

## Grant Announcement:

### *Electronic Records 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 **Electronic Records Projects**.

- See also [Archival and Records Projects](#) grants.

NHPRC support begins no earlier than January 1, 2008.

- Draft Deadline (optional): April 1, 2007
  - Final Deadline: June 1, 2007
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### *Grant Program Description*

The focus of the NHPRC's Electronic Records grant program is to support projects that will lead to sustainable electronic records programs in state archives and other historical records repositories.

*We seek applications for projects to:*

1. Assess institutional capacity through program evaluation and planning;
2. Create institutional capacity with program start-up support;
3. Expand the scope of existing programs; and
4. Develop cooperative institutions that provide electronic records preservation services to repositories.

Although projects focused exclusively on professional development are not eligible in this grant opportunity, we strongly encourage each application to include professional development components necessary for the success of the project. These may consist of basic or advanced e-records training for archives staff and/or for agency records managers, high level administrators, IT staff, and others.

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### *Categories*

#### **1. Program Evaluation and Planning Projects**

Under this category, archives and other repositories may apply for grants of up to \$50,000 to develop organizational and financial structures and technical requirements. They may also use consultants for review of specifications or for staff development.

- Applicants must demonstrate that they have the support of their parent agency at the highest possible levels, or make the case that a proposed project will result in such support.
- Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the basic issues related to operating an electronic records program, including a familiarity with the literature.
- Applicants must be aware of, and commit to, using the standards, best practices, and self-evaluation tools available in their evaluation planning projects.

#### **2. Program Start-Up Projects**

Under this category, archives and other repositories may apply for multi-year grants of up to \$250,000 to implement organizational, financial, and technical structures by hiring or training staff and establishing working relationships with e-records preservation service providers. The Commission expects to make no more than one award in this category. *Applicants not granted awards in this category may be offered a program evaluation and planning grants.*

- Proposals must include descriptions of how the applicant's repository will incorporate electronic records management techniques to identify, appraise, accession, and store electronic records for the long term. The nature of contacts with high-level administrators in records-producing agencies should be detailed. Proposals

should describe how applicants will assure the preservation of authentic e-records and how they will make accessioned e-records available for research.

- Applicants must evaluate thoroughly the repository's readiness, staff capabilities, and institutional support and commitment.
- Applicants must demonstrate that their parent agency, at the highest possible levels, will sustain an ongoing electronic records program.
- Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the major technical and human issues related to operating an electronic records program, including a demonstrable command of the literature.
- Applicants must commit to using current standards, best practices, and self-evaluation tools available in implementing their e-records programs.
- Applicants must provide a convincing business plan for the continuing operation of the e-records program. The NHPRC will not financially support the ongoing operations of e-records archival repositories.

### 3. Program Expansion Projects

Although the NHPRC does not fund the ongoing operations of e-records archives and other repositories, it may support projects that expand successful programs by developing or implementing new tools, techniques, methods, or approaches. The purpose of this category is to help expand successful programs with financial support, rather than assist programs that have not received sufficient institutional support. If funds are available, grants would normally be for up to three years and up to \$150,000. The Commission expects to make no more than one award in this category.

- Applicants must include detailed descriptions of their current electronic records archives programs, demonstrating their sustainability and institutional support; their success at institutionalizing e-records into their enterprise's records management programs; their ability to preserve authentic e-records; and their ability to successfully provide access to the records and promote their use.
- The proposal must illustrate why an expansion of the program is necessary, what are its components, how the expansion will be a model for others, and how its results will be disseminated. If the proposal involves collaboration between two different repositories, outline the needs and skills of each partner.
- Applicants must demonstrate that their parent agency, at the highest possible levels, will sustain an expanded ongoing electronic records program.
- Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the major technical and human issues related to operating an expanded electronic records program, including a demonstrable command of the literature.
- Applicants must commit to using current standards, best practices, and self-evaluation tools available in expanding their e-records programs.
- Applicants must provide a convincing business plan for the continuing operation of the e-records program. The NHPRC will not financially support the ongoing operations of e-records archival repositories.

### 4. Cooperative Networks and Service Providers Projects

The NHPRC may support the creation of e-records service businesses in existing or new non-profit organizations with multiyear grants up to \$400,000. The Commission expects to make no more than one award in this category.

Applicants must provide a business plan that outlines:

- The customers, both immediate and projected, and the applicant's growth strategy.
- The services to be provided including, for example, e-records storage, preservation, access, consulting, and staff development.
- The financial model including anticipated expenses, and revenue from grants, membership fees, charges for metered services, and any other sources.
- An understanding of the major technical and human issues related to operating an electronic records program, including a demonstrable command of the literature.
- The use of current standards, best practices, and self-evaluation tools available in establishing and maintaining their e-records networks and cooperatives.
- Plans for the continuing operation of the cooperative organization after the grant period. The NHPRC will not financially support the ongoing operations of e-records service providers and networks.

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### Award Information

Awards normally are for one, two, or three years and may range from \$20,000 to \$400,000. The Commission provides no more than 50 percent of project costs for Electronic Records 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

This category is open to archives and other repositories and, for Cooperative Networks and Service Provider projects, other organizations that are part of:

- Nonprofit organizations or institutions,
  - Colleges, universities, and other academic institutions,
  - State or local government agencies, or
  - Federally-acknowledged or state-recognized American Indian tribes or groups.
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## *How to Prepare an Application*

Follow the instructions below to prepare a Project Narrative, Summary, and Budget. You should read and understand this Grant Announcement and the Grants.gov application package and instructions in order to prepare your application.

- See the separate [Application Instructions](#) for information on how to fill out the application forms.

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, submitted approximately 2 months before the deadline.

Applicants should also contact the [Coordinator of your State Historical Records Advisory Board](#) about your proposal and seek the board's advice. Many state boards have requirements for submitting draft proposals with deadlines earlier than those of the NHPRC.

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## *Completing the Application*

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

- We strongly suggest that before beginning the process, applicants consult the Federal grant administration rules and regulations governing grants from the NHPRC listed in the [Administering an NHPRC Grant](#) section.

## The Project Narrative

The Project Narrative is a description of the proposal. Be sure to address the requirements under each project area as well as the following questions in your narrative:

- Answers should be no more than 20 double-spaced pages in 12-pt type with standard margins.
- 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?*

State clearly which one of the four types of projects you are proposing. Explain the overall goals of the project and its relationship to your strategic plans, organizational goals, and collection management plans as appropriate. Detail how you plan to meet the expectations listed for your project. Describe your program's business plan, and how funding will help you achieve your purposes, goals, and objectives. Be sure to discuss the nature of preliminary planning and assessment and how that has shaped the scope of the project.

**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 goal to promote sustainable electronic records programs in archives and other historical records repositories. Applicants may want to review the Commission's [Strategic Plan](#).

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

Describe in detail your plan of work in intervals of, at most, six months. Please use specific months and identify the person on the project team who will be responsible for each part of the project. A schematic chart or other type of display may be included in the supplementary materials.

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

Describe assessments, manuals, specifications, new software, or documentation that you plan to complete during the project. Indicate if you plan to present the results of the project in professional newsletters, conference presentations, journal articles, or on the Internet. Describe how you will market your program with press releases, brochures, speeches, websites and other types of outreach.

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

Please 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 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 to be hired for the project, provide job descriptions or the call for consultants.

**Question 6:** *What are your performance objectives?*

List four to seven quantifiable objectives in the proposal by which you and the Commission can evaluate the project following the submission of the final report.

## The 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 and Publications 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)
- Detailed work plan charts that supplement the Narrative
- Statements of commitment to the project by partners, including records creators
- Your institution's mission, goals, and objective statements
- Your institution's pertinent policies on collections development, processing, and preservation.

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

## The 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 applicant through cost sharing, which include 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.

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## ***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. April 1 – Submit draft to the NHPRC (optional).
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. September 1 – Applicant responds to questions letter.
5. November – Commission meets.
6. January 1, 2008 – Earliest possible starting date for project.

## Notification

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

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

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