

Reading Frederick Douglass Together Grant Guidelines

Reading Frederick Douglass Together Grants support public readings and discussions in Massachusetts of Frederick Douglass's famous Fourth of July address, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"

Readings can take place anywhere, from community centers to historical societies to town greens. At each event, people take turns reading parts of the speech until it is completed. Each community considers the meaning of the speech in the past and its resonances in the present. Readings typically take place around between Juneteenth and Fourth of July, but communities also host readings on other days of remembrance or significance. Mass Humanities invites grantees to host a reading during African American History Month and to commemorate the observance of Frederick Douglass's birthday, both in February. While discussions are not required, they are strongly encouraged. Please contact your program officer if you need assistance with planning a discussion.

Amount of Funding

Applicants can request up to \$2000 in funds. For applicants awarded grants, Mass Humanities will award requests in full.

Timeline

Applications will open December 11, 2023. Make sure you submit your application in time for your reading to be funded. Use the following calendar to make sure you choose the right dates for your grant period and event.

Funded events must take place in 2024. Readings can take place anytime within 6 months after the award announcement date, provided your application demonstrates that you will have enough time to include Mass Humanities in publicity about your reading.

Your grant period start date must be after the award announcement date.
Your event date should be at least 2-3 weeks after the award announcement date.
For example, if you want to host your program on June 19th, you will need to apply no later than the May 10 submission date.

Application and Awards Calendar

Application Submitted By	Award Announcement Date
January 5, 2024	January 22, 2024
February 2, 2024	February 19, 2024
March 9, 2024	March 18, 2024
April 5, 2024	April 22, 2024
May 10, 2024	May 28, 2024
June 7, 2024	June 17, 2024

Who is Eligible to Apply?

All nonprofit, government organizations, and state or federally recognized tribes, that serve Massachusetts residents are eligible to apply. Mass Humanities does not award funding to individuals.

Ad-hoc groups must find an eligible organization to be their fiscal sponsor. Fiscal sponsors are nonprofit organizations that manage the grant funds and have signed fiscal sponsor agreements with the group that will host the reading.

What we cannot fund

- Work undertaken or supplies purchased before or after the grant period
- Fundraising activities, capital campaigns, or organizational strategic planning
- Readings that do not primarily serve Massachusetts residents
- Re-grants to other organizations
- The promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view
- Lobbying or advocacy for specific public policies or legislation
- Direct social service, e.g., counseling, therapeutic, legal, or medical services
- The creation of professional art or artistic performances
- Ticket costs if the revenue from ticket sales goes to the applicant organization
- Cost of entertainment or alcohol
- Scholarships or prizes

What we require

Applications must:

- Have a plan for gathering a community of readers, either virtually or in-person, or both.
- Complete an accurate budget (see “Budget Limits” for details).

Budget Limits:

- 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 \$500 per project.
- 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).
- Supplies not directly related to the actual reading.

To avoid underspending funds, or major changes to the final budget, it is best to obtain quotes for costs related to printing and publicity.

Reporting and Publicity

- Funded projects will receive 100% of their award upon submitting their grant contract.
- Completion of final report on project outcomes, public engagement, and use of funds is required to remain eligible for future grant opportunities.
- Funded projects will be required to submit attendance numbers from their events.
- 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

If your organization is a 501(c)(3), government entity, or state or federally recognized tribe, and you have applied for a Mass Humanities grant on its behalf in the past, log in to the system and start the application.

If you or your organization is 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.

Log in to the application system [here](#).

Event Preparation

To support your event and encourage collaboration between communities, Mass Humanities will host a virtual lunchtime workshop that may be helpful to attend. These workshops will be recorded and available for later viewing. The workshop will cover digital promotion, partnerships, discourse guidance and logistics.

Workshop:

Wednesday March 20th 12pm to 1pm

Mass Humanities has developed resources for readings, including a trauma-informed discussion guide, event safety guide and media guide all available on Mass Humanities' website.