



2025 WASHINGTON STORIES FUND GUIDELINES

IMPORTANT DATES (Updated 4/10/25)

Applications open: March 7, 2025

Deadline to apply: ~~April 18, 2025 at 11:59 pm~~ Extended to May 31, 2025 at 11:59 pm

Award Notification: ~~end of May 2025~~ Late June 2025

Period of Performance: June 1, 2025—May 31, 2026

Final report due date: 90 days after project end date

Number of awards and amount: Up to five per region, ranging from \$2,500–\$7,500

Apply here: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=humanities>

GRANT SUMMARY

- Up to five grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$7,500 will be awarded per state region (Central, Central Puget Sound, Eastern, Northwestern, Southwestern).
- We seek to fund projects that highlight unique or little-known stories of people who have made significant contributions to Washington State's cultural richness.
- Any nonprofit organization, public agency, or group is eligible to apply. While groups do not need to be incorporated or have tax-exempt status, they must be organized for nonprofit purposes. Individuals are not eligible to apply.
- Projects should clearly serve a Washington State audience.
- Matching funds are not required but are encouraged. Applicants will be asked to provide an overview of all expenses so reviewers can understand the project scope and determine if expenses (matching funds) can be counted towards Humanities Washington's 1:1 NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) cost-share requirements, if eligible.

WASHINGTON STORIES FUND GRANT OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Washington Stories Fund is to record and share with the broader community the little-known stories of individuals or groups whose contributions add to the cultural richness and health of Washington State and its residents.

Washington Stories Fund is a tool to build bridges, enhance understanding, and celebrate the rich and expansive histories, traditions, and cultures of Washington State and its people through the public humanities. This grant seeks to elevate those various stories and enhance public awareness of new and unique perspectives and cultures.

ELIGIBILITY

Any project that meets the following criteria is eligible:

- Highlights unique or little-known stories of people who have made significant contributions to the cultural richness of Washington State. Priority will be given to projects that draw attention to a perspective that has not already been catalogued or showcased in a significant way.
- Provides the general public with meaningful opportunities to engage with the humanities, such as through community-building events, public exhibits, or other formats.
- Is carried out by a not-for-profit organization or public agency in Washington State. Individuals are not eligible to apply.
- Showcases Washington State stories and clearly serves a Washington State audience.
- Includes at least one humanities scholar to advise on content related to the project (see FAQ for more information on who qualifies as a humanities scholar).

THE SPARK FOR THE WASHINGTON STORIES FUND: LENORE HALE

After a career in family counseling, Lenore Hale and her husband, Charles, moved to Seattle in 2004, making a new life together at Horizon House retirement community until Charles's death in 2008. Shortly afterward, Hale enrolled in a writing class. Her assignments for the class gradually evolved into a two-year project: a book of sketches of her life and family titled *Tell All the Truth but Tell It Slant*. Her experience writing the memoir inspired her to provide the initial seed money for the Washington Stories Fund. Hale was generous of spirit and incisive of mind, with an outgoing yet self-effacing manner that led her to connect readily with others. She had an uncommon wisdom that she shared with all who knew her well. On October 5, 2013, she passed away peacefully at her home in Seattle.

APPLY FOR A WASHINGTON STORIES FUND GRANT

1. Review Grant Application Criteria

Make sure your application is competitive and relevant by reviewing our grants criteria. These criteria are detailed on pages 3-4.

2. Preview the Application

Humanities Washington's [open applications are available here](#). Locate the 2025 Washington Stories Fund grant application within this list and select "preview" to view the full application. View past grant recipients [here](#).

Application Tips:

- *Tell us a story.* This application is your opportunity to explain why your project is distinct, what benefit it will provide to your community, and why it deserves to be funded. Why is this project exciting, unique, and impactful?
- *Provide clear information about the nature and purpose of your project.* Avoid generalizations and hyperbole. Don't write more than you need to.
- *Check your numbers.* Is your budget reasonable and clear? Are your impact goals and audience numbers realistic? Be sure to include both expenses and income when submitting your budget.

3. Prepare Your Budget & Review Expenses

Prepare to submit a [Washington Stories Fund budget form](#) listing your entire program's projected expenses and income. You will be asked to upload this budget form and explain how you would use Humanities Washington's funds in the application.

Before applying, please ensure your program costs are eligible for Washington Stories Fund grants. Eligible and ineligible expenses are listed on pages 3-4.

4. Submit Online Application

Once you have gathered the information, [log in to our online grants portal](#) to apply. If you have already created an account, please log in using the email you originally provided. New to our system? [Learn how to create an account here](#).

Eligible expenses include:

- *Project salaries and benefits.* Salaries and benefits should be appropriate to the project activities proposed and to the time spent (e.g., a percentage of salary based on time spent on the specific project). Humanities Washington may pay benefits if they are specifically indicated in the budget.
- *Fees and honoraria.* Consultant fees and honoraria paid to the project scholar, advisers, speakers, panelists, and other consultants should be appropriate to the project activities proposed and to the time spent.
- *Domestic Travel.* Humanities Washington grant funds may be used to pay domestic airfare, hotel, meals, mileage, and per diem at any standard rate if the rates do not exceed current federal rates for the local area. [View per diem rates for Washington State](#).
- *Venue and equipment rental.* Humanities Washington may pay for rental of equipment but will not pay for its purchase. Costs of renting space for project activities are allowable.
- *Supplies.* Humanities Washington may pay for consumable supplies directly related to project activities.

- *Postage.* Mailing costs for brochures, invitations or other large items may be included. Applicants are encouraged to take advantage of bulk-mail postal rates whenever possible.
- *Publicity.* Costs of printing flyers, brochures, and other publicity materials specific to the project may be included.
- *Digital projects.* Digital projects, including documentary films and podcasts, are allowable provided they are accompanied by a public event, such as a lecture.
- *Equipment purchases.* Purchases of equipment that are directly related to and necessary for the completion of the funded project and do not have a per-unit acquisition cost in excess of \$5,000. Equipment is defined as tangible personal property having a useful life exceeding one year.

Ineligible expenses include:

- Non-project related general organizational overhead expenses (indirect expenses), including the use of a NICRA (federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement).
- The production costs of media, including print publications, CDs, and DVDs
- Travel to professional meetings or conference registration fees
- Fellowships, scholarships, or prizes
- Activities that promote a particular political viewpoint or ideology
- Academic courses, professional workshops, or trainings
- Capital expenses, including construction, preservation, or renovation projects
- Purchase of equipment not directly related to or necessary for the completion of the funded project and/or has a per-unit acquisition cost of more than \$5,000
- Museum, historical society, or library acquisitions or cataloging
- Lobbying and fundraising activities
- Expenses incurred before June 1, 2025
- Programs with significant ticket fees
- Food or beverages, except as a necessary expense based on per diem guidelines when staff or project members are traveling for the grant-funded project
- Travel from or to a destination outside the United States

APPLICATION REVIEW

Washington Stories Fund grants are awarded through a competitive grant process. A panel of experts from across the state who form part of the Humanities Washington 50th anniversary planning committee and represent a wide range of disciplines and fields will read submissions and select up to five recipients in each region (Central, Central Puget Sound, Eastern, Northwest, and Southwest Washington). Final decisions are approved by the Humanities Washington leadership.

Humanities Washington is committed to expansive grantmaking and considers a range of applicants, audiences, participants, and their multifaceted backgrounds and

experiences. It also recognizes the importance of serving communities whose stories and narratives need to be heard. Due to limited funds, not all eligible applicants may receive funding.

Projects are evaluated on the following criteria:

- *Content and project relevance*: Does this project highlight a unique or little-known story? Does it seek to elevate the multifaceted stories of people living in Washington State and enhance the public's awareness of new and unique perspectives and cultures? Does it add to the cultural richness of Washington State and/or its people?
- *Key participants and partnerships*: Have key participants and appropriate partners been identified, including at least one humanities scholar and members of the group whose story is being told? Have participants and partners been given clearly defined, manageable roles that will add to the depth of the project?
- *Outreach and evaluation*: Has the applying organization defined a core audience and/or prospective audience for the project? Is there a clear plan for sharing this story with other communities across the state? Are project goals clearly stated and are the goals shown to be realistic and achievable?
- *Budget*: Is the budget feasible and complete? Are all the expenses included allowable? Did the applying organization clearly indicate how Humanities Washington funds would be used?

NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS

Humanities Washington staff will notify applicants of grant decisions via email. If your project does not receive funding, you may contact Humanities Washington for feedback.

Grant recipients will receive an approval packet containing an approval letter for their records, further instructions for reporting and evaluation, and a DocuSign contract. The award amount ranging from \$2,500 to \$7,500 will be remitted upon receipt of the signed contract. Grant recipients are responsible for submitting a final evaluation form and budget after the completion of their funded project.

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR GRANT IS APPROVED

1. Review your approval packet thoroughly.
2. Return a signed grant agreement to Humanities Washington via DocuSign.
3. Credit Humanities Washington as a supporter of the project and include our logo on any promotional materials. [Find our logos here.](#)
4. Submit images and/or graphics related to the grant-sponsored event for our use in online and print communications. High-resolution digital images showing audience engagement in any online, in-person, or hybrid grant-sponsored events are preferred.

5. Report any significant changes to the project scope or timeline to Humanities Washington.
6. Submit a final evaluation via a link provided by Humanities Washington in their award email.
7. Submit a final budget as part of the final evaluation at the conclusion of the project. Matching funds are not required but are encouraged. Applicants will be asked to provide an overview of all expenses so reviewers can understand the project scope and determine if expenses (matching funds) can be counted towards Humanities Washington's 1:1 NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) cost-share requirements, if eligible. The following expenses do not count toward a match:
 - Food costs such as audience refreshments and receptions. Meals as a necessary expense of staff or project consultants on travel status are an allowable expense.
 - Entertainment or costs related to entertainment.
 - Any contributions that cannot be assigned a fair market value for comparable services.
 - Cost of grant-writing by staff or consultants.
 - Other NEH or humanities council grants.
8. Retain back-up documentation of project expenses as Humanities Washington reserves the right to review project records to ensure proper fiscal practices were followed.

CONTACT US

Questions? Please email grants@humanities.org or call Jera Lego, Program Manager at 206-682-1770 x 113.

ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON

Humanities Washington opens minds and bridges divides by creating spaces to explore different perspectives. Founded in 1973, Humanities Washington is our state's flagship nonprofit for public humanities programming and the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Learn more at humanities.org.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the public humanities?

The **public humanities** create accessible discussions and learning opportunities, helping communities understand and provide context to complex social issues. A public humanities event can include a community conversation on a timely topic, a panel event, or a celebration of local culture.

The **humanities** are the ideas, questions, and disciplines (e.g. history, philosophy, literature, folklife and traditional arts, etc.) that help us document and interpret the world around us. Events which primarily center around artistic performance tend to be

outside the scope of the humanities and are not eligible for a Washington Stories Fund grant. Humanities events that complement a performance, such as talkbacks, have received funding.

A **public event** should be easily accessible in terms of cost, venue, and publicity. For an event to be available to the public it should meet the following criteria:

- The event is free, or the cost of attendance is nominal. Projects with significant or potentially prohibitive ticket fees will not be considered.
- The event is held in a location that can be easily accessed by all members of the public and is ADA compliant.
- The general public is made aware of the event through outreach and publicity.

Who is considered a humanities scholar?

A humanities scholar acts as an expert on the topic you are seeking to explore with your grant. At least one humanities scholar must be involved for projects to be eligible for funding. This individual could be:

- Someone recognized by their cultural community as appropriate to teach or interpret traditional cultural knowledge, such as a tribal elder, storyteller, or traditional practitioner
- Someone with an advanced degree in a humanities field, such as a university professor or graduate student
- Someone with extensive professional and/or life experience on the subject