

# HUMANITIES COUNCIL

## OF WASHINGTON, DC

### **Who we are**

The Humanities Council of Washington, D.C. (HCWDC), established in 1980, is a private, nonprofit organization that funds and conducts humanities-based cultural and educational programs for Washingtonians in every ward. It is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) but is not a Federal or District agency. HCWDC is governed by a 26-member volunteer board, five of whom are appointed by the Mayor, and has a small staff. Its mission is to “transform lives through the power of the humanities.”

### **The Humanities**

The humanities encompass the study of the human experience, which includes, but is not limited to: law, literature, ethics, and history. These disciplines seek to tell the human story—the story of humanity. They help us gain knowledge of the past, provide

*The humanities tell us what it means to be human. They help us to understand*

- *Our story's past:* history, anthropology, archaeology
- *Our story's expression:* literature, linguistics, languages, art history, theory & criticism
- *Our story's values:* ethics, philosophy, comparative religion, jurisprudence

perspective for the present, and guidance for the future. They teach us about others and help us to know ourselves. In doing so they assist us in deciding what is important in our

own lives and what we can do to make them better. The humanities instruct us in addressing the challenges we face together in our families, our communities, and as a nation. They can also be a great source of enjoyment and pride.

### **Request for Proposals: DC Community Heritage Project**

The Council will be re-granting funds received from the D.C. Commission on Arts and Humanities to the heritage, history, and preservation community of D.C. Proposals may request funds of up to \$2000 for programs and projects focused on the history, heritage, and preservation of Washington. These grants are on a short timeline with a grant period lasting from **June 15, 2009 through October 15, 2009**. Funds are designated for short projects that can be completed within the 120 day grant period; contained components of larger projects that can be completed within those 120 days; or for planning work to develop a larger project.

### **Who may apply?**

Grant funds are available to organizations that fit the following criteria:

- Has 501 c 3 non-profit status **OR** D.C. government non-profit status. Copies of the letter(s) of determination from either the I.R.S. or the D.C. government will need to be submitted with applications.

Groups and organizations without non-profit status may work with a qualifying organization if they agree to act as your sponsor. If you are interested in applying for D.C. non-profit status for your organization you can find information on the process at: <http://brc.dc.gov/nonprofit/nonprofit.asp>, and an application for the tax exemption status that your organization will need to qualify to sponsor a grant application for the RFP can be found at [http://brc.dc.gov/nonprofit/requirementsorg/dc\\_tax\\_exemp.asp](http://brc.dc.gov/nonprofit/requirementsorg/dc_tax_exemp.asp).

## ***Project Guidelines***

Proposals will need to meet all of the following criteria in order to be considered:

- The project must be D.C. based and focused.
- The project must be grounded in the humanities ([a list of humanities disciplines is available on our website](#)).
- The project must be centered on community heritage, history, or preservation.

## ***Completing the Application***

The following explanations will help you to complete the application for the community heritage RFP.

- ***Humanities scholar input:*** Humanities scholars play a central role in all HCWDC funded projects—as planners, speakers, resource consultants, or evaluators. A humanities scholar is an individual with particular training or experience qualifying him or her as a professional in one or more of the academic disciplines of the humanities. The typical qualification is an advanced degree (M.A. or Ph.D.) in a humanities field of study; however, individuals without advanced degrees may qualify as humanities scholars because of their acquired expertise in a particular domain or an established reputation as an independent scholar in one of the humanities disciplines, such as local writers or historians. If you do not have a humanities scholar for your project, please contact the Council at (202) 387-8391 to help you connect with a local scholar who can work with your project.
- ***Sponsor cost-share:*** HCWDC requires the grant applicant or sponsoring organizations to contribute an amount **equal to or exceeding** its grant request. For example, an applicant who requests \$2,000 must show \$2,000 or more in cost-share. This sponsor participation

may be in cash or in-kind contributions. An in-kind contribution is a cash, equipment, or service donation made to the sponsoring organization for the project. This might include, for example, the free use of film editing equipment, the project director's time if they are not paid, or cash paid by the organization or other donation to complete parts of the project.

- ***Availability of funds:*** HCWDC awards funds annually to qualified projects. Choice of grant recipients depends on the quality and appropriateness of the proposed project. It also may depend on the strength of past grants and the community impact of the project.

## ***Application Form***

### ***Definitions & Explanations:***

*(Numbers here correspond to application.)*

- 1. Project Title:** This is the title that your project will take in advertisements, publicity, and internally within your organization.
- 2. Budget:** HCWDC Grant Request is the amount you are requesting from HCWDC, **which must be no more than 50 percent of your total project costs.** Complete the budget sheet before filling in this amount.
- 3. Humanities Focus & Format of Project:** Format of the Project refers to whether it is a discussion, a lecture, a tour, a pamphlet, a video, etc. For further explanation of humanities focus please read *The Humanities* section on page one of this brochure.
- 4. The Humanities Scholars:** List the name(s), affiliations, address(es), and phone number(s) of the scholar(s) that will be assisting you in your project. For further explanation read *Humanities scholar input* under *Project Guidelines* in this brochure.
- 5. Timeline:** The maximum term of DC Community Heritage grants is 120 days from the date of the award. The program for which you would receive funding should be completed during the grant period. When requesting HCWDC funds you should keep this timeline in mind and request funds only for programs or components of projects that can be completed during the grant period. Evaluations and

financial reports must be completed no later than **October 31, 2009**. *While the project may be ongoing, you will need to complete the piece for which you have received funding must be completed.* For example, if your project is a documentary film, you may not complete the film during the grant period. However, if you request HCDWC funds for pre-production research then you should have completed the pre-production research for your film within the term of the grant. Further guidelines for these reports will be provided once funding is awarded.

**7. Intended Audience:** Describe the composition and size of your intended audience. Give a realistic assessment and include the targeted **ward(s)** and **neighborhood(s)**.

**9. Authorizing official of sponsoring organization:** This is usually the director, CEO, or board chair that has the authority to sign the application on behalf of the organization.

**10. Project director:** The person responsible for overall management of the project and who serves as the liaison with HCWDC.

**11. Project bookkeeper:** The person who will complete the budget and financial forms and keep track of all project expenses. **This person cannot hold any other official positions on the project.** They CANNOT be listed as the project director, authorized official of the sponsoring organization or as a scholar.

#### ***What we do NOT fund***

- Projects without a humanities scholar's involvement.
- Projects for the sole benefit of the organization's internal membership. All projects must have a broad outreach to the community beyond the sponsoring organization's membership.
- Creative or Performing Art, unless they are used in a supporting role as a catalyst or basis for a discussion or other interpretive endeavor related to theory, philosophy, or criticism of the art form.
- Project is sponsored by a for-profit organization. All projects must be sponsored by a non-profit organization.
- Acquisition of equipment, construction, restoration, or preservation, unless special permission is granted.
- Lobbying, fundraising, advocacy or political action activities. Programs that promote a particular solution or point of view, ideology, or action.
- Refreshments or entertainment.
- Project expenses incurred or paid out before the HCWDC Grant is awarded.

### ***Budget Sheet Definitions & Explanations:***

**Sponsoring cost share** is the contribution by the sponsoring agency. The total cost share for the project, which is the sum of the cash cost and in-kind cost share, must be at least equal to the amount requested from HCWDC.

**Cash cost share** includes cash contributions made by third parties as well as contributions made by the applicant organization for the project. Anything the applicant organization contributes to a project, including salary support for people working on the project, the purchase of supplies, space to carry out project activities, and services related to the project should be included in cash cost share. The applicant should indicate how these costs have been estimated.

**In-kind cost share** is the dollar value of services, goods, and space contributed to the project by third parties. For example, if a consultant waives or reduces fees, the fee may be reflected in the budget as an in-kind cost sharing item, provided the in-kind contribution is adequately documented.

**Honoraria:** Scholar fees are not fixed but a customary rate ranges between \$150 and \$1,000. This varies considerably depending on the amount of preparation needed and the time spent on the project.

**Salary/Wages:** Salaries for documented time spent on the project by agency staff may be included in cash cost share.

**Travel:** Use standard mileage rates.

**Project Income:** If approved in advance, the grantee may earn income to support the project by registration or admission fees. Such income must be applied to the cost of the project and must be accounted for and reported to HCWDC.

### ***Steps to funding***

1. Attend the grants assistance workshop. While this is not required, it is extremely helpful in learning what kind of programs are funded, how to complete your application, and in getting to know the HCWDC staff. You may always call the HCWDC staff to discuss your ideas or potential project and receive their assistance. Three grants assistance workshops for this RFP will take place at different locations in the District. Please visit the [Upcoming Events](#) page on our website or email

[grants@wdchumanities.org](mailto:grants@wdchumanities.org) for time, locations, and to RSVP.

2. Submit **5 copies** of the completed application to the Council offices by 5 pm on May 1, 2009. Please be sure to include copies of all of the items on the application checklist.

3. Notice of the board approved grant award determinations will be sent to applicants by June 15, 2009.

***If you are funded, you will....***

- Receive an award letter. It will include instructions for administering and reporting your grant and any specific conditions.
- Attend an awardees meeting for further instructions regarding administering your grant. You will sign the award letter and return it to the HCWDC at this ceremony, and will receive your grant award check.
- Submit a final report by October 31, 2009.

***If you are not funded, you will....***

- Receive a letter notifying you of your grant application status. It will include instructions for discussing your application with HCDWC staff, including suggestions on strengthening your application for future grant cycles.

For all applicants, HCWDC staff does not discuss the status of applications or awards by telephone. Award notices are sent by United States mail service to the project director's attention at the sponsoring organization's address.