



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) Community Identity and Heritage: Emergency Response (FY27)

June 30, 2026

Overview

The Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC), a non-profit organization, strives to create a more just society that is curious, connected, and compassionate by increasing the collective understanding of ourselves, our communities, and our histories through stories and experiences.

In 2008, Minnesota's voters passed the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) to the Minnesota Constitution to: protect drinking water sources; to protect, enhance, and restore wetlands, prairies, forests, fish, game, and wildlife habitat; to preserve arts and cultural heritage; to support parks and trails; and to protect, enhance, and restore lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater.

The Legacy Amendment increases the state sales tax by three-eighths of one percent, beginning on July 1, 2009, continuing until 2034, and creates four funds. The additional sales tax revenue is distributed into the four funds as follows: 33 percent to the clean water fund; 33 percent to the outdoor heritage fund; 19.75 percent to the arts and cultural heritage fund; and 14.25 percent to the parks and trails fund.

Organizations that receive funding from the arts and cultural heritage fund are generally expected to:

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

Minnesota Legislation

During the Minnesota Legislative session that ended in 2025, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$600,000 to MHC from the Legacy Fund for emergency response grants to organizations that work to create, celebrate, and teach the art, culture, and heritage of the many diverse cultural groups that make up Minnesota, including but not limited to Indigenous organizations, communities whose culture and heritage have been historically underrepresented, recent immigrant communities, and veterans.

Funding for this grant program was appropriate for each fiscal year during the biennium. \$300,000 has been awarded for Fiscal Year 2026 and \$300,000 will be available to award for Fiscal Year 2027 until October 15, 2026.



Funding Availability

MHC will award \$300,000 (less allowable administrative fee) in Community Identity & Heritage Emergency Response grants, on a rolling basis to organizations until October 15, 2026.

Emergency Response grants are to be used to assist communities responding to major events in Minnesota to:

- Facilitate the process of grieving,
- Encourage healing,
- Create memorials, and/or
- Assist in recovery of the community.

Applicants may request any amount of funding up to \$75,000.

As this funding comes from the arts and culture heritage fund, funding awarded by MHC may not be used for:

- Replacing the loss of Medical care assistance or to provide medical care and services,
- Replacing the loss of SNAP benefits or to provide food and grocery support,
- Replacing the loss of Housing assistance or to provide housing or rental support,
- Legal services, or
- Other purposes that are inconsistent with the arts and culture heritage fund.

Eligibility

An applicant is eligible to apply for funding:

- If the applicant is in good standing with the IRS,
- If the applicant is in good standing with MHC, and
- If the applicant is working to:
 - Preserve and honor the cultural heritage of Minnesota,
 - Provide education and student outreach in cultural diversity,
 - Support the development of culturally diverse humanities programming, including arts programming, by individuals and organizations, or
 - Empower communities in building identity and culture, including preserving and honoring communities whose Indigenous cultures are endangered or disappearing.

MHC uses the [IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search](#) to confirm compliance. If you are unsure whether you are in good standing with MHC, please contact Grants Administrator Laura Adams at 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.



Technical Assistance

If you have any questions about this RFP, please email MHC's Grants Administrators at grants@mnhum.org

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

Zoom links for the public information sessions can be found on MHC's website.

If applying in English is a barrier or you need a reasonable accommodation to submit your application, please contact grants@mnhum.org.

Application

Applicants are encouraged to apply online through MHC's grants management system. 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.

Applicants may partner with other organizations in submitting a proposal. If multiple organizations are applying, one organization must be designated in the proposal as the "lead" applicant. The lead applicant serves as the main contact and receives the grant funding if the proposal is selected for a grant award.

If you request funding in the amount of \$50,000 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 (must be 2023 or forward).
- If your annual revenue was at least \$50,000 but less than \$750,000, please submit your most recent IRS Form 990 (must be 2023 or forward).
- 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.

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

Legacy Funding Limitations

Legacy prohibits funds from being used to:

- Reimburse costs incurred before the grant agreement is fully signed,
- Start, match, add, support or complete any type of fundraiser,
- Support a benefit(s),
- Support investments (such as improvements, construction, property, or equipment),
- Purchase promotional giveaway items such as t-shirts, keychains,
- Fund out-of-state expenses, such as out-of-state travel and lodging and contractor expenses,
- Pay for expenses or other institutional overhead costs that are 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.

Grant Payments

Applicants will be asked in their application to identify whether they wish to receive funding through Reimbursement or Advance. An applicant awarded a grant is referred to as Grantee. Under Reimbursement, the grantee receives reimbursement after incurring the expenses and submitting documentation to MHC that the expenses have been incurred. Under Advance, the grantee receives funding prior to incurring expenses. Advances are available on the following schedule:

- If the grant is \$10,000 or less, the maximum available advance is 75%,
- If the grant is at least \$10,000 and less than \$49,999, the maximum available advance is 50%,
- If the grant is \$50,000 or more, the maximum available advance is 25%.

Factors such as history of late reports, prior poor performance, and financial risk will be considered in determining Advance eligibility.

MHC is required to hold ten (10%) percent of a grantee's award until all reporting requirements have been met. Grant funds are not available until the grant Agreement has been signed by MHC and the grantee.

If Advance has been requested, the first Advance payment will be made within 25 business days of MHC receiving a W9 and/or ACH form. No payments will be made if the grantee has a past due progress report.



Selection Process

MHC will review applications on a rolling basis as applications are submitted to MHC. In determining whether to issue an Emergency grant, MHC will consider the following factors:

- Significance of the major event or emergency that prompted the application.
- How the project will facilitate grieving, encourage healing, create a memorial, or assist the community in recovery.
- Is the success of the project clear?
- The timeliness of the response.
- How was the community involved in developing the application?
- How will the goals of the project be accomplished?
- Are itemized expenses detailed, clear, and consistent with Legacy?
- Is the budget in MHC's required template?

Monitoring Expectations

Monitoring

MHC will monitor your activities throughout the course of the grant period. During the project or upon completion of the project, you will be asked to provide and should be prepared to produce information concerning:

- Details of program income and expenses to date compared to the original budget,
- Details of how you evaluated success, what information you measured, and whether you believe you achieved success,
- Timesheets, payroll allocations, and paycheck stubs for personnel expenses,
- Identify the number of people who you expect to attend and the Minnesota counties in which you believe they live,
- Full-Time Employment results,
- A list of board members or directors (as applicable),
- Identify non-MHC funds you were able to secure for the project and how the funds were used,
- Details regarding the direct and administrative expenses for the project,
- Fiscal Agent contact information (as applicable), and
- An invoice for any payment requested.

Using Third Parties

If you use grant funds awarded to hire or retain a third party not originally identified in your grant application, you must use the following processes:

- Between \$25,000 and \$99,999, must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids, and



- 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 certified from the following entities are given an opportunity to bid:

- [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 have a written process for awarding and administering contracts. If you proceed with a single source bid, you must maintain proper documentation justifying your decision. Your process must also address how you will address conflicts of interest.

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.

Interim Written Report

Depending on the amount of award and grant term length, you may be required to prepare an Interim Written 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. Your last payment under the terms of the Grant Agreement, ten (10) percent of your grant, will be sent once reconciliation has been completed and your final report has been reviewed by MHC.

Document Retention

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.