



MINNESOTA HUMANITIES CENTER (MHC) GRANT FUNDING 2025 CULTURAL & ETHNIC STUDIES FAQ

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q. What is the maximum amount I can request under the Arts and Music Education Grant?

The total amount of funding available for this grant line is \$500,000. The maximum amount an applicant can request is \$50,000.

ELIGIBILITY

Q. Who is eligible to apply for an Arts & Music Education (Legacy) grant?

Any organization who is in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), in good standing with MHC, and who has no outstanding open grants with MHC, is eligible to apply for an Arts & Cultural Heritage (Legacy) grant.

Q. What does it mean to be “in good standing” with the IRS and MHC?

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

An organization is in good standing with MHC unless they have a history of untimely or inaccurate financial or program reports or has an open grant beyond its closure date. If you are unsure whether you are in good standing with MHC, please contact us at submissions@mnhum.org. MHC may grant an exemption to an individual or organization that is not in good standing with MHC if the applicant uses a Fiscal Sponsor.

Q. Am I eligible to receive funding from MHC if I’m receiving funding from another source such as a Foundation, a Legacy funder (Minnesota Historical Society or the Minnesota State Arts Board), or a state administrative agency (Department of Administration, Department of Education, or Department of Employment and Economic Development)?

Yes. However, the amount you seek from MHC and the amount you receive from the other source may not exceed the total amount of funding needed for your project.

Q. Can schools apply for this grant?

No. Schools including colleges, universities, and charter schools as well as school districts are ineligible for this grant. We encourage interested applicants from any of the above to connect with local organizations and partner with them on their applications.

Q. Can organizations outside of Minnesota apply for this funding?

No, this funding is only for organizations based in Minnesota.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Q. Can we receive technical assistance from MHC?

Yes, MHC is available to provide technical assistance to complete online submissions through the close of the deadline. Contact the MHC Grants team by email at submissions@mnhum.org to request technical assistance.

Q. Can we receive feedback from MHC about our application before we submit it?

Yes, MHC is available to review drafts of your proposal and budget. This allows applicants time to incorporate MHC's feedback prior to their submissions by the deadline. Contact the MHC Grants team by email at submissions@mnhum.org to coordinate MHC's review of draft documents. Requests must be submitted by Friday, June 13, 2025 at 4:30pm in order to be reviewed.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Q. I don't have access to a computer. Do I have to apply online?

The preferred method for applying for an MHC grant is to apply online. However, you do not need to submit your application online. If you need accommodation to submit a hard copy of your application to MHC, contact the MHC Grants team by email at submissions@mnhum.org.

Q. Can there be co-applicants on a grant?

No. There can only be one applicant recognized by MHC as the lead applicant. While you may submit multiple applications as a lead applicant, you may only be awarded one grant. Additionally, you may identify multiple collaborators on any application you file with MHC.

Q. Can I be listed as a collaborator if I am a lead applicant on an application?

Yes. You may be listed as a collaborator on multiple applications.

Q. Can I apply for funds to host a benefit or fundraiser?

No, Minnesota law prohibits Legacy funds from being used to support a benefit or fundraiser.

Q. What should I consider as I am deciding how much to request?

Applicants, at a minimum, should consider the scale and scope of their projects, alternative possible funding sources, and the duration of the project in determining the amount to request.

MHC provides information sessions, one-on-one support, and resources to help applicants factor all the various considerations (size of project, reach and impact, project updates, and financial tracking and reporting requirements), when determining how much to request.

We strongly recommend applicants take advantage of MHC support in developing project ideas and drafting requests for funding. Reviews of past grant cycles show that applicants who sought support and incorporated feedback from MHC prior to their submissions, were more successful in reviewing awards. Please contact us early in the open application period so we can be as helpful as possible.

Q. What type of expenses can I consider in deciding how much to request?

The following expenses may be considered within any grant proposal:

- Wages, salary, and benefits of staff working on the project for the hours (hourly employee), or proportionate salary (management employee) spent by the individual working on the project, and
- Compensation due to independent contractors for designing, administering, and implementing the project including paying an artist a stipend or fee for their work.

There are some expenses that **should not** be considered within a grant proposal:

- Cover costs incurred before the grant agreement is fully signed,
- Start, match, add, or complete any type of capital campaign,
- Support capital costs (such as improvements, construction, property, or equipment),
- Support benefits and fundraisers,
- Purchase promotional giveaway items such as t-shirts, keychains, etc.,
- Fund out-of-state expenses such as out-of-state travel and lodging,
- Pay for indirect costs or overhead charges not directly related to the activities outlined in the project proposal,
- 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.

Q. What type of financial documents do I need to submit with my application?

The following financial documents will be considered with the grant proposal:

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

- If your annual revenue was \$750,000 or more last year, please submit your most recent certified financial audit.
- If your annual revenue was at least \$50,000 but less than \$750,000, please submit your most recent IRS Form 990.
- If your annual revenue was no more than \$49,999, please submit the last financial statement (for example, income statement and balance statement) reviewed by your board.

Failure to submit the above financial information as requested may result in your application not being reviewed.

Q. When will I be notified about my application?

Application reviews start immediately following the closing of the grant line. MHC completes a three-step review process including: 1) initial eligibility review to assess applications are complete, with all attachments provided, and the application meets statutory requirements, 2) Panel Reviews to assess against the criteria and alignment with legislative intent, scored against a rubric, and grant award amounts are recommended, and 3) a financial review to assess financial documents within posted guidelines provided in the Request for Proposal. The amount of time this takes varies depending on the number of applications received. Funding recommendations are made to MHC's CEO, who makes the final funding determination.

FISCAL SPONSOR

If you need a Fiscal Sponsor, you will be considered the awardee, and the Fiscal Sponsor will be considered the Grantee under the grant agreement. A Fiscal Sponsor may not charge more than ten percent (10%) of the total grant award.

Q. What is a Fiscal Sponsor?

A Fiscal Sponsor works at a minimum, with the awardee to:

- a. Ensure that all financial reports required to be submitted to MHC under the grant agreement are timely and accurate,
- b. Produce all financial reports as supporting documentation for the grant to MHC or other Minnesota governmental entities when requested, and
- c. Maintain all financial reports and supporting documentation for six (6) years after completion of the grant as required by Minnesota law.

The awardee remains solely responsible for ensuring that all programming is implemented as described within the grant agreement.

Q. What is the responsibility of a Fiscal Sponsor?

A Fiscal Sponsor must maintain all necessary records to show and account for the use of grant funds awarded to the Grantee. Under [Minn. Stat. §16C.05, subd. 5](#), A Fiscal Sponsor should ensure that all books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices relevant to the grant contract are maintained for a minimum of six (6) years from the end of the grant contract to allow for examination upon request by MHC, the State of Minnesota, the State Auditor, or the Legislative Auditor.

A Fiscal Sponsor is required to participate in a Grantee orientation training session consistent with the terms of the grant agreement and the initial grant award by MHC to the Grantee. Failure to participate in the orientation training session may result in suspension of the grant contract.

GRANT AWARD

Q. What happens after we receive notice that we are awarded a grant?

MHC will forward correspondence to you to ensure that grants funds can be promptly distributed to you. You will be asked to submit W-9 and ACH authorization paperwork to MHC.

MHC will also forward information on how you can access MHC's online grants management system. The online grants management system is the primary means by which MHC communicates with Grantees. To facilitate communication with MHC, please become familiar with the online grants management system. MHC will also forward information to you on how to access the MHC Grantee Toolkit.

Finally, MHC will forward information to you on how you can attend a Grantee orientation session. If you have a Fiscal Sponsor, both you and your Fiscal Sponsor are required to attend the Grantee orientation consistent with the terms of the grant agreement.

Q. Is there a date by which funds must be expended?

Your project should be completed, and all funding should be used by May 31, 2026, to allow for your final reporting to be finished and submitted by June 30, 2026. There is no option to extend the project end date past May 31, 2026.

Q. Is the online grants management system the only way MHC communicates with Grantees?

No. While MHC relies primarily on the online grants management system for most communication with Grantees, MHC can and does communicate with Grantees by phone, email, and written correspondence.

Q. How often does MHC make payments?

Payments are made by MHC to Grantees as outlined in the grant agreement that has been negotiated with the Grantee.

Q. What information must I submit to request payment from MHC?

To request payment from MHC, you will need to provide a transaction report setting forth expenses incurred and information as to whether spending on the project is consistent with the budget for the project.

Q. Once my payment request from MHC has been approved, when can I expect to receive payment?

MHC will issue payment within thirty (30) days once your payment request has been approved.

Q. What training is required once the proposal has been accepted?

All Grantees, awardees, and their Fiscal Sponsors, are required to participate in one Grantee orientation session that is consistent with their grant agreement. No other training is required.

While not required, many successful awardees take advantage of MHC's Grantee Resources and establish regular consistent communication with MHC's grants team who can provide coaching and directions to ensure successful completion of your grant within the terms of your grant agreement.

Q. Does MHC expect awardees to acknowledge their award?

Yes! Minnesota law requires recipients of the Legacy grants to acknowledge receipt of such funding to the general public. The grant agreement between the awardee and MHC will set forth the Legacy logo, MHC logo, and acknowledgment language that should be used by the awardee. MHC anticipates that for Legacy grants that awardees and Grantees will include the Legacy logo, MHC logo, and acknowledgment language in public and annual reports.

Q. Will I have to submit progress reports on the grant agreement?

Yes, Grantees will be required to submit one interim report, and your grant agreement will outline the schedule as to when your interim report is due to MHC.

Q. Can I pay individuals working on the grant with cash?

No. Due to the difficulty in creating and maintaining electronic files and paper documentation for cash transactions, the State of Minnesota does not allow awardees to pay vendors with cash.

Q. Can I use PayPal? Can I pay individuals working on the grant with gift cards?

MHC strongly discourages the use of PayPal, Venmo, or any similar online payment processor by a grant awardee. MHC also strongly discourages the use of gift cards by a grant awardee. A Grantee must seek MHC approval for these types of payments in advance.

Q. Can I get reimbursed for expenses I incurred expenses after I receive notice that my proposal has been accepted but the grant agreement has not been executed?

No, Minnesota law prohibits reimbursement of any expenses prior to execution of a grant agreement. Therefore, please sign and return your grant agreement to MHC as soon as possible to maximize the expenses for which you may seek reimbursement.

POST AWARD

Q. Will I need to provide a final progress report to MHC?

Yes. The grant agreement will detail that a final report is due to MHC. MHC will use information from your final report to update the Legislature and the public on the success of your project.

Q. What financial reporting must I provide MHC when the grant has been completed?

Upon conclusion of the grant agreement, the Grantee or Fiscal Sponsor must provide information to allow MHC to conduct a financial reconciliation. The level of financial reporting that must be provided to MHC when the grant has been completed is dependent on the amount awarded and whether the Grantee or Fiscal Sponsor obtained an advance. All grant agreements over \$50,000 will require one (1) on-site visit by MHC. Detailed information about what financial reporting needs to be provided can be found in the Grantee orientation training, Grantee Toolkit, and grant agreement.