



Mass Humanities SHARP Grants Guidelines

Humanities organizations have provided a source of solace, connection, information, and reflection throughout the COVID-19 crisis. As our society recovers from and reckons with the pandemic's impact, particularly the systemic inequalities and racial disparities it laid bare, Mass Humanities is honored to announce "Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP)" grants to support these efforts. Through funding provided to the National Endowment for the Humanities by the American Rescue Plan, Mass Humanities' SHARP grants will support these institutions as they prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of the coronavirus on their operations and the communities they serve.

Amount of Funding

- Grants of up to \$20,000.
- Matching funds are not required.
- Applicants' grant request cannot not exceed 50% of their most recently reported total operating expenses.

Mass Humanities may make partial grant awards depending on the number and size of grant requests received.

Important Dates

- The application is online and will be available on **Tuesday, July 6, 2021**.
- A webinar about the grant application will take place on **Wednesday, July 14, 2021**.
- The deadline to submit your application is **Wednesday, August 4, 2021 at 11:59pm**.
- Mass Humanities will notify applicants of results in **mid-September 2021**.

Questions? Contact Mass Humanities SHARP Grants Officer Meri Jenkins:
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Priorities

- Mass Humanities will distribute the grant funding to all the regions of Massachusetts and ensure funds reach small and mid-sized organizations with operating budgets of \$500,000 or less.
- Priority will be given to humanities organizations that:
 - Serve one or more communities affected by systemic inequality.
 - Provide those communities with programming that is focused on the humanities.
 - Contribute to diversity and inclusion in humanities programming.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a grant, your organization's mission and programs must focus on the humanities. Here is how the National Endowment for the Humanities defines the humanities:

"The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study and interpretation of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

--National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965, as amended.

To be eligible for a grant your organization must also be:

- A 501(3) nonprofit tax exempt organization based in Massachusetts.
OR
- A federally recognized tribe based in Massachusetts.

Your organization will need a DUNS number. (See below)

DUNS Number

- The National Endowment for the Humanities requires all recipients for American Rescue Plan grants to provide a Data Universal Number System (known as DUNS) number.
- If your organization does not have one, click here: [Obtaining a DUNS Number \(irs.gov\)](https://www.irs.gov/obtain-duns) for instructions.
- Getting a DUNS number is free of charge. If you come across any organizations or websites charging a fee for a DUNS number it is probably a scam or illegal.
- Apply well in advance – it can take more than two weeks to receive a number.

Ineligible Organizations

Below is a list of organizations that are not eligible to apply for funding:

- For-profit entities.
- Municipality entity or government agencies.
 - Exception: libraries may apply but only through their 501(c)3 support group.
- Universities, colleges, academic departments.
- Organizations whose mission and programs is the creation or performance of art.
- Political or advocacy organizations.
- Unincorporated association.
- Fiscally sponsored organizations.
- Individuals.
- Foreign organizations.

Mass Humanities SHARP Grants for Operating Support

Applicants to Mass Humanities SHARP grants can apply for up to \$20,000 in operating funds. Use of funds is targeted in five main areas. Applicants may request funds across all of the five areas described below, or choose to focus their application on one or more category. In the application, you will explain your needs and plans for using the funds.

Targeted funding areas:

- 1. Revenue:** To help restore operations affected by loss of revenue and/or pandemic closures. Expenses in this category may include, for example, basic operating and maintenance costs such as utilities or supplies, or changes in the type of programming and programming costs.
- 2. Staffing:** In relation to the effects of the coronavirus, to maintain, re-employ, replace, or hire new full or part-time positions in your organization and/or increase diversity in your staff.
- 3. Rebuilding Audiences:** To re-engage the communities your organization serves, develop relationships with new audiences, and re-position your organization in response to the effects of the pandemic. This may include, but is not limited to, community outreach, and redefining your organization's public profile. Expenses may include, for example, the cost of advertising, and digital and print marketing.
- 4. Training:** To develop and increase staff awareness and capability. This may include equity, inclusion and diversity procedures and policy training. This may also include online training programs in all areas of operations; trainer costs; educational classes, off-site development training or certification programs (note: travel costs are not allowed).
- 5. Organizational Capacity:** The organizational capacity category is limited to a cap of \$5,000. This category is aimed at rebuilding your organization's capacity to resolve or respond to issues faced during the coronavirus. This is typically done with an external advisor or expert. This grant category is a good choice if your organization is uncertain

about the next steps to take as you plan for recovery and want a clearer understanding of your organization's specific issues before carrying out changes.

Grants will fund activities that build upon and maintain organization-level infrastructure and governance. This includes activities to improve your organizations:

- Assessment of inclusion, diversity, equity and access (IDEA) needs
- Financial stability
- Strategic planning
- Governance, policies and procedures
- Program evaluation
- Research and analysis

NOTE: Organizational Capacity funds are not intended to support staff positions. See the staffing category above.

Period of Funding

Grant recipients can use funds to cover expenses from October 1, 2021 to December 1, 2022.

Ineligible Use of Funds

You may not use grant money for:

- Travel - domestic or otherwise.
- Pre-grant award costs incurred before October 1, 2021.
- Cancellation costs.
- Competitive re-granting.
- Fundraising activities.
- Equipment costs that exceed 20% of total grant request.
- Construction, purchase of real estate, major alteration, renovation, or environmental sustainability improvements.
- Collections acquisition.
- Overlapping program or project costs with any other pending or approved application(s) for federal funding and/or Mass Humanities project-based grant.
- Promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view.
- Advocacy of a particular program of social or political action.
- Support of specific public policies or legislation.
- Lobbying.
- Fundraising activities.
- The creation or performance of art or performing arts.

Required Documents

The application is online. There are two documents that have to be uploaded into your application. They are:

1. Proof of your organizations 501(c) 3 status. This can be either:

- Your organization's IRS determination letter
OR
- A PDF copy confirming that you are listed on the IRS's Tax Exempt Organization List. Use this link to confirm your organization is listed: [Tax Exempt Organization Search | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](#)

2. Recent financials: A PDF copy of the organization's most recent IRS Form 990 or audited accounts. Note: Organizations that file a 990N must upload a document showing their actual expenses.

Application Review Process and Criteria

Each application will be reviewed by a committee made up of members of Mass Humanities' Board of Directors and experts in the humanities field.

The applications will be reviewed based on the following:

- Relevance of mission and programs to the humanities
- Explanation of need
- Plan for use of grant funds
- Budget

Conflicts of Interest

Mass Humanities Board of Directors and reviewers will not serve on any panel in which their organization or parent or subsidiary organization has submitted an application.

Reporting

- Mass Humanities will require organizations in receipt of a Mass Humanities SHARP grant to complete a final report no later than December 30, 2022.
- The report will include a narrative outlining the activities undertaken during the grant award period, a budget of actual expenditures, a statement or demonstration of impact.

How to Apply

1. You are encouraged to read the guidelines thoroughly to make sure you understand the requirements.
2. You are encouraged to sign up and attend the webinar (or view the posted recording) about the application process on Wednesday, July 14, 2021. Register for the webinar by clicking this link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mass-humanities-sharps-grant-information-session-tickets-161274306793>
3. Make sure you have a DUNS number.
4. Log in or create an account in the online grants system to start your application.

- If your organization is a 501(c)3 and you have applied for a Mass Humanities grant on its behalf in the past, log in to the system with your login email address and password to start the application.
 - If you or your organization are new to Mass Humanities, you will need to create an account. To create an account you will need to know your organization's address and tax-ID number.
5. Review the online application well ahead of the deadline. Prepare your answers and required uploads.
 6. Submit by the deadline - **Wednesday, August 4, 2021 by 11:59pm.**

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Access the online application by opening this link:
<https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=masshumanities>

For more information about other Mass Humanities grant opportunities click this link: [Grant Programs - Current Grants | Mass Humanities Grants](#)