Diversity in Local History

Grant Program Guidelines

2021-2022
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Section 1 – DIVERSITY IN LOCAL HISTORY

1.1 Introduction

The Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) will distribute $150,000 over the course of the FY21-23 biennium through Diversity in Local History (DLH) Grants. The program will award small grants to heritage organizations to fund paid internships to support diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. This program allows emerging professionals in the heritage sector to connect with local history museums and historical societies in Washington to enable these organizations to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion principles into their practice, and promote a long-term focus on inclusive history practices. These grants will be distributed through a competitive process.

1.2 Background

Washington State has 400+ heritage organizations that include local history museums and historical societies; tribal museums and cultural centers; online archives; historic gardens and historic house museums; maritime museums and historic ships; and genealogical societies. In early 2020, the WSHS launched a survey of the heritage sector to collect basic data and assess areas of need. The majority of organizations surveyed identified lack of funding as the primary factor limiting their ability to provide new programs, better steward their collections, and engage more diverse audiences.

Beginning in March of 2020, indefinite closures due to COVID-19 had an immediate negative impact on the long-term health of our state’s heritage sector. While struggling to remain vital amidst the uncertainties brought on by COVID-19, many heritage organizations are considering what role museums and heritage organizations play in perpetuating systemic racism and other exclusionary practices and how they can ignite or renew efforts to address inclusion in their practices. Just 29% percent of heritage organizations surveyed at the beginning of 2020 report adopting a DEI statement for their institution. Anecdotally we know that recent demands for acknowledging and addressing racism have encouraged reflection and dialogue within these institutions, but many don’t know where to start with this work.

1.3 Overview

To support organizations seeking to move forward in their DEI work, the WSHS is providing grants up to $15,000 to fund internships that will promote diversity, equity, and inclusion work in heritage organizations. This program will provide funding for heritage organizations to hire current undergraduate students, graduate students, or recent graduates for projects in local history museums and historical societies across Washington to support efforts to reflect on institutional bias and implement new practices intended to ensure collections, public programs, and internal policies serve all members of the community and advance inclusive history.

The Diversity in Local History Grants are open to all heritage organizations in Washington State, regardless of an existing track record of commitment to DEI work. WSHS believes that achieving equity is essential to the long-term health of the statewide heritage sector and wants to support heritage organizations in moving forward with DEI work from any starting point. In order for a community to support their local history museum or historical society it is important that they see themselves
represented there, and as communities change over time, so must our thinking and practice around heritage work. The best way that we can rebuild our heritage sector in the wake of this unprecedented public health and economic crisis is to help these organizations remain relevant and support their efforts to partner with their communities to understand how history connects us all.

As statewide partners working to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion principles in the heritage sector, all heritage organizations, including granted heritage organizations and their interns, may request support from WSHS staff in the Heritage Outreach Department as well as other WSHS staff such as exhibitions/curation, public programs, education, collections, philanthropy, marketing and communications, and general management. This support is offered to all heritage organizations, regardless of participation in the Diversity in Local History grant program.

1.4 Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 26, 2021</td>
<td>Grant application opens</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 16, 2021</td>
<td>Grant workshop (<a href="#">register here</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 5, 2021</td>
<td>Grant application due</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1, 2021</td>
<td>Grants announced and descriptions posted in the Heritage Portal</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 9 &amp; 16, 2021</td>
<td>Project overview workshops (<a href="#">register here</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 29, 2021</td>
<td>Intern submissions received through Heritage Portal sent to grantees</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2021</td>
<td>Grantee contracting (organizations should select their intern by Monday, December 6, 2021 to expect contract execution before January 1, 2022)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January - June 2022</td>
<td>Project work and monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 30, 2022</td>
<td>Grant projects completed, final reports submitted</td>
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</table>
Section 2 – GRANT PROCESS

2.1 Grant Eligibility

Eligible applicants include nonprofits, tribal organizations, and local governmental entities in Washington State who have a mission to preserve and interpret history and heritage for the general public. State government entities are not eligible for this program.

Organizations with smaller annual budgets will be prioritized in the competitive grant review process.

Applicants must provide a project manager for their project; ideally this individual will have some professional training in museum studies, public history, anthropology, information and library sciences, or a related field (however, this is not a requirement).

2.2 Grant Stipulations

Grant requests will be based on the number of project hours proposed for the intern(s) who must be paid at a rate of at least $18/hour. Grant funds may be requested to cover the required minimum rate of $18/hour as well as additional hiring costs such as payroll taxes and employee benefits. Heritage organizations participating in the program may choose to pay their interns at a higher hourly rate using their own funding with grant funds covering the first $18/hour. Travel and lodging expenses are not eligible expenses for grant funds.

The maximum grant request for projects involving one intern is $7,500 and the maximum grant request for projects involving two interns is $15,000.

Grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis only. Heritage organizations that receive grant funding must have sufficient funds on hand to pay their interns at least twice per month throughout the project unless another payment schedule is approved by WSHS staff. Grantees will only be reimbursed upon submitting documentation of payment to their intern(s). Reimbursements may be processed as often as once monthly, upon request. Final reimbursement will not occur until a project final report is submitted.

All project work funded by grant dollars must be completed by June 30, 2022.

No match is required for this grant.

2.3 Grant Criteria

Grants will be distributed through a competitive process. Grant applications will be evaluated by a volunteer group of leaders from the heritage community, supported by staff from the WSHS Heritage Outreach Department. Applications will be evaluated based upon the following:

- Degree to which the proposed project improves the diversity of the historical narrative of the applicant organization and/or helps bring DEI concepts and practices to applicant operations.
- Degree to which the proposed project will broaden the applicant organization’s audience, contribute to audience diversity, and leverage community engagement.
• Degree to which the proposed project promotes the long-term sustainability and stability of the applicant organization
• Demonstration of the following:
  o Clearly identified project goals, outcomes, and deliverables
  o Commitment of organization to DEI work and ability of organization to leverage proposed project into future DEI planning and work
  o Adequate personnel, resources, and finances to support the project and intern
  o Realistic scope and timeframe of proposed project
• Geographic distribution of funds
• General quality and completeness of application

2.4 Grant Application

All applications must be submitted through the Washington State Historical Society Heritage Portal, accessed at: washingtonhistory.org/heritageportal

Applicants must have both an organizational profile and an individual profile. Multiple individuals may be affiliated to one organization and edit a grant request within the portal. After a Heritage Portal account has been registered, users will receive a confirmation email and will be able to set their password and login information. Please note that it can take 2-3 business days to complete the registration process.

Once registered, users will be able to update their organization profile and access the Diversity in Local History grant program application.

Please read the application form carefully before beginning. Applicants will be able to save their progress and return to the form as many times as they need before submitting. Please note that the level of past or current DEI work described in the application form will not disqualify any applicant or negatively affect the application review. The WSHS is committed to supporting all organizations as they move forward in DEI work from any competency level.

In addition to filling out the form through the Heritage Portal, the following documents will need to be uploaded through the portal to the application form:

• Roster of governing authority (e.g. board of trustees, tribal council, etc.) including affiliations and length of current terms
• IRS Determination Letter (for nonprofits)
• Mission Statement (and Vision & Values Statements if available)
• Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement (if available)
• Last fiscal year IRS 990 form
• Documentation of available cash on hand or written commitment of funds to pay intern signed by the director, board president, or equivalent organizational leadership
2.5 Announcement of Funded Projects

Grant applications will be evaluated and scored by a volunteer group of leaders from the heritage community of Washington State.

Projects selected by the review committee for grant awards will be summarized and announced in partnership with the selected host organizations.

The Heritage Outreach Department of the WSHS will assist in advertising the available projects to prospective interns at colleges and universities across Washington. Interested intern applicants may apply directly to granted heritage organizations or upload their materials to the Heritage Portal. If applicants elect to upload their materials to the Heritage Portal, they will have the ability to specify interest in particular projects and their materials will be forwarded to those granted heritage organizations only. The granted heritage organizations will have the opportunity to review materials uploaded to the Heritage Portal for every intern who indicates interest in their particular project.

Each granted heritage organization is responsible for contacting their preferred intern applicant to make an offer of employment, either by selecting an intern who submitted materials through the Heritage Portal or selecting an intern that was recruited through the organization’s own process or preference.

The WSHS is not entering into an employment relationship with any participant in the program and, to the extent an employment relationship exists, the granted heritage organization is the sole employer of participating interns. Granted heritage organizations are solely responsible for all obligations that arise from the employment relationship between them and the interns they hire.
Section 3 – GRANTEE INTERN SELECTION

3.1 Intern Eligibility
Interns must be:

a.) currently enrolled at an accredited institution of higher education in Washington State, or
b.) have graduated within the last two years from an accredited institution of higher education and be currently residing in Washington State.

Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to submit materials for consideration. Prospective interns should have an academic area of focus in a history- or humanities-based field, such as:

- Museum studies/museology
- Anthropology
- History
- Public History
- Archaeology
- Historic Preservation
- American Ethnic Studies
- American Indian Studies
- Cultural Studies
- Non-profit Management
- Arts Management
- Education
- Humanities
- Information and Library Sciences
- Gender Studies

3.2 Internship Overview
Intern submissions will be evaluated by the individual granted heritage organizations. All interviews and offers of employment, if any, are at the granted heritage organization’s sole discretion. Each granted heritage organization is responsible for contacting their preferred intern to make an offer of employment, either by selecting an intern who submitted information through the Heritage Portal or selecting an intern that was recruited through the individual granted heritage organization’s own process or preference.

Granted heritage organizations will make employment offers directly to the intern(s) they select, and project details such as hours, project scope, and schedule will be negotiated directly between granted heritage organizations and their selected intern.

The WSHS is not entering into an employment relationship with any participant in the program and, to the extent an employment relationship exists, the granted heritage organization is the sole employer of participating interns. Granted heritage organizations are solely responsible for all obligations that arise from the employment relationship between them and the interns they hire.

The terms of the grants provided to participating heritage organizations will stipulate that granted heritage organizations must pay their interns at least twice per month at a rate of at least $18/hour unless another payment schedule is approved by WSHS staff. Travel and lodging expenses may not be covered by grant funds.
3.3 Intern Submission Options

Interns may choose to reach out to granted heritage organizations directly or submit their information through the WSHS Heritage Portal to be distributed to multiple granted heritage organizations at once. The Heritage Portal may be accessed at: washingtonhistory.org/heritageportal

Interns submitting through the Heritage Portal will create an individual profile to access the submission form. After a Heritage Portal account has been registered, users will receive a confirmation email and will be able to set their password and log in information. *Please note that it can take 2-3 business days to complete the registration process.*

Once registered, users will be able to update their profile and see the Diversity in Local History grant program intern submission form. All information requested through the Heritage Portal submission form is optional. Interns will be able to save their progress and return to the form as many times as they need before submitting.

In addition to filling out the form through the Heritage Portal, the following documents may be attached to the submission form:

- Letter of Interest
- Resume or CV
- Contact information for three references
- Academic transcript