

Grant Announcement:

Archives - Basic Projects

The deadline for this announcement has passed. The guidelines below can be used for reference, but should NOT be used to prepare an application.

The following grant application information is for **Archives -Basic Projects**.

- See also [Archives - Detailed Processing Projects](#) and [Electronic Records Projects](#) grants.
- Archives and historical records repositories may not propose a Basic Project and a Detailed Processing Project at the same application deadline.

NHPRC support begins no earlier than June 1, 2008.

- Draft Deadline (optional): August 1, 2007
- Final Deadline: October 1, 2007

See the [Application Cycle](#) for additional information.

Grant Program Description

The NHPRC supports archives and records projects to carry out fundamental archival activities that promote the preservation and use of America's documentary heritage essential to understanding our democracy, history, and culture.

The Commission is particularly concerned that some historical collections in archives and repositories are difficult for most researchers to find because they are not processed or represented in national catalogs. It hopes to encourage repositories to reveal these "hidden collections" by concentrating on materials in their "backlogs." In addition, the NHPRC wishes to continue support for planning for archives, collection development, and appropriate preservation.

As a result, the Commission seeks proposals for projects that support backlog processing and collections cataloging, phased preservation, and/or collections development. Proposed projects must employ the best and most cost-effective archival methods. Activities included under Basic Projects may be any one or combination of the following:

1. Basic Processing,
2. Preservation Planning,
3. Collections Development, and
4. Establishing Archives.

Although projects focused exclusively on professional development are not eligible in this grant category, we strongly encourage each application to include professional development components necessary for the success of the project.

Categories

1. Basic Processing

Basic processing emphasizes activities to reveal collections that researchers cannot easily discover. A minimum standard is the creation of a basic catalog record for each collection or archival series at a repository. Basic processing also includes reappraisal of collections with a goal of deaccessioning where appropriate. In addition, applicants must plan to establish standard accessioning and processing practices that will prevent future backlogs, including, if necessary, a revised collection development policy. Likewise, institutions must develop or implement processing techniques to eliminate unprocessed backlogs of holdings at a level consistent with appropriate standards and at a reasonable rate.

In general, repositories should catalog personal papers and manuscript collections at the collection level, and catalog institutional records at the series level. Basic processing usually includes surveying and describing at the next component level: at the series level for manuscript collections, and at the subseries level for institutional records. Only in unusual circumstances should basic processing projects include the creation of file or folder listings. (For such projects, organizations may propose [Archives - Detailed Processing Projects](#).)

After identifying collections and records, applicants will need to create MARC catalog records in a national bibliographic utility. Likewise, finding aids must comply with Encoded Archival Description standards and must be made available to appropriate regional and national archival databases. Applicants must also plan for promoting use of their collections after completing this processing.

2. Preservation Planning

The NHPRC supports preservation planning and implementation projects that focus on the repository's preservation of collections as a whole. This approach of "phased preservation" often involves surveys of collections, assessment of environmental controls, and risk assessment. The NHPRC cannot fund projects that involve construction, but applicants may include planning for necessary improvements to physical facilities. Collection level preservation assessments may also be carried out as part of a basic processing project.

Organizations seeking to undertake detailed preservation activities — comprehensive reboxing and refolding; preservation copying, reformatting, or microfilming; removing staples and paper clips; and item-level repair and conservation — should propose [Archives - Detailed Processing Projects](#).

3. Collections Development

Organizations seeking to improve collections development may apply for grants to support the following activities: documentation strategies, surveys, appraisal projects, records management projects with archival components, reappraisal and deaccessioning, and fieldwork and other collecting activities. The NHPRC does not support projects to create new documentation, except for oral history projects conducted by American Indian tribes and other indigenous peoples that rely on oral traditions to document their history and culture.

All projects that include collecting activities must show that the institution has developed, or will develop as part of the project, initial processing techniques to gain basic physical and intellectual control over new accessions. If the repository has a large unprocessed backlog of holdings, collections development activities may occur only alongside basic processing activities.

4. Establishing Archives

Organizations may apply for grants to support archives start-up projects. An initial grant may support the cost of a consultant to assess the need and sustainability of an archives program. The consultant can help the organization identify the needs for an archives program, the necessary financial and organizational resources, a records management plan (if necessary), and its collecting scope. The consultant may assist in preparing mission, goals, and objectives; a staffing plan; and operational rules and procedures.

If the organization already has a detailed assessment, it may submit a proposal for costs associated with starting their archives program. The applicant must demonstrate an understanding of, and willingness to follow, the principles outlined in this announcement. The assessment should include a well thought-out collection development plan, a plan for basic processing of new accessions in a timely manner to avoid future backlogs, and a phased preservation plan. Applications for startup projects must provide convincing evidence of a sound and sustainable business plan, including commitments for ongoing support from the parent institution.

Award Information

A grant normally is for one to three years and up to \$200,000. The Commission expects to make up to 20 grants in this category, for a total of up to \$900,000. The Commission provides no more than 50 percent of project costs for Basic Projects.

Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is the financial contribution the applicant pledges to the cost of a project. Cost sharing can include both direct and indirect expenses, in-kind contributions, non-Federal third-party contributions, and any income earned directly by the project.

Eligibility

Archives and other repositories of historical documents that are part of:

- Nonprofit organizations or institutions
- Colleges, universities and, other academic institutions
- State or local government agencies
- Federally-acknowledged or state-recognized Native American tribes or groups

How to Prepare an Application

Applicants must use the Grants.gov application process. See [How to Apply](#).

Applicants are encouraged to contact [Daniel Stokes, Program Officer](#) at the NHPRC who may:

- advise the applicant about the review process;
- answer questions about what activities are eligible for support;
- supply samples of successful applications; and
- read and comment on a preliminary draft. Applicants may submit a draft at least 2 months

before the deadline.

Applicants should also contact their [State Historical Records Advisory Board](#) about the proposal and seek the board's advice. Many state boards encourage applicants to submit draft proposals in advance of NHPRC deadlines.

Completing an Application

A complete application includes a Project Narrative, Summary, Supplementary Materials, and Budget.

Before beginning the process, applicants should review the rules and regulations governing NHPRC grants under the [Administering an NHPRC Grant](#) section.

Project Narrative

The Project Narrative is a description of the proposal. Address the requirements listed above, as well as the following questions:

- Answers should be no more than 20 double-spaced pages in 12-pt type with standard margins.
- You should supplement the narrative with resumes, examples, and illustrations, which should also be no more than 20 pages.

Question 1: *What is the purpose of the project and what are its goals?*

Summarize your organization's history, mission, and goals with an emphasis on its archival programs and records. State clearly which combination of the processing, preservation, collections development, and program development activities listed above are included in the proposed project. Explain the overall goals of the project and its relationship to your strategic plans, organizational goals, and collection management plans, as appropriate. Make the case for the significance of the historical records and collections affected by the project. Describe the types of records including quantities in cubic feet, subject matters, formats, and dates. Show how the records to be collected, processed, or preserved are important for their national, regional, statewide, or local users. Projects with collections of largely statewide or local significance, or of limited interest, should consider seeking support through the State Historical Records Advisory Board or a state historical agency. Characterize the project's audience and show how the activities proposed will improve public discovery and use of historical records.

Question 2: *What is the significance of the project in relation to the NHPRC's programs and goals?*

Explain how the project relates to the Commission's overall mission, vision, and goals, particularly the goals to promote increased access and use of documentary materials held in historical records repositories. Describe your current or proposed accessioning and processing methodologies and explain how they support the goals of revealing hidden collections and preventing future backlogs. In addition, summarize the historical importance of individuals, events, developments, organizations, and places documented by the project's collections. For background, applicants may want to review the Commission's [Strategic Plan](#).

Question 3: *What is the plan of work for the grant period?*

Provide evidence of preliminary planning and a realistic scope of work for the project. Describe in detail the type of activities (processing, preservation, development, start up) you intend to engage in and the relationship among them. Outline each stage of the planned work and include costs, including applicant contributions and grant funds, for each major stage. Include in supplementary materials a chart that identifies the people and other resources needed for each

stage.

Question 4: *What products, if any, will be produced during the grant period?*

Describe the products you plan to produce for the completed project. This includes collection level catalogs and archival finding aids and any related publicity or scholarly publications. Applicants who intend to place finding aids on the Internet should use Encoded Archival Description (EAD). Collection catalog entries must be MARC records and contributed to a national bibliographical utility.

Question 5: *What are the qualifications of the personnel?*

Provide a narrative explanation of the qualifications of the staff named in the project budget, both for those already on staff and for those to be hired. Explain any special training planned for personnel. In the supplementary materials, provide a resume or vitae of not more than three pages per person for all staff named in the project budget. For those staff or consultants to be hired for the project, provide job descriptions or "call for consultants".

Question 6: *What are your performance objectives and how will you evaluate the success of the project?*

List four to seven quantifiable Performance Objectives by which the project can be evaluated as you submit interim and final reports. In addition, discuss methods your institution will use to evaluate the project after the end of the grant period (e.g., researchers' surveys or other methods).

Project Summary

The Project Summary should be no more than 3 double-spaced pages in 12-pt type with standard margins, and it must include these sections:

- Purposes and Goals of the Project
- Significance and Relationship to NHPRC Goals and Objectives
- Summary of Plan of Work for the Grant Period
- Products to be completed during the Grant Period
- Names, Titles, Institutions, Phone Numbers, and E-Mail Addresses of the Project Director and Key Personnel
- Performance Objectives

Supplementary Materials

Please attach up to 20 pages of Supplementary Materials to your Narrative, such as:

- Resumes of named staff members (required)
- Position descriptions for staff to be hired with grant funds (required, if applicable)
- Your institution's mission, goals, and objective statements
- Your institution's pertinent policies on collections development, processing, and preservation.
- Detailed work plan charts that supplement the Narrative
- Examples of MARC collection and/or series records and other discovery tools
- Statements of commitment to the project by partners, including records creators

If these materials are available on a web site, please provide the URLs.

Project Budget

Applicants will be asked to compute the project costs to be charged to grant funds as well as those that will be supported by the applicant through cost sharing, which includes both direct and in-direct expenses, in-kind contributions, non-Federal third-party contributions, and any income earned directly by the project. All of the items listed, whether supported by grant funds or cost-sharing contributions, must be reasonable and necessary to accomplish project objectives, allowable in terms of the applicable federal cost principles, auditable, and incurred during the grant period. Applicants should review the appropriate [Office of Management and Budget](#) circulars on cost principles.

Charges to the project for items such as salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and contractual services must conform to the written policies and established practices of the applicant organization.

- You must submit a budget on the NARA/NEH Budget form found in the Grants.gov application package. Note that the form itself contains additional instructions. You may include with your application a narrative budget supplement for budget categories not otherwise explained in the project narrative.
- For some projects, you may request funding for up to 3 years, but if the project will take 18 months or longer, you must provide a budget for each project year or fraction thereof.
- Provide specific budget figures, rounding to the nearest dollar.

Budget Categories

In preparing the budget, please follow the instructions on the NARA/NEH Budget form on Grants.gov. You may also use a supplemental budget narrative to give further details, for example, on the specifications of employee's duties or equipment, the requirements and costs of consultants, or the need for travel funds:

Salaries: List each staff position and the full salary to be charged to the project and show the percentage of time each staff member will devote to the project.

- Indicate which positions are to be filled for the proposed project and which personnel are already on the staff of the applicant institution.
- Grant funds may be used to pay the salaries of only those individuals actually working on the project.
- You may count the time provided to the project by advisory board members.

Fringe Benefits: If you use a daily rate or honoraria, no separate benefits should be included.

Consultant Fees: Include payments for consultant services and honoraria, but list consultant travel expenses in the "Travel" category.

Travel: Please note that the NHPRC does not fund staff travel to professional meetings unless the travel is essential to accomplish the goals of the project.

Supplies and Materials: Justify the cost of specialized materials and supplies in a supplemental budget narrative.

Services: Include the cost of duplication and printing, long-distance telephone, equipment leasing, postage, and other services that you are not including under other budget categories or as indirect-cost expenses.

Other costs: The NHPRC does not provide grant funds for the acquisition of routine equipment such as office furnishings, shelving, and file cabinets, but we may provide grant support for the purchase of technical equipment, such as computers and peripherals, essential for a project.

Application Review

The NHPRC staff will acknowledge receipt of the application soon after we receive it. We then begin the evaluation process:

1. *State Boards*

Your State Historical Records Advisory Board may evaluate the application on technical merits as well as its relation to state plan priorities.

2. *Peer Reviewers*

We may ask 5 to 10 external peer reviewers to evaluate the proposal.

3. *Commission Staff*

Approximately 2 months after the submission deadline, the Project Director receives blind copies of reviewers' comments and questions from the Commission staff. Applicants have an opportunity to expand on the material provided, clear up any misconceptions, and generally strengthen the proposal before the Commission meeting. Staff make overall recommendations to the Commission based on reviewers' comments, the appropriateness of the project in meeting the Commission's goals, the proposal's completeness, conformity to application requirements and overall eligibility, and answers to the questions letter.

4. *The Commission*

After reviewing proposals, the comments of peer reviewers, the applicants' responses to the reviews, and evaluations by the Commission staff, Commission members deliberate on proposals and make funding recommendations to the Archivist of the United States who, as Commission Chairman, has final statutory authority. Throughout this process, all members of the Commission and its staff follow conflict-of-interest rules to assure fair and equal treatment of every application.

Possible Commission Actions on the Proposal

Grants are contingent upon available appropriated funds. The Commission may recommend to the Archivist:

- Approval of the proposal as submitted and extend an offer of a grant.
- Approval of the proposal with an offer of fewer funds than requested.
- Approval of the proposal, subject to the applicant satisfying particular conditions.
- Rejection of the proposal.

Application Cycle

This is a general guide to the Application Cycle and deadlines:

1. August 1 – Submit draft to the NHPRC (optional).
2. October 1 – Deadline - Final proposal due.
3. May 2008 – Commission meets.
4. June 1, 2008 – Earliest possible starting date for project.

Notification

Grant applicants will be notified within 2 weeks after the Archivist's decision.

* Please see our [Privacy Statement](#)

Page URL: <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/basic.html>

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