are funded based on the average scores they receive.

- Everyone involved in the review process is expected to remain impartial. HumanitiesDC requires that reviewers recuse themselves from the review of any application that presents a personal or professional conflict of interest.
- If you, or someone you know, are interested in being a grant reviewer, please [review the information on our website](#) to learn how to apply. You may be both an applicant and a grant reviewer, but you will not review applications for the same grant program you apply to.

Notification and Payment of Awards:

HumanitiesDC will notify applicants of their status (approved or denied) approximately eight weeks after the application deadline. Grant awards are approved and certified in the [grants portal](#) and via DocuSign. Awards are disbursed via direct deposit within a month after the acceptance form is correctly submitted. The full grant is typically awarded at the beginning of the grant period. If funding is not available at the beginning of the grant period, grants might be awarded in installments. Denied applicants may request a summary of grant reviewer comments.

HumanitiesDC reserves the right to change or rescind grant opportunities if we do not receive sufficient funds and/or if other unexpected situations occur. HumanitiesDC may accept or deny all applications submitted for funding if that is determined to be in the best interest of the organization.

Grant Award Terms:

1. Grantees take on all financial and legal obligations of the grant award.
2. Grantees agree to document all grant expenditures.
3. Any changes to the scope, budget (greater than 25% in any one budget category), or project period must be requested in writing in advance.
4. Grantees 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. Grantees 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.

Reporting:

The required final reports are submitted through the [grants portal](#). Grants managers will review reports and provide feedback within 60 days.

- The interim report will be due **November 1, 2026**. This report includes an explanation of funds spent and a brief overview of progress to date.

- The final report will be due on **May 30, 2027**, which is 30 days after the end of the grant period. This report includes an explanation of funds spent, documentation of all expenditures, and a project evaluation.

Close Out:

Grants are successfully closed when HumanitiesDC grant managers determine all grant requirements have been met, interim and final reports have been successfully completed, and all grant funds have been spent or returned to HumanitiesDC. Failure to achieve a successful grant closeout may result in loss of eligibility for future HumanitiesDC grants.



2026 General Operating Support Grant for Humanities Organizations Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Issued: March 3, 2026

Application Deadline: May 1, 2026, by 4:59 PM

Project Period: July 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027. Funds must be spent during the project period (also known as the “grant period”).

Grant Type: Non-Program

Maximum Award Amount: \$25,000

Applications must be submitted online [at this link](#)

About HumanitiesDC:

Washington, DC, is a vibrant city rich in history, full of curious minds asking bold questions and sharing powerful stories. These narratives help us navigate the complexities of our past, present, and future. Through history, literature, language, religion, philosophy, and ethics, the humanities guide us in learning from our experiences, empathizing with different perspectives, and challenging our assumptions. Through storytelling and research, the humanities are a compass for interpreting what humans make and exploring what makes us human. Since 1980, HumanitiesDC has been one of 56 state councils supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, dedicated to making the humanities accessible to all. Through HumanitiesDC community grants and public programs, we celebrate, elevate, and connect the voices that bring our city to life.

Access and Equal Opportunity

Persons needing reasonable accommodations to access HumanitiesDC applicant support materials or applications may contact the staff person listed below to request assistance. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be received at least 10 business days before the application due date. HumanitiesDC staff will respond to requests for reasonable accommodations within 5 business days.

Staff Contact: Leah Gage, Community Grants Manager, grants@humanitiesdc.org, 202.770.3077 x815

What are the Humanities?

We use the following definition of humanities: “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 \(NEH\)](#)). In short, the humanities allow us to explore and understand the human experience.

Applicant Eligibility

Humanities-focused, DC-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations with annual budgets of \$2 million or less are eligible to apply. Budget size is determined by an organization’s total cash expenses for the most recently completed fiscal year, as supported by the organization’s IRS Form 990 or 990 EZ.

These organizations must have an explicit mission and track record of conducting programming in the humanities as a significant part of their work, meaning more than half of the organization’s previous year’s programming must be devoted to the humanities. Newly-founded organizations without a programming track-record should be prepared to demonstrate planned programming. Please refer to the section above, “What are the Humanities?” for more clarification.

Examples of eligible non-profit organizations may include community and cultural heritage organizations, museums, historic sites, preservation and historical societies, and education organizations with a significant humanities focus. Organizations that occasionally tackle or delve into humanities-based themes or activities are not eligible for this grant. Organizations with a primary mission, focus, or whose programming is dedicated to creating visual art, dance, theater, or music, as well as organizations focused on social services, health, or general education typically do not meet the definition of a humanities-focused non-profit and thus are not eligible for this grant.

Organizations may not receive a General Operations Support grant from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and this grant from HumanitiesDC within the same fiscal year.

Summary of Grant Opportunity

This grant opportunity provides general operating support funding to humanities-focused 501(c)(3) organizations in Washington, DC with budgets under \$2 million. Rather than proposing a

specific project, the applicant will describe their mission, track-record and programming, community engagement, and significance to DC. 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.

Funding Scope:

General Operating Support funds can be used for almost any purpose that allows the organization to continue meeting its mission, with limited exceptions (see “Allowable Costs” below). Applicants will not identify a specific project but will be asked to describe how the grant funds will benefit their organization.

Weighted Review Criteria

Applications are reviewed and scored based on the criteria below. The review process is explained in the *Application Review Process* section of this RFP.

Humanities Mission & Programming – 30%

The organization’s mission has an explicit humanities focus, and the majority of the organization’s programming is dedicated to the humanities. The applicant demonstrates that programs are successful or impactful; success or impact is clearly defined, and the applicant describes how success is measured.

Public Engagement – 15%

The organization demonstrates a clear and effective plan for defining, reaching, and engaging with its target audience. Programming is or will be inclusive, diverse, equitable and accessible (defined broadly to include financial, geographic, demographic, cultural and developmental accessibility).

Significance to DC – 20%

The organization’s mission and programming are significant to the DC community, as demonstrated by the unique role of the organization’s humanities programming in DC, whether the organization reaches underserved or underrepresented DC communities, or other relevant criteria as presented by the applicant.

Capacity and Personnel - 15%

The organization's team and collaborators, whether staff or volunteer, are well-positioned to carry out the work of the organization. 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.

Intended Use of Funds – 20%

There is a demonstrated need and compelling plan for the use of the funds. The applicant provides a compelling response for how grant funds will contribute to, support, and/or grow the organization and its work.

Eligibility Requirements:

Please direct questions or concerns about eligibility requirements to the staff contact listed on page 1. Only DC-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Interested individuals, community groups, and fiscal sponsors are not eligible for this grant.

Organizations applying for this grant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is registered and authorized to do business in Washington, DC with a physical mailing address in the District. DC residents should comprise most of its constituents.
 - The organization must be registered as either a "Domestic" entity (an entity that was incorporated in the District) or a "Foreign" entity (an entity that was incorporated in another state).
 - The Organization must have its principal physical business office address located in the District of Columbia. Applicants shall not use Post Office boxes.
- Register and comply with the regulatory requirements of the following agencies:
 - Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP)
 - 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)
- Agree that by signing the conditions document and accepting the funds, they will comply with: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which provides that grant recipients must take adequate steps to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to grant-related programs, activities and services); (b) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin); (c)

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex); (d) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (e) the Americans with Disabilities Act (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities); (f) the Age Discrimination Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination against those 40 years or older); (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).”

- Have an annual budget of \$2 million or less as determined by total cash expenses for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- A humanities focus must be central to the mission and primary activities of the organization. Please refer to the “Applicant Eligibility” section for our definition of the term “humanities.”

All applicants applying for this grant opportunity must:

- Obtain a certification of “[Citywide Clean Hands](#)” from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue. Applicants are encouraged to review the requirements before applying to ensure they can get this certificate. If an applicant is chosen for funding, they must submit the certification alongside the Grant Agreement Form. The certification must be dated no more than 30 days before it is submitted, and must be submitted to HumanitiesDC within 2 weeks of their award notification.
- Not appear on the [DC Government’s Excluded Parties List](#) per the DC Office of Contracting and Procurement.
- Be in good standing with HumanitiesDC
 - Note: a HumanitiesDC grantee that has failed to comply with HumanitiesDC policies (e.g., grant reporting) may not be in “good standing” and may be ineligible to receive additional funds.
- Be able to provide proof of eligibility at any time during the grant period. Any awardees found ineligible after the award date must return all grant funds to HumanitiesDC.
- Submit the application through our [grants portal](#).

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.

Applicants 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 HumanitiesDC.

Fiscal Sponsorship

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

Note on Submitting Multiple Applications

Eligible applicants may only submit one request for General Operating Support per year. General Operating Support applicants may also apply for and receive one 2026 program grant (i.e., Community Culture & Heritage, Oral History Interviewing, Continuing Oral History Projects, Beyond the Archives, or Visions – Projects + Events).

For Current HumanitiesDC Grantees:

Current grantees may apply for 2026 funding even if they have not yet closed out an open grant. However, if they are approved for 2026 grant funding, any open grants -must be fully closed out and the grantee must remain in good standing before any new funds are distributed (interim and final reports submitted and approved, project has been completed, and all funds are spent or returned to HumanitiesDC). HumanitiesDC reserves the right to subtract any unspent or unaccounted for 2025 grant spending from new grant distribution.

Allowable Expenses

This grant is intended to support general operating expenses, which may include salary, consulting fees, rent, utilities, information technology, administrative fees, or an operating reserve fund.

Prohibited costs include food and beverages, tuition and scholarships, debt reduction, re-granting or sub-granting, costs related to fundraisers or lobbying, funding to foreign or domestic government agencies. **Grantees will be required to document - through materials such as receipts, paid invoices, credit card or bank statements, payroll reports, and cancelled checks - all expenses paid with HumanitiesDC funds in their final reports.** Grantees will be allowed to update their budgets during the project period if needed, and more guidance will

be provided.

Cash Match Requirement

There is no matching requirement for this grant program. However, if the proposed activities cost more than the amount requested, applicants will be asked to describe other secured/planned funding sources in the application that will enable the proposed project to be completed.

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 that are applying for funding for public events must provide the following information in their application to demonstrate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C § § 12101 et seq.):

1. The process of 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 progress/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, interpreted performances, etc.) and marketing/advertising.

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HumanitiesDC will consider reasonable accommodation requests from applicants with disabilities to assist them in submitting grant applications via mail, email, or hand delivery. This request must be made at least 10 business days before the application deadline. To make a request for reasonable accommodation, please contact the Grants Manager identified at the beginning of this document.

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Close Out:

Grants are successfully closed when HumanitiesDC grant managers determine all grant requirements have been met, interim and final reports have been successfully completed, and all grant funds have been spent or returned to HumanitiesDC. Failure to achieve a successful grant closeout may result in loss of eligibility for future HumanitiesDC grants.