



Expand Massachusetts Stories Grants

Massachusetts is complicated and evolving. Steeped in revolutionary traditions that shape our democracy, we live in a global capital of ideas enriched by generations of longtime residents and new arrivals who reimagine the possibilities of our neighborhoods and institutions. Systemic inequities and shifting demographics require new conversations about what it means to be part of the Massachusetts story. As we begin the recovery from the extraordinary challenges of the last year, a reckoning with our history can infuse new voices into our efforts to build a more equitable commonwealth.

At Mass Humanities, we believe in an inclusive society that recognizes all people's perspectives, especially those that have been historically excluded. Launching on June 1, the Expand Massachusetts Stories initiative offers up to \$20,000 for projects that collect, interpret and/or share narratives about the commonwealth, with an emphasis on the voices and experiences that have gone unrecognized, or have been excluded from public conversation.

Projects should employ the tools of the humanities—inquiry, contextualization, and reflection—to improve our shared understanding of the Bay State. Organizations are encouraged to explore and amplify previously unacknowledged voices from the past; make space for the lived experiences of Massachusetts residents from historically excluded communities; reconsider well-known stories from new perspectives; or provide opportunities for people to engage their understandings of their communities through the humanities. Successful proposals will demonstrate how the project contributes to a more inclusive story of Massachusetts. Mass Humanities is especially interested in projects based in the knowledge and wisdom that exists locally.

Questions?

Email your questions to grants@masshumanities.org. We will respond to your questions and post an updated FAQ on June 14th, based on common inquiries.

Amount of Funding

Applicants can request up to \$20,000 in project funds. For projects awarded grants, Mass Humanities will award requests in full.

Timeline

The application process begins June 1, 2021. Final awards will be announced September, 21, 2021. To learn more about the stages of the application process go to the “How to Apply” section.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Applicant organizations must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) non-profit, fiscally-sponsored association or filmmaker (see below), state or federally recognized tribe, or non-federal government organization.
- Serve Massachusetts residents.
- Be in compliance with state and federal regulations which bar discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, or sexual orientation, and which require accessibility for persons with disabilities. Specifically:
 - [The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 \(ADA\)](#)
 - [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 \(Section 504\)](#)
 - [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)
 - [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#)
 - [The Age Discrimination Act of 1975](#)

Fiscally sponsored applicants: Ad-hoc groups, filmmakers, and non-profit organizations without 501(c)(3) status must find an eligible 501(c)(3) organization to be their fiscal sponsor. Fiscal sponsors manage the grant funds and are identified in the application. They must also provide a signed fiscal sponsor agreement for upload in the online application.

Mass Humanities does not award funding to individuals.

Applicants need to have completed any past Mass Humanities grant projects and submitted their final report one week (June 15, 2021) before the Letter of Inquiry is due for a new grant application. There are four exceptions to this rule:

- Organizations can have open Reading Frederick Douglass Together and Bridge Street Sponsorship Grants.
- Organizations can be fiscal sponsors on more than one Mass Humanities grant at a time.
- Colleges and universities can have more than one grant open at a time if those grants are for different departments or institutes.
- In July, Mass Humanities will create a grant opportunity for Massachusetts humanities organizations, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities’ Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) Federal Relief Program. Organizations may apply for both Mass Humanities SHARP and Expand Massachusetts Stories grants, but may not apply to use SHARP funds for any direct project costs associated with their Expand Massachusetts Stories grant.

What Kind of Projects are Eligible?

Expand Massachusetts Stories Grants can fund a project at either the planning or implementation stage.

To be eligible, proposed projects need to:

- Have the goal of making narratives of Massachusetts accessible to Massachusetts residents at minimal cost to participants.

- Have a clear objective and completion date.
- Use the tools of the humanities—inquiry, contextualization, and/or reflection.
- Be supported by a humanities advisor.
- Primarily serve audiences outside of 4-year college faculty and students.

Potential projects may include

- Oral histories
- Community-centered museum exhibitions
- Facilitated discussions about underrepresented aspects of local histories
- Exhibits and programs focused on new interpretations of collections
- Documentary films or digital media projects that present new insights into the lives of Massachusetts residents past or present
- Teacher professional development focused on connecting Massachusetts narratives to K-12 curriculum.
- Programs that use inquiry, contextualization, and/or reflection to support residents in recording and exploring their lived experiences.

Special Project Requirements

Film projects, oral history or story collection projects, and projects related to Native American and Indigenous communities have additional requirements. See the Film Requirements, Oral History and Story Collecting Requirements, and the Code of Ethics for Projects Related to Native Americans in the Appendix.

What Expand Massachusetts Stories Grants Cannot Fund:

- Work undertaken or supplies purchased before or after the grant period
- Profit-making or fundraising projects; capital campaigns, or organizational strategic planning
- Re-grants to other organizations
- Direct social service, e.g., counseling, therapeutic, legal, or medical services
- The creation of professional art or artistic performances
- Professional theater productions
- Costs of entertainment or alcohol
- Tickets costs if the revenue from ticket sales goes to the applicant organization
- Capital improvements, construction, or restoration
- Lobbying or advocacy projects for specific public policies or legislation
- The promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view
- Scholarships or prizes
- General operating costs (outside of indirect project costs)

What are We Looking For?

Every application is unique. These are the kinds of questions we ask when reviewing projects:

Expand Massachusetts Stories: How does the project expand public understanding of Massachusetts' stories, particularly stories that have been unrecognized in, or excluded from, public conversation? What will participants learn about themselves and/or about Massachusetts

that they did not know before? How do these stories matter to participants and/or Massachusetts residents?

Humanities: Will humanities questions, themes, and/or content be important to the project and participants' experiences? Will the humanities advisor's skills and knowledge support the project? Will the final program engage diverse perspectives?

Viability: Does everyone involved in the project, from the advisor, to the director, to contractors and support staff have the experience to succeed? Are there clear goals, detailed plans, and a reasonable timeline to achieve them? If the project relies on partnerships, are they in place?

Audience: Is the project designed with an audience's experiences and interests in mind? Are there relationships or clear plans in place for successful outreach or collaboration? Will Mass Humanities' support go where it will have an impact? Are events free or low-cost for attendees?

Budget: Is the budget reasonable and achievable? Are the plans described in the proposal covered in the budget? If additional funds are needed to complete the project, is there a realistic plan for securing them?

When writing your application, help us envision your project by giving illustrative examples and specific details.

Who Qualifies as a Humanities Advisor?

Humanities advisors contribute to projects with their deep knowledge of humanities subjects or methods. They are recognized by their peers for their expertise, or by a community as a bearer of its knowledge and traditions. For example, a humanities advisor can be someone who has earned an advanced humanities degree from a university, or a humanities advisor can be a tribal elder and educator. Some humanities advisors may have knowledge of a subject matter relevant to the proposed program. Some may be experts in a kind of humanities inquiry or method. Projects can have multiple humanities advisors on their team, but at least one will provide a resume and statement explaining how their humanities knowledge will inform the proposed program.

What are Humanities Subjects and Methods?

The humanities help us explore who we are as individuals, as members of a society, and as inheritors of the past. According to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the humanities include the following fields of learning: literature, language, history, philosophy, archeology, comparative religion, law, ethics, interpretation of the arts, and social sciences that use humanities methods. Of course, new humanities fields and topics emerge all the time. Many go by different names. What they share is a method that values inquiry into individual and shared experience, connection to others' ideas and experiences, and reflection and interpretation.

Reporting and Publicity

- Funded projects with awards less than \$10,000 will receive 90% of their award upon submitting their grant contract. Remaining funds will be awarded upon completion of a brief final report on project outcomes and use of funds.
- Funded projects with awards of \$10,000 and above will receive 45% of their award upon submitting their grant contract. Grantees can request an additional 45% of their award after completing an optional interim report. All remaining funds will be awarded upon completion of a final report on project outcomes and use of funds.

- Funded projects that need to make major changes to the scope, timeline, format, key project staff, or budget changes of more than \$500 per-line item should submit a “change request” form in the online grants system for approval.
- Funded projects will acknowledge Mass Humanities and the Mass Cultural Council in publicity.

How to Apply

Starting your online application

If your organization already has an account in Mass Humanities online grant system, log in and make sure that all of the contact information is up to date.

If your organization is new to Mass Humanities, you will need to create an account.

If your organization has previously applied for a Mass Humanities Project, Discussion, Local History, or Reading Frederick Douglass Together grant using a fiscal sponsor as the applicant, you will also need to create an account. This new account will be for your organization not your fiscal sponsor. In the application, you will provide information about your fiscal sponsor.

Creating an Account

To create an account in the online grants system you will need to provide the following information:

Name and IRS Tax Identification Number of the applicant organization.

Note: If your organization does not have a Tax Identification Number you may enter 99-9999999. In the application you will be asked to provide the Tax Identification Number of your fiscal sponsor. Filmmakers should apply as “[First Name] [Last Name] – Filmmaker.”

Address and phone number of the applicant organization.

Name, address, phone number, and email address of the person completing the application. The email address you enter here is important for two reasons:

- The email address will become the primary contact for your grant application. All notifications about the progress of your application, and all information should you be awarded a grant, will be sent to this address.
- The email address and password you enter at this stage will become your account login. You will need them whenever you want to log in to the online grants system. Make sure you save them for future use.

Completing the Application Stages

Expand Massachusetts Stories grants have four stages. See “Detailed Timeline” below for dates in this process.

1. Letter of Inquiry (LOI) Form
2. Applicant Selection
3. Application Development
4. Final Application Submission

1. Letter of Inquiry (LOI): Your application begins with a letter of inquiry form in the online grants system. In the form, you provide information about your project idea, plans for implementation, and project costs.

Accessing the Online LOI Form: When you log in to your online account, go to the “Apply” page and select the “Expand Massachusetts Stories” grant. A “LOI” form will open. Work on answering the questions. Your responses save automatically so that you can work on the form over a few sittings. You can also click the “Save Draft” button to receive confirmation that your answers are saved. When you’re done, click the “Submit” button.

2. Applicant Selection: Mass Humanities staff will review your LOI. If your project is competitive and your plan is viable, Mass Humanities staff will approve your LOI. If your LOI is not approved, we are happy to provide feedback.

3. Application Development: If your LOI is approved, you will be able to open an “Application” form in the online grants system. A Mass Humanities program officer will create opportunities for feedback, question and answer sessions, and advice over the month-long application development period.

4. Final Application: Your final application is due by 11:59pm on the final application deadline.

Final Application Process: Make sure you’ve answered all of the questions marked with a *. Double-check any additional documents you’ve uploaded and press “Submit.” As always, leave time to troubleshoot technical glitches.

Final Application Notification: Expand Massachusetts Stories grant applicants will be notified of their award on September 21, 2021.

Detailed Timeline

June 1, 2021, 9am – Letter of Inquiries open

June 22, 2021, 11:59pm – Deadline to submit letters of inquiry

July 1, 2021 – Applicant selection notification

July 30, 2021, 11:59pm – Deadline to submit final application

September 21, 2021 – Award notifications

Requirement for Project Budgets

Mass Humanities funds can cover many types of project costs, from research hours, to exhibit design, to printing, publicity and more. On our budget forms, you explain the costs of the project during the grant period, how much of those costs you are asking Mass Humanities to cover, and how you plan to cover the rest of them.

If your proposal is accepted into the application stage, Mass Humanities staff will help you understand these rules and how to apply them to your budget.

Budget Limits

Mass Humanities limits spending on certain kinds of project costs:

- Speaker Stipends/Honoraria: We fund up to \$500 per speaker, per event.

- Reusable Equipment: We fund up to \$1,000 for the purchase of reusable equipment needed for the project. Equipment cost requests should be kept to a reasonable percentage of the total Mass Humanities funds requested.
- Receptions: We fund food costs for receptions up to \$300 per project.
- Food: Reasonable food costs for program participants (such as lunch at a teacher's institute or food for youth in an after-school program) are allowed.
- Lodging: We fund lodging up to \$250 per person, per day.
- Travel: Reasonable travel costs for project personnel, such as out-of-town speakers, are allowed. Mass Humanities rarely funds international travel (originating outside of Canada, Mexico, the U.S., and U.S. territories and possessions).

Cost Share Requirements

Mass Humanities funding can only cover up to half of your total project costs. The rest must come from other sources, which can include your organization's operating budget. These costs covered by other sources are called your "cost share." There are two different kinds of cost-shares, depending on how the support is given:

Cash-share: Cash-share support is when actual money changes hands — when your organization pays for things like work, supplies, external venue rentals, travel costs or fees. The cash can come from your organization, from ticket sales or registration fees, and from other funding sources.

In-kind-share: In-kind support is a cash-less donation. It includes things like free use of facilities, supplies donated to the project, and volunteered time. In your budget, you'll be asked to determine the cash-value of these donations. For example, in Massachusetts, volunteer time is valued at approximately \$30/hour.

Matching Requirement: As above, Mass Humanities funding can only cover up to half of your total project costs. Applicant organizations must at least equally match the amount of funding requested of Mass Humanities through a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. This is often called a "matching requirement," or "one-to-one match." It helps you show who else (including your organization) is making a financial commitment or volunteer contribution to the project.

Cash match: At least 10% of the cost-share match must be a cash-share.

Budget Line Matches: Mass Humanities funds requested on Line A (Project Director) must be matched, at least equally, in cash-share on line A. No other line requires a direct match.

Project Administration: Mass Humanities funds for Project Administration (lines A&B combined) may not add up to more than 50% of the total Mass Humanities funding request.

Indirect Costs

Mass Humanities funds may be used to cover a portion of your indirect costs. Indirect costs are often called "overhead" or "operating costs." They don't go directly to the project, but they are necessary to do things like keep the lights on while staff works, manage financial transactions, and cover insurance.

Calculating Indirect Costs: Calculate your indirect cost request as 10% of the total direct project costs you are asking Mass Humanities to fund.

For example, an organization seeks \$4000 for direct costs like renting a space it does not own, paying speakers, and printing fliers. Using a 10% rate, it calculates its indirect costs as \$400. Its total funding request (direct plus indirect) is \$4400.

Special Project Requirements

FILM PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Mass Humanities supports documentary films that explore humanities themes through collaborations between humanities experts and documentary filmmakers

Documentary Film Project Grants can support either:

- Work that strengthens the presence of humanities expertise and results in pre-production deliverables.
OR
- Work that supports film distribution through audience education and engagement.

Documentary Film project deliverables include but aren't limited to:

- Research-supported film treatments
- Trailers, websites, op-docs and other public engagement tools
- Curriculum guides and/or teacher workshops for film screenings in K-12 classrooms
- Distribution campaigns that include public screenings and discussions, including online distribution
- Translation or subtitles for the purpose of public engagement

Applicants must state whether they are applying for the pre-production or distribution phase of their film projects. They also need to include a brief document demonstrating that a very similar film does not already exist.

ORAL HISTORY AND STORY COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS

Oral history and story collection projects are eligible for Mass Humanities funding if the gathering, sharing, and gaining insight into a community's story is central to the project.

Projects whose primary aim is training individuals in storytelling performance are not eligible for Expand Massachusetts Stories grants.

All oral history or story collection project proposals should demonstrate that the project meets the following conditions:

1. At least 10 subjects identified by name or a specific group of subjects and a strategy for getting them interviewed.
2. The involvement of an oral interview specialist. This person may be the humanities advisor, or the project may have both an interview specialist and a humanities advisor who brings other necessary knowledge to the project.
3. An interpretive/editorial step (an organizing and editing of the materials) that intentionally puts together and shares samples or a thematic presentation of the interviews. For example, an exhibit, public presentation, program, or website/page.

4. Training for interviewers that includes interview technique and equipment use, ethical responsibilities, and education about the topic or community that is the focus of the project.
5. Technology: Use digital technology only. For advice, visit the Oral History Association's website. Video is permissible but an audio recording should be made simultaneously for back-up and transcription.
6. A plan for storing and making interviews publically accessible. Projects that plan to store interviews in a public archive should conform with standards of technology, privacy, and historical scholarship such as described in the Principles and Best Practices of the Oral History Association. Be specific about equipment, plans, and commitments.
7. Recorded interviews must be accompanied by a legal release. There is no standard form.
8. 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.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PROJECTS RELATED TO NATIVE AMERICAN & INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

National Endowment for the Humanities Code of Ethics Related to Native Americans

Mass Humanities award recipients have the responsibility of ensuring that researchers and scholars working on projects related to Native Americans, Aleut, Eskimo, or Native Hawaiian peoples adhere to the following provisions:

Every effort should be made in advance of project design and execution to engage the agreement, advice, and cooperation of members of the Native community in planning and execution of the project and in the disposition and results from the project. This should be communicated to the Native community and the anticipated consequences and results of the research or data-gathering should be explained as fully as possible to the individuals and groups likely to be affected.

Where research or exhibition of materials involves the acquisition of material (objects and documents) and transfer of information on the assumption of trust between persons, the rights, expressed interests and sensitivities of those originating the material must be safeguarded.

There is an obligation on the part of the scholar/ researcher/principal investigator to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of research and publication on the participant population and to inform them of the probable impact.

Native community consultants have the right to remain anonymous or be specifically named and given credit if they so choose. This right should be respected where it has been explicitly promised.

Where there is no clear understanding to the contrary, sources should be kept confidential. Because funded proposals, grant reports and other written material in the Endowment's possession are available to the public, no identifications contrary to the wishes of the community consultants should appear.

Investigators using recording devices such as cameras or tape recorders or the technique of oral interviewing are also subject to the above criteria. Subjects under study should understand the capacities of such machines and should be free to accept or reject their use.

Individuals or group community consultants should be fairly compensated (through reciprocal exchange or monetary payment) for their services/ information and there may be no exploitation of subjects under study. Scholars should make every attempt to guarantee appropriate credit (in the form of co-

authorship or co-investigatorship) and the distribution of financial rewards where appropriate for products resulting from projects.

Any report or work considered for publication (and where applicable and possible, films or exhibitions) should be deposited with the Native representatives of the elders and traditional leaders of the community. Every effort should be made to see that such a representational body has an opportunity to view the films or exhibitions which result from work undertaken in the community.

This Code should not interfere with or preclude any formal agreements made between researchers and Native peoples for the course of research undertaken with Federal funds. Further, the Code does not preclude or supersede ethical codes subscribed to and endorsed by various professional associations, but rather intends only to make clear the standards expected of those receiving Endowment funds.

This Code conforms to the principles of Public Law 95-341 as amended (the Indian Religious Freedom Act), Public Law 89-665 as amended (the National Historic Preservation Act), and other relevant public laws governing relations with native peoples of North America. Those who direct projects that are subject to the Code of Ethics are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the laws on which it is based to ensure full compliance with the Code. Although the body of the law and customs on which the Code is constructed is rooted in relations with native peoples of North America, researchers are urged to follow it whenever living cultures and peoples are involved.