



## OVERVIEW

MHC, organized as a non-profit organization, is Minnesota’s affiliate to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The academic disciplines of the Humanities help us to express, examine, and learn what it means to be human. MHC’s vision is a more just society that is curious, connected, and compassionate.

The Minnesota Legislature passed the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) in 2008 to ensure clean water, preserve opportunities for Minnesotans to enjoy nature, parks, and trails, and to appreciate arts and culture that exists within the State. The Legacy Amendment increases the state sales tax by three-eighths of one percent to create the Legacy Fund – 19.75% of the Legacy Fund is dedicated to the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Individuals and organizations that receive funding from the Legacy Fund are expected to:

- Amplify arts, culture, and heritage in Minnesota,
- Increase the depth and breadth of Minnesotans who will connect with arts, culture, and heritage, and
- Provide opportunities for individuals for free or at reduced cost to allow access for economically disadvantaged individuals and families in Minnesota to attend Legacy programs.

During the Minnesota Legislative session that ended in 2024, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated funding to the Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC) from the Legacy Fund to administer Community Identity & Heritage Festival Grants for organizations in Minnesota that are working to create, celebrate, and teach the art, culture, and heritage of Minnesota communities.

### Funding Availability

MHC will award \$450,000 in Community Identity & Heritage Festival grants (less allowable administrative fee) to MHC for design, award, and monitoring of the grant program on a rolling basis to organizations until funds are expended or June 30, 2025, whichever occurs first.

### Timeline

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| RFP posted   | October 10, 2024 |
| Application submitted  |                  |
| Applications under review (response within 30 to 45 days)    | November 1, 2024 |
| Award Notifications  |                  |
| Funding available following execution of the grant agreement |                  |

### Eligibility

Any organization is eligible to receive grant funding if they are in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), in good standing with MHC, has no outstanding open grants with MHC and actively and regularly seeks to create, celebrate, and teach the art, culture, and heritage of diverse Minnesota communities, including but not limited to:

- African American community,
- Asian and Pacific Island communities,
- Indigenous communities with a focus on the 11 Tribes within in Minnesota,
- Latinx communities,



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- LGBTQIA+ community,
- Somali diaspora and other African immigrant communities, and
- Other underrepresented cultural groups celebrate the cultural diversity of Minnesota.

An organization is in good standing with the IRS when they have completed all IRS reporting requirements and can receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. MHC uses the [IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search](#) to confirm compliance.

An organization that has failed to complete a prior grant, has a history of inconsistent and inaccurate financial reporting, or a history of overdue reports may not be in good standing with MHC. If you are unsure whether you are in good standing with MHC, please contact Laura Adams at [laura.adams@mnhum.org](mailto:laura.adams@mnhum.org). MHC may grant an exemption to an organization that is not in good standing if the applicant uses a fiscal agent.

Additional financial information may be requested based on review an assessment of applications submitted.

To be eligible for funding, a project must support one of the following requirements:

- Community events,
- Music and jazz festivals,
- Cultural festivals for art installations, music, and other performances and activities that support festivals and events.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

If you have any questions about this RFP, please contact:

Laura Adams  
Minnesota Humanities Center  
Grants Administrator  
987 Ivy Avenue East  
St. Paul, MN 55016  
[laura.adams@mnhum.org](mailto:laura.adams@mnhum.org)

All applicants are strongly encouraged to contact MHC in advance of submitting a full proposal. MHC will discuss proposal ideas, help align ideas with funding criteria, outline ideal project (and grant payment) timelines, and review budgets for allowable expenses and scope. MHC is available and committed to helping applicants submit the strongest application possible. We will attempt to respond within 48 hours of the question being submitted by phone or email.

MHC will host a series of public information sessions for anyone interested in applying. Information will include details about criteria, eligibility, tips for successful applications, and how to apply online:

|                          |   |         |
|--------------------------|---|---------|
| Informational Session #1 | October 22, 2024, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm (CST) | Virtual |
| Informational Session #2 | October 25, 2024, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm (CST) | Virtual |
| Informational Session #3 | October 29, 2024, 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm (CST) | Virtual |



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Zoom links for the public information sessions can be requested from Laura Adams at [laura.adams@mnhum.org](mailto:laura.adams@mnhum.org).

If applying in English is a barrier or you need a reasonable accommodation to submit your application, please contact Laura Adams at [laura.adams@mnhum.org](mailto:laura.adams@mnhum.org).

### **APPLICATION**

Applicants are encouraged to apply online through MHC's grants management system. You may access the Community Identity and Heritage Festival grants application [here](#). Applicants may review the full organization application [here](#). We recommend reviewing the full application prior to logging on and setting up an account. You may save your initial application entries and subsequently return to the document to finish your application.

MHC encourages, though does not require, collaboration on grant projects. However, only one (1) organization may be the "lead" applicant. The lead applicant will serve as the main contact and the one who will receive grant funding, if awarded, on behalf of the collaboration or partnership. An organization may also submit multiple applications as the lead applicant, however, will only be eligible to receive one Community Identity and Heritage Festival grant.

Please do not submit any additional materials other than what is requested, such as binders or photos, in the application. Unrequested materials will not be reviewed.

#### **Financial Information Submission**

You may request up to \$50,000 in funding. If you request funding in the amount of \$25,000 or more, you need to submit the following financial documentation with your application:

- Grant applicants with annual revenue of \$750,000 or more need to submit their most recent certified financial audit.
- Grant applicants with annual revenue over \$50,000 but less than \$750,000, need to submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
- Grant applicants with annual revenue under \$50,000 and do not have an IRS Form 990, need to submit the most recent board reviewed financial statements (For example, income statement and balance statement).

Organizations who do not submit the correct financials in alignment with their requested funding amount are at greater risk for ineligibility.

#### **Legacy Funding Limitations**

Legacy prohibits funds from being used to:

- Fund parades.
- Cover costs expensed before the grant agreement is fully signed,
- Start, match, add, or complete any type of fundraising,
- Support investments (such as improvements, construction, property, or equipment,
- Support the purchase of equipment (such as iPads, computers, monitors and AV),
- Pay for expenses or other institutional overhead costs not directly related and proportional to, and necessary for, the activities outlined in the project proposal,
- Support benefits,



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- Purchase promotional giveaway items such as t-shirts, keychains, or gifts to promote the applicant's brand,
- Food expenses when expenses are either (i) incurred during the planning phase of the project, or (ii) are not essential to the final program,
- Wages, salary, and benefits of staff for the time that such individuals are not working on the project, and
- Fund out-of-state expenses such as out-of-state travel, and

### **Grant Payments**

Minnesota law, as enforced by the Department of Administration, provides the manner in which MHC may issue payments to grantees. Grant funds cannot be issued until MHC has received a fully executed Agreement from the grantee. Reimbursement is the preferred and default method of payment under state guidelines. Under the Reimbursement model, upon the grantee providing information that expenses have been incurred, MHC will forward funding reimbursement to the grantee.

Grantees may also receive a partial advance under Minnesota law. Under the Advance model, the grantee may receive the following partial advance depending on the amount of the grant:

- If the grant is \$10,000 or less, the maximum that can be advanced is 75%.
- If the grant is more than \$10,000, the maximum that can be advanced is 50%.

Grantees will not receive any additional funding under their grant award until a financial reconciliation has occurred. Advances may only be provided under Minnesota law to Grantees who do not have a history of late reports, poor performance, or financial risk. Grant payments will not be made when the grantee has past due progress reports.

MHC is required to hold ten (10) percent of the total grant award to a grantee until all reporting requirements are met. Upon completion of a grant, MHC conducts a financial review of the expenses incurred by the grantee. Minnesota law requires MHC to conduct a more in-depth financial review of the expenses of grantees that obtain an advance.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Funding decisions will be made on a competitive basis and a review panel will assist in the determination. Timely filed applications selected for an award will be eligible to receive funding within 25 business days following execution of the grant agreement.

### **Selection Criteria and Weight**

Applicants will go through an eligibility check and initial review. Each applicant will be reviewed on a 100-point scale. Applications will be assessed using the following scoring factors and weight criteria:

- Project Details (30)
  - How well does the project (select as many as applicable but at least one of the following):
    - Preserve and honor the cultural heritage of Minnesota?
    - Provide education and student outreach on cultural diversity?
    - Support the development of culturally diverse humanities programming, including arts programming?



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- Empower communities in building identity and culture, including but not limited to preserving and honoring communities whose Indigenous cultures are endangered or disappearing?
- Community Involvement (25)
  - How were members of the community/board involved in developing this grant proposal and how were their ideas incorporated?
  - How will the community/board be involved going forward?
- Project Management (25)
  - How will the project be completed on a timely basis?
  - How will the reporting of expenses and hours be correctly reported?
  - How will the goals for the project be achieved?
  - Does the budget submitted align with the proposed project?
  - Is the budget in MHC's required template?
  - Are the itemized expenses detailed, clear and consistent with Legacy?
  - If applicable, how will compliance with Minnesota competitive bid laws be ensured?
- Evaluation & Impact (20)
  - Is the success of the project clear?
  - Is the evaluation process clear as to methodology?
  - What audience are you attempting to reach with your project?
  - How do you expect to impact the audience you are attempting to reach?
  - What steps are you taking to maximize your desired impact?

## **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

During the course of the project, you should remember that upon completion of the project you will be asked to provide:

- Details of program income and expenses to date compared to the original budget,
- Details about measurable outcomes achieved to date, and
- Details on evaluating the results of funded programming to date.

MHC may ask you additional questions to fulfill Legislative Coordinating Commission (LCC) reporting requirements. MHC is responsible for updating the LCC's website with information from Grantee reports that inform, educate, and demonstrate to the public how funds are being expended consistent with the Legacy Amendment.

### **Grant Bidding Requirements**

If you seek to use grant funds awarded to hire or retain a third party, you must use the following processes:

- Between \$25,000 and \$50,000, must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids.
- Between \$10,000 and \$24,999, must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or awarded to a targeted vendor.

You must use all possible steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through the following entities:



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- [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
- Metropolitan Council's Targeted Vendor list: [Minnesota Unified Certification Program](#)
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Program](#)

You must not contract with any entity that is suspended or debarred in Minnesota. [Suspended/Debarred Vendor Information](#)

You must also maintain standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and the actions of your employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. Documentation justifying a single sole source bid should also be maintained.

### **Interim Report**

Depending on the amount of award, you may be required to prepare an Interim Report for MHC to demonstrate adequate progress in fulfilling the terms of your award. The terms of your Interim Report will be, if applicable, stated within your grant agreement with MHC.

### **Final Report**

At the end of the reporting period identified within your Grant Agreement, you will be required to submit a final report to MHC. MHC will also engage in a final reconciliation of your expenses under the terms of the Grant Agreement. Your last payment under the terms of the Grant Agreement will not be sent to you until you send your final report and reconciliation has been completed.

### **Audits**

Minnesota law requires all grantees to maintain their books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices relevant to their grant for examination by the Minnesota Legislative auditor or Minnesota state auditor for a minimum of six (6) years from the grant agreement end date or the state retention requirements, whichever is later.

### **Non-Discrimination and State Contract Compliance**

Minnesota law requires all grantees to agree not to discriminate in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act and to abide by Minnesota law that requires ensuring equal opportunity within contracting.