Grant Announcement:

Electronic Records Projects

The following grant application information is for **Electronic Records Projects.**

- *See also* Archival and Records Projects grants.

NHPRC support begins no earlier than December 1, 2006.

- Draft Deadline: April 1, 2006
- Final Deadline (postmark):   June 1, 2006

See the Application Cycle for additional information.

Grant Program Description

The Commission seeks ways to ensure that records created today will be usable with tomorrow's technology. As society moves recordkeeping from paper to electronic records, it is essential that electronic records retain their authenticity and are preserved. The NHPRC supports efforts by archivists and other records managers to meet the challenges of a proliferation of electronic records.

The NHPRC especially welcomes projects that build institutional capacity, promote professional development and education in the field, and help create and support consortia and other cooperative programs.

Eligible Activities Include:

- Projects to establish sustainable electronic records programs within archival institutions.
- Projects to establish and expand electronic records programs by cooperative efforts.
- Electronic records-related professional education.
- Conferences, consultancies, and similar efforts.
- Research, development, and analysis projects.
- Projects that attempt to establish policies, best practices, and tools for long-term preservation of, and access to, electronic records.

Grants for Electronic Records Projects cannot be used to:

- Digitize records orginally produced in analog media, including paper, microfilm, sound recordings, or motion pictures.

Award Information

Awards normally are for one, two, or three years and have ranged widely in amount depending on the nature of the project. In recent years, Electronic Records project awards have been in these ranges:

- Implementation. . . . .$50,000 - $175,000
- Research and Development. . $195,000 - $300,000
- Analysis. . . . .$80,000 - $160,000
- Education. . . . . $90,000 - $150,000

Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is the financial contribution the applicant pledges to the cost of a project.

- The Commission provides no more than 50 percent of project costs for Electronic Records 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.

Eligibility

This category is open to individuals; non-profit, tax-exempt organizations; institutions of higher education; local and state governments.

How to Prepare an Application

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

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Director for Technology Initiatives 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 should submit a draft at least 2 months before the deadline.

Step one — Project Planning

A. Prepare a Draft Project Description

Answer the following questions in preparing your draft:

1. What is the purpose of the project and what are its goals?
2. What is its significance in relation to the NHPRC's mission, vision, and goals?
3. What is the plan of work for the grant period?
4. What publications or other products will be produced during the grant period?
5. What are the qualifications of the personnel?
6. What are your performance objectives?

B. Prepare a Draft Budget

You can find general suggestions, definitions, budget categories, and other information in the [Preparing the Budget](#) section of this announcement.

- Submit a draft, preferably no later than April 1, and consult with NHPRC staff.
- Revise your draft to produce a final, 20-page project narrative plus a three-page summary.

C. Prepare Supporting Documents

This includes staff resumes and up to 20 pages of supplementary appendices.

- For additional information, see the [Supplementary Materials](#) section of this announcement.

Step Two — Completing the Final Application

Complete the 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); products and publications to be completed during the grant period; and names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of the project director and other key personnel.

Complete the Project Narrative

The Project Narrative is a description of the proposal. Address the following questions in your narrative:

- 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?
Begin by making the case for the project's significance. Discuss the overall scope of work and goals.

Question 2: What is the significance of the project in relation to the NHPRC's programs and goals?
Please explain how the project relates to the Commission's overall mission, vision, and goals.

Question 3: What is the plan of work for the grant period?
Please provide ample evidence of preliminary planning. Applicants should have a realistic idea of the scope of the project. Outline each stage of the planned work within the grant period, and clarify complex work plans with a timechart identifying anticipated activities.

Question 4: What products, if any, will be produced during the grant period?
Describe the products you plan to produce for the completed project. Discuss the next steps your institution will take after the grant period.

Question 5: What are the qualifications of the personnel?
Please provide vitae of not more than two pages per person for all staff named in the project budget. For those staff to be hired for the project, provide job descriptions, specify the qualifications that will be sought in candidates for vacant positions, and describe the roles to be played by all project staff, consultants, and contractors. Explain any special training planned for personnel.

Question 6:   *What are your performance objectives?*

A list of Performance Objectives — measurable outcomes of your Federally-funded work — should also be included in the proposal. List four to seven quantifiable objectives in the proposal by which the project can be evaluated following the submission of the final report and the closing of the grant.

Prepare Supplementary Materials

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

- Endorsements from institutional officials and scholars
- Long-term budget projections, beyond the grant period's term
- Appendices

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

Preparing the Budget

The budget should include the project costs that will be charged to grant funds as well as those that will be supported by 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 <u>Administering an NHPRC Grant</u> section. You should also review the appropriate <u>Office of Management and Budget</u> 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 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 (e.g., registration fees).

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 we 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.

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. *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.
4. *NHPRC staff*
   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.
5. *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 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. April 1 – Submit draft to the NHPRC.
2. June 1 – Deadline - Final proposal postmarked by this date to the NHPRC.
3. August 1 – Questions letter sent to applicant by the NHPRC staff.
4. Mid-October – Applicant responds to questions letter.
5. November – Commission meets.
6. December 1 – 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