



Major Collaborative Archival Initiatives

FY 2025 Grant Announcement: (Initial)

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) of the National Archives supports projects that promote access to America's historical records to encourage understanding of our democracy, history, and culture.

Funding Opportunity Number: MAJOR-202405

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 89.003

- *Draft Deadline: February 15, 2024*
- **Application Deadline: May 8, 2024**

NHPRC support begins no earlier than **January 1, 2025**.

Agency Contact

Before beginning the process, applicants should contact the Director for Access Programs Nancy Melley (nancy.melley@nara.gov) who may:

- Advise the applicant about the review process;
- Answer questions about what activities are eligible for support;
- Supply samples of successful applications;
- Read and comment on a preliminary draft.

Grant Program Description

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission seeks projects that will significantly improve public discovery and use of major historical records collections.

All types of historical records are eligible, including documents, photographs, born-digital records, and analog audio and moving images.

Projects may focus on broad movements in U.S. history, such as law, politics, social reform, business, military, the arts, and other aspects of the national experience, or on the papers of individual figure(s) in American history.

Collections that center the voices and document the history of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are especially welcome.

With the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence approaching, the Commission is especially interested in projects that promote discovery and access to collections that explore the ideals behind our nation's founding and the continuous debate over those ideals to the present day.

Major Collaborative Archival Initiatives **must be collaborations among multiple institutions** that undertake either of these two eligible activities to:

- digitize and publish as a “virtual” collection online historical records housed at multiple repositories but center on a common theme, organization, or important historical figure(s); or
- create and test new tools and methods for the archival field to enhance public access, especially for born-digital records

Projects that actively engage the public in the work of the project will be more competitive.

If you have a project that will process collections or digitize smaller collections and will not require more than \$150,000 in grant funds, you should consult the Archival Projects program.



A Major Initiative went to a collaborative of eight California in support of Densho, for access to Japanese American history collections.

Soldier Tak Kondo with a group in front of the USO in Heart Mountain concentration camp. Photo courtesy of Marjorie Matsushita and the Manzanar National Historic Site Collection.

A successful **Major Collaborative Archival Initiative** proposal will:

- demonstrate the value of the contents of the collections
- outline a project that addresses best practices for the work
- be appropriately staffed
- propose a budget that accomplishes the project in a cost-effective manner, and
- create outline activities that bring researchers to the collections included in the project as well as the rest of the repository's holdings.

Award Information

A grant is for one to three years. Awards will be between \$150,000 and \$350,000. The NHPRC expects to make up to five grants in this category for a total of up to \$1,000,000. Grants begin no earlier than **January 1, 2025**.

The Commission requires that grant recipients acknowledge NHPRC grant assistance in all publicity, publications, and other products that result from its support.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants:

- U.S. nonprofit organizations or institutions
- U.S. colleges, universities, and other academic institutions
- State or local government agencies
- Federally-acknowledged or state-recognized Native American tribes or groups

For a comprehensive list of the Commission's limitations on funding, please see "What we do and do not fund." Projects must be collaborations that include at least one of the eligible activities described for this program. Applications must include all required elements (SF424, Project Narrative, NHPRC Budget form, and Supplemental Materials). Applications that do not meet either of these criteria will not be considered.

In order to ensure eligibility, applicants should first review the rules and regulations governing NHPRC grants under the Administering an NHPRC Grant section.

Cost Sharing

The total costs of a project are shared between the NHPRC and the applicant organization.

Cost sharing is required. The applicant's financial contribution may include both direct and indirect expenses, in-kind contributions, non-Federal third-party contributions, and any income earned directly by the project. NHPRC grant recipients are not permitted to use grant funds for indirect costs (as indicated in 2 CFR 2600.101). Indirect costs must be listed under the applicant's cost sharing contribution if they are included in the budget.

The Commission provides no more than 50 percent of total project costs in the **Major Collaborative Archival Initiatives** program..

Other Requirements

Applicant organizations must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) prior to submitting an application, maintain SAM registration throughout the application and award process, and include a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number in their application. Details on SAM registration and requesting a UEI number can be found at the System for Award Management website at <https://sam.gov>. Please refer to the User Guides section and the Grants Registrations PDF .

Ensure your SAM.gov and Grants.gov registrations and passwords are current. It may take up to one month to register or reactivate your registration with SAM.gov and Grants.gov. NHPRC will not grant deadline extensions for lack of registration.

Drafts

Applicants should submit a draft proposal prior to making a formal application. Draft materials should include, at minimum, the project narrative and budget, and drafts should be sent directly to the Director for Access Programs, Nancy Melley (nancy.melley@nara.gov), who will send comments on your proposal in time for you to make changes to a final application. The deadline for drafts in this program is **February 15, 2024**.

Application Information

You must use Grants.gov to submit your application. All information necessary to apply is included in this announcement, the Application Instructions, and the forms on Grants.gov. If you need the information supplied in an alternative format, please call the NHPRC at 202-357-5010.

In the event that Grants.gov is experiencing technical difficulties that prevent submission, applicants must first attempt to resolve the issue with the Grants.gov Contact Center (800-518-4726). If Grants.gov cannot solve the problem, applicants may request an alternative. To make use of the NHPRC backup system, applicants must contact Jeff de la Concepcion (jeff.delaconcepcion@nara.gov) no later than 3:00 Eastern Time on the day of the deadline with their valid Grants.gov Contact Center trouble-ticket number.

Preparing Your Application

Using the Application Instructions, fill out the Standard Form 424 and the NHPRC Budget Form. You will also prepare a Project Narrative and Supplementary Materials to attach to your Application Package.

Project Narrative

The Project Narrative is a description of the proposal. It should be no more than 20 double-spaced pages in 12-pt type formatted for 8.5 x 11 inch paper with standard margins and page numbers. Please organize your narrative in sections:

Statement of Purpose: In one or two sentences, please state the project's purpose, the quantity and format type of materials involved, and how they will be accessed. For example: *The [institution] and its partners will digitize [# of pages/minutes] from XX collections about [theme/historical figure/organization] or The [institution] and its partners will code and test an application to provide [type of access] to [format] materials. Please include the [\$ amount] of your request.*

Overview: Provide an overview of the project and how it will improve public discovery and use of historical records. Describe in detail the collections and show how the records broaden public understanding of our democracy, history, and culture. Characterize the project's intended audience. Briefly summarize your organization's history, mission, and goals with an emphasis on its archival programs. Describe the nature and scope of your holdings and your access policies for public use of your holdings. Describe your partners and their commitments to the project, and the reasons for unifying collections. If you are planning to create new tools and methods for users, briefly describe how they will mark an advancement or enhancement of current archival practices.

Description of Collections: Describe the records that will be made accessible. Include the quantity in cubic or linear feet for analog materials, in files and bytes for born-digital materials, and an estimate of the number of hours for audio and moving image materials. Detail the topical matters, formats, dates, and their historical significance. Explain how these records have the highest value for broad public use and how they significantly enhance understanding of the overall American experience. Provide specific evidence of the current research demand and explain how you expect this project to change usage levels.

Archival Methodologies: Describe your digitization methodologies or your plan to innovate current archival methodologies and practices. Provide descriptions of your equipment and resources, metadata standards, and professional scanning practices. Specify cost estimates for digitized items. Detail the specific methods used for any preservation reformatting of audio or moving image materials. Outline your institution's long-term preservation plan (or provide a link to it online).

For Projects to Create New Tools and Methods: Describe the problem your project is addressing and how your proposed solution may advance, enhance, or make more efficient current practices in the field. Include specifics about how these tools will enable users to better access the records. Explain how the collaborative effort will work.

Public Participation: If applicable, describe your plan to engage the public throughout the project in the active use of the records. Projects should consider ways to engage a broad range of people.

Project Products: Describe and quantify the products you plan to produce for the completed project. This includes updated descriptive information, digitized items, electronic files, and related materials, or if applicable, any new tools and methods and related documentation..

Project Publicity: Describe how you will publicize the project from start to finish using both online and traditional means. Explain how you will share any new tools and methods with other institutions to encourage replication and adoption.

Plan of Work: Provide evidence of planning and a realistic scope of work for the project. Describe each stage of the work plan in six month, or shorter, increments. Provide a time chart identifying the personnel required for each activity in the supplemental materials).

Staff Qualifications: Provide a narrative explanation of how the project will be staffed. Explain the roles of all staff named in the project budget, both for those already on staff and for those to be hired. List the names, titles, institutions, phone numbers, and email addresses of the project director and named staff members. (Please ensure that the project director listed in the Narrative is the same person listed in Section 8 (f), of the SF 424. If your institution requires a different contact person on the SF 424, please explain in one sentence.) In the supplementary materials, provide a résumé of not more than two pages per person for all staff named in the project budget. For those staff or consultants to be hired for the project, provide position descriptions or call for consultants.

Performance Objectives: List six to eight quantifiable performance objectives that will allow you and the Commission to evaluate the project as you submit interim and final reports. Performance objectives might include the number of items digitized, the number of digital surrogates published online, types of new procedures put in place to expedite access to collections, and the number and type of outreach events.

Supplementary Materials

Prepare up to 50 pages of Supplementary Materials to your Narrative, including:

- Brief résumés of named staff members (please use only institutional addresses and phone numbers and limit to two pages per staff member)
- Position descriptions for staff to be hired with grant funds
- Detailed work plan charts that supplement the Narrative
- Institution's preservation plan for digital materials
- Samples from existing finding aid(s) or indexes for selected materials
- Letters of support
- Statements of commitment to the project by partners

If these materials are available on a web site, please provide the URL(s). Reviewers appreciate applications with fewer supplemental pages.

Project Budget

You must submit a budget on the NHPRC Budget Form available on the Application Instructions page. Note that the form itself contains additional instructions. You may include with your application a narrative budget supplement for budget categories that require further detail. Provide specific budget figures, rounding to the nearest dollar.

Submission Dates and Times

- *Draft Deadline: February 15, 2024*
- **Final Deadline:** Applications must be submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time **May 8, 2024.**

A funding decision will be made at the Commission's November 2024 meeting. NHPRC support begins no earlier than **January 1, 2025.**

Application Review

The NHPRC staff will acknowledge receipt of the application soon after we receive it. The following evaluation criteria and weights will be used by NHPRC staff and other reviewers to form recommendations:

Criteria for **Major Collaborative Archival Initiatives** proposals

1. The potential of the historical records collections to broaden understanding of our democracy, history, and culture. *(30 percent)*
2. Appropriateness of the project's strategies, techniques, tools, and methods for completing activities that will result in enhanced public access. *(30 percent)*
3. The ability to complete the project's objectives based on the quality and extent of the proposed collaboration, including its ability to enhance, build upon, and include the capacities of all participants. *(25 percent)*
4. The coherence, effectiveness, and reasonableness of the proposed work plan, budget, and dissemination plan. *(15 percent)*

Review Process

After submitting a proposal, do not discuss the pending application to the NHPRC with any Commission member. Commission members must ensure fair and equitable treatment of all applications and do not discuss proposals with individual applicants.

Your proposal will be reviewed by:

- **A Panel of Peer Reviewers:** We will ask up to 7 external peer reviewers to evaluate and score the proposal.
- **The Commission:** Based on reviews and staff evaluation, the Commission members deliberate and make funding recommendations to the Archivist of the United States, who has final statutory authority and selects award recipients. Throughout this process, all members of the Commission and its staff follow conflict-of-interest rules.

Award Administration Information

Notification

Grants are contingent upon available appropriated funds. In some cases, the Commission will adjust grant amounts depending upon the number of recommended proposals and total budget. The Commission may recommend that the Archivist approve the proposal and extend an offer of a grant with applicable terms and conditions, or it may recommend rejection of the proposal.

Commission staff will notify applicants of the Archivist's decision within two weeks following the meeting and will provide anonymous copies of reviewer comments to all applicants.

Successful applicants will receive an informal offer of award outlining the steps that must be accomplished to qualify for the award. Those steps include verification of their acceptance of general terms and conditions, completion of a survey on their Financial Capability and Accounting Systems, and finalization of performance objectives for their project.

For awards that meet or exceed the Federal government's simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000), NHPRC staff will first review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the designated integrity and performance system. This information is accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). After this review, NHPRC staff will follow the procedures in 2 CFR 200, subpart F, Appendix I, part e.3.

Once these are received, reviewed, and accepted, the NHPRC will issue an official award notice.

Administrative Requirements

In order to ensure that you can manage a grant, applicants should review the Federal grant administration rules and regulations governing grants from the NHPRC listed in the Administering an NHPRC Grant section.

Reporting

In most cases, award recipients will report on their performance in narrative reports every six months and submit financial reports once a year.

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

1-86-NARA-NARA or 1-866-272-6272