

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 20-member volunteer board 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 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.

Grant Programs

HCWDC offers three grant programs.

- *Small Grants*: up to \$1,500. HCWDC awards small grants up to two times a year. These grants may be used for small projects that meet the listed criteria or may be used for planning a larger project. Planning grants may be used to support preliminary work in designing a major humanities project that warrants detailed planning because of its length, scope, or cost. Grant funds may be used to pay for the services of hiring a humanities consultant and other costs involved in the preparation of a project plan.
- *Major Grants*: up to \$1,501 to \$5,000. HCWDC considers major grant proposals up to two times a year. Projects funded by a major grant must meet all of the requirements listed below.
- *DC Community Heritage Project Grants*: up to \$2000 for projects focusing on the history and historic preservation of Washington, DC neighborhoods and landmarks. Community Heritage Project grants are awarded in late spring and our conducted over a four month period.

Who may apply

Any nonprofit agency or ad hoc group sponsored by a 501(c)(3) organization that is based in Washington, D.C. and who is sponsoring a humanities project for the benefit of residents of the District of Columbia may apply.

Project Guidelines

- *Appropriate Project Goals*: Each project must promote HCWDC’s goal of “transforming lives through the power of the humanities.” The Council’s desire is to further the practice and study of the humanities in order to enrich the lives of residents of the District of Columbia; enhance the understanding of Washington’s artistic, cultural, and social life; and to preserve its culture and history. Events must be open to all citizens and should strive to reach diverse audiences beyond the organization’s established membership.

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- *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 them 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.
- *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 \$5,000 must show \$5,000 or more in cost-share. This sponsor participation may be in cash or in-kind contributions.
- *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 served by the project.

Steps to funding

1. Attend a 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.
2. For **Major Grants**, submit **one (1)** copy of the *Preliminary Application* by the deadline. For a Major Grant, staff will advise you to submit a final application or, if necessary, suggest revisions to enable you to meet the requirements. Submit **one (1)** copy of the final application by the final application deadline.
3. For **Small /Planning /DC Community Heritage Project Grants**, submit **one (1)** copy of the application by the grant deadline.
4. Obtain a decision of HCWDC board regarding your funding (approx. 4 weeks after deadline).

If you are funded, you will...

- Receive an award letter. It will include instructions for administering and reporting your grant and any specific conditions.
- Sign the award letter and present it to the HCWDC at the awards ceremony.
- At the awards ceremony you will receive the full funding for Small and DCCHP grants and 90% of the grant total for Major Grants when the signed award letter is received by the HCWDC.
- Submit an interim report (Major Grants only).
- Submit a final report (all grants) within 60 days of project completion.
- Receive remaining grant funds (if applicable) following receipt and acceptance of your final report.

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Application: Definitions & Explanations

- **Project Title:** This is the title your project will take in advertisements, publicity, and internally within your organization.
- **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.
- **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.
- **The Humanities Scholars:** List the name(s) and address(es) 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.
- **Timeline:** Evaluations and financial reports must be completed no later than **sixty (60)** days after the project completion date for all grants. Further guidelines for these reports will be provided once funding is awarded.
- **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.
- **Project director:** The person responsible for overall management of the project and who serves as the liaison with HCWDC.
- **Project bookkeeper:** The person who will complete the budget and financial forms and keep track of all project expenses. All projects must have a separate **project director** and **project bookkeeper**.

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.

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- **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 the most current version of the IRS standard mileage rate.
- **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.

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.
- Projects sponsored by a for-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 , point of view, ideology or action.
- Refreshments or entertainment.
- Project expenses incurred or paid out before the HCWDC Grant is awarded.