

Oral history projects are eligible for Mass Humanities funding if:

- ❖ The gathering and presenting of information on, and gaining insight into, a humanities theme or issue is central to the project
 - ❖ The process of gathering the interviews is a major goal of the project (e.g. high school students doing oral histories as part of curriculum or extracurricular project)
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All oral history project proposals should demonstrate that the project meets the following conditions:

1. Conformity with standards of technology, privacy, and historical scholarship such as described in [Principles and Best Practices](#) of the Oral History Association, **with one exception** (see below). * Be specific about equipment, plans, and commitments. Each interview must be accompanied by a legal release. There is no standard form. There is a good discussion of the topic at [Florida Voices](#).
 2. The involvement of an oral history specialist and/or humanities scholar.**
 3. A thematic or structured approach -- a "humanities theme" -- that guides the questioning, as advised by the humanities scholar. The proposal should include:
 - A short reading list on the theme, for interviewers
 - Sample questions on the theme
 - At least 10 subjects identified by name or a specific group of subjects and a strategy for getting them interviewed
 4. A plan to have an oral history specialist to prepare interviewers in these skills:
 - Interview technique and equipment use
 - Topic or theme: short reading list
 - Research into the specific background of each subject to sharpen the questions or discussion
 5. An interpretive/editorial step (an organizing and editing of the materials) that inserts the voice of a historian or scholar in the knitting together of samples or a thematic presentation of the oral histories.
 6. A plan for a guided or interpreted public presentation or program such as:
 - an exhibit or a school visiting project
 - contributions to a larger project, for instances an addendum to an online collection of a local historical society site or a thematic website
 7. Technology:
 - Use digital technology only. [Advice](#)
 - Video is permissible but an audio recording should be made simultaneously for back-up and transcription. *Mass Humanities will not pay for rental of video equipment or fees for film specialists.*
 8. Original recordings and transcriptions must be deposited in a public archive, which could include your local public library, but an archive is better. Advice on that on the [OHA Wiki](#).
 9. Projects that involve teaching must have commitments from teacher(s) and school, as well as indicate how the project is aligned with the MA Curriculum Standards.
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Please note the exception to OHA practices: Mass Humanities does **not ask interviewers to "attempt to extend the inquiry beyond the specific focus of the project" as described in the OHA's PBP document under the heading *Interview Item # 4*, at the one-but-last bullet. Instead, we would like to see the interviewer come as prepared as possible, and *the interview be in service to the project* -- leaving room for diverging opinions and allowing for the interview to divert in fruitful ways. Should there be time, or should the subject feel there is something else important to cover, or a connection to make, it is of course fine to range beyond the topic at hand.*

****** These may be one and the same, however projects on special topics should include a scholar with knowledge of the field in addition to an oral historian.