Humanities in Place: Proposal Guidelines

Humanities in Place supports a fuller, more complex telling of American histories and lived experiences by deepening the range of how and where our stories are told and by bringing a wider variety of voices into the public dialogue.

Working with media, heritage and public spaces, history museums and other institutions, and conveners of shared experiences—including the digital or ephemeral—we strive to expand the public expression of the histories that have made us and the values we hold.

Our program works across and within diverse communities, encouraging bold, innovative rethinking of past practice, as well as visionary new approaches for how to collectively understand, uplift, and celebrate more complete stories about who we are.

The Grant Application

The grant application ("the proposal") consists of four pieces:

1. Information on the proposed grant and organization
2. A proposal narrative document that provides detailed information on the proposed work
3. Supplemental documents
4. A budget and budget description outlining how funds would be spent

All information, including document attachments and the budget, should be submitted directly through the Fluxx grantee portal. In addition to the application requirements presented here, additional information may be requested.

Applicants should review and be familiar with the Foundation's grantmaking policies and guidelines (https://mellon.org/grants/grantmaking-policies-and-guidelines/) and crediting guidelines (https://www.brandguidelines.mellon.org/crediting-instructions). Please note that the Mellon Foundation is a non-profit organization, and as such we are nonpartisan. The Foundation makes grants designated for charitable and/or educational purposes and grant applications and other communications should always be in alignment with those purposes. If the applicant's proposal is approved by the Mellon Foundation, the grantee will be required to enter into a standard grant agreement with the Foundation before the grant is funded. This grant agreement and the finalized proposal establish the terms of the grant.

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Proposal Information

GRANT INFORMATION

- Organization and grant contacts
- Grant title
- Amount requested
- Grant start date
- Grant duration

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

- Annual operating budget and fiscal year end date
- Will you be requesting that the grant funds be paid to a third-party payee?
- Is this a fiscally sponsored project?

Tipping: Please note that proposed grants that are large relative to the total income of your organization could impact your organization's ability to satisfy the public support test for public charity status. Additional resources about this matter can be found here: https://www.ngosource.org/blog/an-introduction-to-public-support-tests.

GRANT-PRODUCED CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

- Grant-produced content and output

  - Does the proposed grant include the creation of content or other work products, such as audio or video works (including podcasts, films, and oral history and other recordings), databases, software, digitization of works, books, white papers, or other digital content?
  - If yes, please describe those content outputs or work products and note whether the content or work products will be distributed or made available for educational or charitable purposes. Please also describe:
    - Any rights or permissions that your organization would need to secure in connection with the work;
    - The means by which the content or work product would be distributed or made available for educational or charitable purposes, including the type of license that your organization would issue to users; and

- How your organization would seek to ensure the long-term sustainability of any digital or software products.
- Visual documentation
  - Will you be documenting the proposed grant with any visuals, such as photography, or other archival materials? If so, the Foundation may be interested in requesting copies for its records and to promote the grant.
  - If yes, please describe.
- Does the proposed work include the creation of a new position within the organization (employment or fellowship)? If yes, you will be prompted to upload a draft position description.

Proposal Narrative

Please upload a Word document to the documents section in Fluxx that responds to the questions below. You are welcome to provide separate answers to each individual question or to draft a cohesive narrative that incorporates answers to all questions. The proposal narrative should be no more than 5-10 pages.[1]

If helpful, you may repurpose language from other relevant proposals, including documents previously submitted to Mellon. You may include visuals, infographics, tables, and bulleted lists directly within the Word document. Likewise, we hope you will be able to use this proposal narrative for other purposes.

1. INTRODUCTION

- In one paragraph, please provide a brief overview of your organization(s). What drives your work (in general and/or the work for which you seek Mellon support)?[2]

2. GRANT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

- In one paragraph, please summarize the proposed work.[3]

3. REASON FOR THE WORK

- What need or issue does your proposed work aim to address?
- How are you positioned to do this work?

4. GOALS

- What are the goals of the proposed work during the grant period?
- If relevant, how will the proposed work move you toward your goals beyond the end of the grant?
- If you are planning to assess the contribution of your work, how will you do so?

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[1] For Officer Grants, the proposal should be no more than 2–3 pages.

[2] This question is not required for colleges and universities.

[3] For fiscally sponsored grants, please include a brief statement that indicates this proposal is being submitted by the fiscal sponsor to support the sponsored project.

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5. ACTIVITIES

- What activities would Mellon funding support? Please include a timeline.

- If relevant, identify significant collaborating partners and describe how they would participate in the work.

- If the grant will support any staff positions (in part or in whole), how will they contribute to the proposed work?

6. SUSTAINABILITY

- What are your plans for the sustainability of the organization after the end of Mellon funding?

- What are your plans for the continuation of the proposed grant activities beyond the end of Mellon funding?

- For construction projects, what are the plans in place for ongoing maintenance and operations of the site?

7. POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- What potential challenges could impact the proposed work? How have they informed your planned activities?

Supplemental Documents

- Financial statements
- Brief biographies of the principal investigator(s)/project lead(s) and other key staff directly involved in the proposed work
- If applicable:
  - If the proposed grant includes the creation of a new position with the organization, a draft position description.
  - If the proposed project includes support for construction, please upload the following and note that additional documents may be requested.
    - A third-party estimate of the construction costs.
    - Any plans, renderings, or drawings that you currently have available.
    - If the proposed project includes support for construction on public land, please also provide information about the relevant approval process and documentation (e.g., timeline, relevant stakeholders).
  - If the proposed project includes a cash reserve, please upload a board-approved policy for the use of the reserve funds.
- Additional documents may be requested, including a separate full cost budget for fiscally sponsored projects or for projects where grant funds support a portion of the work.

Grant Budget and Budget Description

The budget should be in local currency and include all spendable funds requested from the Foundation for the proposed grant. The budget should not include projected interest or investment income, funds requested for cash reserves or endowments, or project costs that would not be funded by the Foundation.

The budget description should summarize the costs included in each expenditure category. If it is helpful to provide supporting calculations in a spreadsheet format, a supplementary file may be uploaded with the proposal documents.

Please note that the Foundation's program areas may not fund certain types of grant activities. For information on what program areas do and do not fund, please visit the Foundation's website.

1. EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES

The Foundation uses set expenditure categories (listed below). Up to five additional custom categories can be added for each proposal. If the proposal is accepted, financial reporting must follow the same expenditure categories outlined in the grant budget.

2. BUDGET PERIODS

A budget should be added for each reporting period, with the name of the period (e.g., Year 1) and the start and end dates of the period clearly indicated. Reporting periods are typically one year long but can vary if needed. There should be no gaps between budget periods.

3. GRANTEE AUTHORIZATION

Final budgets should be reviewed by an individual with institutional responsibility for financial reporting. The name and contact details of that person should be entered in the Grantee Authorizations section.

EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES

- **Salaries, wages, and benefits:** Please indicate the title, base salary or hourly wages, the number of people and/or the FTE percentage allocation, benefit calculations, and any anticipated periodic increases for each position funded by the proposed grant (e.g., Program Director: $100,000/yr base salary, 20% benefit cost, 50% allocation to the project for 2 years, 3% increase in year 2 = $121,800). Funding for fellowships, artist fees, and consultants should be presented within the corresponding expenditure categories below.

- **Fellowships and residencies:** Please indicate the base salary or stipend amount, the number of people in each position and/or the FTE percentage allocation, and any benefit calculations for each fellow, resident, or scholarship funded by the proposed grant (e.g., Example Fellowship: $50,000/yr base salary, 20% benefit cost, 2 fellows/yr for 3 years = $360,000)..

- **Artist fees:** Please indicate the rate of compensation, noting whether this is a flat rate or based on hourly, per diem, or weekly rates; the expected time commitment; any other expenses that are included; and whether there is a separate rate of compensation for rehearsal, production, or workshop time as compared to performances or showings for artist fees. Please note: If artists are on salary (receiving W-2s), the related expense should be included in the Salaries, Wages, and Benefits category, but if artists are receiving 1099 tax forms, the expense should be included in this category.

- **Consultants and other professional services:** Please indicate whether agreements are existing or anticipated with any third parties, including consultants, vendors, and/or honoraria, and the amount budgeted for each. Please also indicate whether amounts are based on a fixed price, or hourly or per diem rate, and whether anticipated travel or other additional expenses are included. In addition, the Proposal Narrative document should elaborate further on the roles and responsibilities of consultants and vendors. For grants where a significant portion of the budget will be paid to a third party, please also refer to the Foundation's "Guidelines for Grants Involving Consultants and/or Contractors" on our website.

- **Subgrants/regrants:** Please indicate the names and amounts of funds allocated for each subgrant recipient and/or the amounts expected to be awarded to each organization and/or individual regrant recipient. In addition, the Proposal Narrative document should elaborate further on the roles and responsibilities of any subgrantees/collaborating organizations.

- **Conferences, meetings, and travel:** Please indicate any expenses for registration, facility fees, meals, transportation or mileage

reimbursements, lodging, and/or per diem payments. Please provide a breakdown of the costs by activity and the number of people attending and/or traveling. Travel costs should be reasonable and in accordance with your organization's internal policies.

- **Promotion, marketing, and advertising:** Please describe any promotion, marketing, or advertising expenses that are directly attributable to the proposed project.

- **Equipment and supplies:** Please describe any equipment or supplies expenses that are directly attributable to the proposed project.

- **Construction or building costs:** All construction budgets should include a line item or percentage for contingency. Funding for equipment/ supplies and consultants/other professional services that are associated with construction projects should be presented within those expenditure categories.

- **Indirect costs:** Please describe the method used to calculate any indirect costs. Specific expenses included in indirect costs do not need to be quantified or described, only the method of calculation. Indirect costs are those that are not directly attributable to the grant-funded project, including activities that support the organization as a whole, such as finance and accounting, human resources, and leadership. Allocated costs that are directly attributable to the grant-funded project or activities, such as allocated salaries for staff time spent on the project are not considered to be indirect costs and should be included in the relevant expenditure categories in the grant budget.

- **Custom budget categories:** You can create up to five custom budget categories to describe the amount and purpose of costs that do not fit within any of the budget categories provided above. Please add the custom budget category name to each grant budget period, even if there is no expenditure in that period.