Grant Announcement:

Digitizing Historical Records

The following grant application information is for **Digitizing Historical Records Projects.**

NHPRC support begins no earlier than January 1, 2007.

- Final Deadline (postmark):   October 2, 2006

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

Grant Program Description

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) promotes the preservation and use of America's documentary heritage essential to understanding our democracy, history, and culture.

The Commission seeks proposals to test and implement cost-effective methods to scan historical record collections and make digital versions freely available on the Internet. These pilot Digitizing Historical Records projects should develop models that can be used by other archives.

Projects must focus on digitizing archival components that consist of nationally-significant materials. Archival components may be entire collections or series. The selected materials should already be processed so that projects can use existing information to create metadata for the digitized collection. The selected materials should include enough records to test the feasibility and value of disseminating large quantities of historical sources based on standard archival methods of description and arrangement (most likely using existing Encoded Archival Description finding aids).

Goals of these projects are to produce:

- Entire collections or series useable online as digital images and
- Descriptions of methods and practices that other institutions can use to reproduce the results.

In order to make these pilot projects as widely useful as possible for archives, historical repositories, and researchers, the project's proposal must discuss:

1. Selection criteria for the materials to be digitized;
2. Applicability of existing archival methods to your strategy for digitization of historical records without adding extensive item-level metadata;
3. Standards for and methods of digitization (contractors or in-house) as well as preservation plans for the resulting digital records;
4. Strategies for making the materials accessible to the public on the Internet and the specifications for necessary software and hardware;
5. Evaluation plans that will look at the anticipated use of the digitized materials; the effectiveness of the methods employed in digitizing and displaying the materials; and the

specific overall performance objectives of the entire project; and

6. Plan of work with detailed cost and time estimates, the bases of these estimates, and project tracking plans that will allow for the development of a cost-model for subsequent projects.

Award Information

The Commission intends to allocate one to three awards of up to a total of $150,000 each. Each project may be up to three years in duration.

Cost Sharing

The Commission will provide up to 50 percent of the total project costs.

Eligibility

The following types of institutions, organizations, agencies, or individuals are eligible:

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

Eligible organizations must be legally established and located within a state within the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a United States territory.

How to Prepare an Application

You will need to produce three groups of documents:

1. Project Description (and Summary)
2. Project Budget
3. Supporting Documents

Before beginning the process, you should decide how you will submit your application. We encourage you to submit via Grants.gov, but you may also download and submit your application via email, or download the forms and mail in your final application.

- For more information on your choices, see How to Submit Applications.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Director of Technology Initiatives at the NHPRC who may:

- answer questions about what activities are eligible for support;
- read and comment on a preliminary draft;
- advise the applicant about the review process.

Project Description

A Project Description should provide the purposes and goals of the proposed project; how they relate to the goals listed in this Announcement; a plan of work; projected results to be completed during the grant period; the names and contact information for the project director and key

personnel.

- The narrative should be no more than 20 double-spaced pages in 12 point type with standard margins.
- Supplement the narrative with resumes, examples, and illustrations.

In your Project Description, answer the following questions about your plans for Digitizing Historical Records and include the specified information in your supplementary materials.

Answer the following questions in your proposal and include the specified information in your supplementary materials:

1. *Selection Criteria:* Explain how you selected the materials to be digitized and how that reflects the mission of your institution, your strategic plans, the current uses of the materials, and broader trends in historical studies. Which staff members were included in this process and what skills did they bring to the task? Be sure to indicate that your institution has all necessary rights to digitize the collection for delivery online to the general public. The Commission expects the selected materials to come from already processed collections with existing finding aids. Restricted materials should either not be included or make up only a small percentage of the materials. Please include selected relevant portions of the existing finding aid in your supplementary materials as well as a link to it if it is available online.

2. *Use of Archival Standards and Methods:* Explain how your project will apply existing archival methodologies to the development of the digitized collections. Who will manage the project and what skills do they have or need? (Include resumes for staff and position descriptions for people you plan to hire with grant funds). How will your methods ensure that users understand the context of the material and the order of the materials? What use will you make of existing EAD or other catalog records to create minimum metadata for each digital image? Discuss the use, if any, of microfilm, as part of a preservation strategy. Will you digitize from an existing microfilm edition? Will you produce microfilm from digital images or use hybrid systems to produce both microfilm and digital images at the same time? Explain how and why.

3. *Standards and Methods for Digitization:* Applicants must demonstrate their understanding of digitization standards, indicate which standards they intend to use, and why. If you expect to contract out for the digitization, explain your reasoning (include a draft copy of your request for proposals as an appendix). If you plan to do the work in your repository, discuss your previous experiences in doing production scanning and what capacities you have and which you will need to develop (including personnel, training, equipment and software).

4. *Access:* How do you already describe and make available the selected materials? How will digitizing these materials change that access? Put these ideas in the context of existing methods that all archives use to disseminate information. In addition, describe what kind of hardware and software you plan to use or develop to make these collections available online? Consider what kinds of searches and display methods you will offer the users and how these will take advantage of existing information about the materials. The Commission prefers not to fund extensive metadata creation but rather to encourage methods that repurpose existing metadata. Do you intend to control, limit, or charge for the downloading or printing of the digital images? If so, explain how and why. Will you need to restrict access to any portion of the digitized materials? If so, explain your method of ensuring appropriate safeguards for restricted materials.

5. *Evaluation:* Discuss how you will evaluate the success of your project. How do you currently track the use of these materials and other materials in your collection? What metrics will you use to measure your digitization process? How will you measure changes in the use of this collection by the public? The Commission requires a final report that describes your results, with recommendations regarding digitization for other repositories and a proposed business model for how you intend to continue archival digitization in the future. The Commission requires successful applicants to continue to track the use of the digitized collections after the end of the grant period and make annual reports to the Commission for at least three years following the project's completion.

6. *Work Plan:* Applicants must include a plan of work including a time-line and a detailed description of each of the proposed steps in the process, with staff involved, costs, and time estimates. Successful applicants will be expected to carefully document the processes, including any changes in work flow, as well as the actual costs of each step.

Supplementary Materials

You may also include other material that you think will be useful in the evaluation of the proposal; please limit these additional materials to no more than 20 pages; including:

- Brief (two page) resumes or curriculum vitae for all named staff on the application
- Position announcement for any new positions to be paid for by grant funds
- Brief bibliography of the relevant scholarship
- Existing finding aid(s) for selected materials and links to complete finding aids (if available)
- Institution's preservation plan for digital materials (if available)

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

Complete a Project Summary

Prepare a three-page Project Summary that includes: purposes and goals of the project; significance and relationship to NHPRC goals and objectives; plan of work for grant period (including references to techniques); and names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of the project director and other key personnel.

Preparing the Budget

The Project Budget should include all costs that will be charged to grant funds as well as those that will be supported by the applicant or non-Federal, third-party cash and in-kind contributions. 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.

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 NA Form 17001. (You may use an exact replica.) 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.
- You may request funding for up to 3 years, but if the project will take 18 months or longer,

you must fill out a separate budget form for each project year or fraction thereof.

- Provide specific budget figures, rounding off figures to the nearest dollar.

We strongly suggest that applicants consult the Federal grant administration rules and regulations governing grants from the NHPRC listed in the Administering an NHPRC Grant section. You should also review the appropriate Office of Management and Budget circulars on cost principles.

Definitions

In preparing the budget section of the application, please be aware of the following definitions:

Direct costs – expenses attributable directly to the cost of a project, such as salaries, project supplies, travel expenses, and equipment rented or purchased.

Indirect costs – costs incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore not attributable to a specific project or activity. Typically, indirect costs include items such as overhead for facilities maintenance and accounting services. NHPRC prefers not to provide grant funds for indirect costs.

Cost Sharing– the financial contribution the applicant pledges to the costs of a project. The Commission provides no more than 50 percent of project costs for digitization projects. 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.

Budget Categories

In preparing the budget, please follow the suggestions below in each of the categories:

Salaries: List each staff position and the full salary for that position.

- 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 only to pay the salaries of individuals actually working on the project.
- You may count the time provided by advisory board members as cost sharing.
- You may use a daily rate comparable to the allowable maximum for Commission-funded consultants ($400) when board member contributions will be fifteen days or less per year.
- Board member contributions to the grant must be allocable to the specific project for which they are requested.

  Grant funds may not substitute for or supplement salaries of regular, full-time staff members. (For example, a faculty member with a 12-month, full-time appointment, whose salary for that appointment is paid in full by an applicant university, should not request supplemental salary support for summer work.) Grant funds may be used to pay existing full-time personnel working on a project only if the institution uses its own funds to hire substitute staff for their regular duties during the grant period.

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

- For other staff indicate the percentage basis for each amount. The Commission encourages the provision of benefits comparable to those accorded for a similar non-grant-funded position within the given institution.

Consultant Fees: Include payments for consultant services and honoraria.

- Include consultant travel expenses in the "Travel" category.
- The Commission needs justification for a daily consulting fee above $400.

Travel: List the destination for each trip and the basis for individual trip costs and transportation rates (airfare, mileage, and taxis).

- In the case of projected meetings use the cost based on the actual mileage of those involved or on an established average cost for the board. Per diem (food and lodging) rates should be the applicant institution's standard rate. If the institution has no standard rate of its own, please use standard Federal rates, which you may obtain by calling the Commission office. 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: Itemize the estimated cost of specialized materials and supplies. Justify them in the proposal narrative or a narrative budget supplement.

- Note that the "Supplies and Materials" category of the budget also includes expenditures for equipment costing less than $5,000 per unit. You may request grant funds for purchasing permanent equipment when you can demonstrate that purchasing will be less expensive than renting.
- The Commission does not provide grant funds for the acquisition of routine equipment such as office furnishings, shelving, and file cabinets, but will provide grant support for the purchase of technical equipment, such as computers and peripherals essential for a project, if those costs are divided evenly between grant funds and cost sharing. This applies both to expendable equipment included in the "Supplies and Materials" category and to permanent equipment included in the "Other Costs" category of the budget.

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.

- Note that, except for conferences and SHRAB meetings, the NHPRC does not provide grant funds for rental space.

Other costs: Cash awards or other subgrants should be listed here.

Application Review

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

1. *Peer Reviewers*
   We may ask 5 to 10 external peer reviewers to evaluate the proposal.
2. *NHPRC Staff*
   Staff makes overall recommendations to the Commission based on the appropriateness of the project in meeting the Commission's goals, the proposal's completeness, and conformity to application requirement.
3. *The Commission*
   After reviewing proposals and evaluations by the Commission staff, Commission members deliberate on proposals and make funding recommendations to the Archivist of the United States who 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

In making its decision on proposals, the Commission may decide to do the following:

1. Approve the proposal as submitted.
2. Approve the proposal with an offer of fewer funds than requested.
3. Approve the proposal, subject to the applicant satisfying particular conditions.
4. Approve the proposal contingent on availability of Commission funds.
5. Reject the proposal.

Application Cycle

This is a general guide to the Application Cycle:

1. October 2   –   Deadline - Final proposal postmarked or electronically submitted.
2. November 2006   –   Commission meets.
3. January 1, 2007   –   Earliest possible starting date for project.

Notification

- Successful grant applicants are notified informally by telephone or e-mail within 2 days after the Commission meeting.
- Unsuccessful applicants are notified within 2 weeks.

A press release listing the grants awarded is issued and posted on our web site as soon as possible after the Commission meeting.

Grant Administration

For more information on how to comply with Federal regulations, see our Administering a Grant section.

* Please see our Privacy Statement