



Join Speakers Bureau with Humanities Washington!

Are you passionate about exploring history, philosophy, literature, culture, and more with public audiences? Take your expertise on the road across Washington state! Humanities Washington is looking for qualified individuals to serve as presenters for our 2026-2027 statewide Speakers Bureau program. The application will open on **February 12** and the deadline to apply is **April 30, 2025**.

Please read this document before you begin your application. When you are ready to apply, you can access our application portal [access our application portal here](#). You may also [preview the application questions here](#). Instructions for creating an account and using the portal system are [available here](#).

What is Humanities Washington's Speakers Bureau?

Humanities Washington's longest running and most popular program, Speakers Bureau provides communities with experts and scholars who give public presentations across Washington State. Speakers Bureau presenters discuss a wide variety of topics, ranging from history to politics, music, philosophy, and everything in between. Our roster of presenters is chosen not only for their expertise, but for their ability to inspire discussion with people of all ages and backgrounds.

Speakers Bureau presenters collectively deliver hundreds of events each year. To reach as many Washingtonians as possible, we partner with a wide range of organizations, including libraries, schools, museums, historical societies, community centers, and civic organizations.

Why apply?

If you are passionate about a subject, sharing your expertise with a wide variety of audiences can be both exciting and meaningful. From urban libraries to rural community centers, Speakers Bureau programs let you meet with and learn from audiences in every corner of the state. Speakers Bureau programs often have the energy of a community event, making them different from a typical lecture at a college or university.

Benefits of joining Speakers Bureau:

- \$400 honorarium per in-person, \$300 honorarium per online presentation
- Travel expenses covered
- Flexible schedule
- Meet communities big and small in beautiful Washington State

How It Works

Every two years, Humanities Washington enlists a new cohort of speakers who nonprofit organizations and community groups can book to give talks in their communities. These organizations select which Speakers they are interested in hosting, then apply to Humanities Washington to receive funding for the event. If approved, hosts receive funding, resources, and one-on-one support from staff to hold a successful event. All talks are free and open to the public.



Humanities Washington seeks speakers with the following qualifications:

- Significant or advanced expertise with the subject matter of your proposed presentation. This can include:
 - Recognition from cultural community as a teacher or interpreter of traditional cultural knowledge, such as a tribal elder, storyteller, or traditional practitioner
 - Advanced formal study in the field (master's level or higher)
 - Extensive professional and/or life experience on the subject
- Demonstrated success in working with public audiences
- Ability to work well with a wide range of audiences – culturally, economically, and geographically
- Interest in – and ability and willingness to – travel to communities across the state

Speakers who are selected will be asked to:

- Agree to be available for 5-10 presentations (online and in-person) during each program year at mutually agreed-upon times with host organizations
- Provide their own mode of transportation (Round-trip travel costs are reimbursed)
- Encourage dialogue and conversation among program attendees through a one-hour interactive presentation at each scheduled event
- Reach out to potential host organizations to generate interest in their presentation
- Work collaboratively with Humanities Washington to promote their Speakers Bureau talk
- Maintain communication with the Speakers Bureau program manager about all events and pertinent updates
- Offer the approved presentation exclusively as part of the Speakers Bureau program for the duration of their contract with Humanities Washington

Some things that you should expect from the application:

- **Provide a brief bio**, between 100-150 words. If selected as a speaker, this bio will be shared publicly on our website. You can consult our [Current Speakers](#) website for some examples.
- **Provide a high-level overview** of your talk (between 100-150 words) aimed at a general audience. If selected as a speaker, this will be used to draft your talk description on our public-facing website. Consult our [Current Speakers](#) for examples.
- **Submit a 10–20-minute video** that outlines the key points of your talk and demonstrates how it will be structured. You can record a new video or share an existing one where you have presented this talk before.



Presentation Topics

Speakers Bureau presenters apply with **one specific topic** that they are passionate and experienced in discussing with public audiences. Topics should be relevant to Washington State audiences and based in the humanities. For inspiration and ideas, you can view our [current Speakers Bureau presenters](#). While we welcome applications on all humanities topics, below are examples of presentation categories that have been well-received by local audiences and/or are sought by Humanities Washington:

- State and national history (especially in light of 2026 being the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence)
- Indigenous history and culture
- Artificial intelligence (through a humanities lens)
- Food and culture
- Democracy (history, process, functioning, etc.)
- Pop culture
- Connecting the humanities and the sciences through a specific topic
- Connecting the humanities and the arts through a specific topic

Apply

Humanities Washington seeks new speakers every two years in a competitive process overseen by a statewide review committee. Interactive models that include group discussion, workshops, participatory activities, and other forms of collaborative engagement are highly preferred. Ready to Apply? Learn more at our resources below.

Timeline

February 12	Online application opens
April 30	Online application deadline
By June 5	Applicants notified
June and July	Video auditions with selected applicants
July	Finalists selected and notified
August (TBD)	Orientation for finalists held online
January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2027	Term as a Speakers Bureau presenter

Resources

- [Speakers Bureau Website](#)
- [Instructions to Access Application](#)
- [Application](#)
- [Preview Application](#)
- Q&A Session
 - Register here for the Q&A session for applicants on March 10, 2025 at 1:00pm: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/96rSXY-uQDKN86c0acCSAw>

If these resources do not answer your questions, please contact our team at speakers@humanities.org

About Humanities Washington

Humanities Washington opens minds and bridges divides by creating spaces to explore different perspectives. Humanities Washington is our state's flagship nonprofit for public humanities programming and a state affiliate with the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more about Humanities Washington, visit humanities.org.