



## Program Grants

### Grant Guidelines for 2010

The Missouri Humanities Council will consider any proposal to support public humanities programming within Missouri's borders. Audiences may be general or specific (public school history teachers, for example), but all should be adults.

#### Main Interests in Grant-Supported Programs

MHC works to benefit people by improving their institutions: families, schools, and community organizations. Family-friendly programming is as important as programming that crosses racial and ethnic lines. In recent years, MHC grants have supported an increasing number of conferences and institutes aimed at upgrading the knowledge of Missouri teachers. Grants have also been an important way of upgrading and improving local organizations with History in their missions.

**Improvements in the interpretive practices of museums, historical societies, and historic houses.** MHC has announced a long-term initiative called 21st by 21, which aims to modernize interpretive practices throughout the state. We would like to bring methods and practices into the 21st century in time for the statehood bicentennial in 2021.

**Inclusive History.** MHC encourages projects that integrate the diverse cultural traditions in a community or region. The demographics of Missouri are changing rapidly. MHC supports programs that interpret the state's history and cultural richness in inclusive ways.

**Interactive, Experiential Learning,** including learning that takes place via the internet. MHC is helping organizations create "virtual museums" and use social networking sites such as "Wiki spaces" and Flickr to involve their own communities and distant participants in learning experiences.

#### Amounts Awarded

Many MHC grants are under \$2,500, and a few exceed \$10,000. The highest award in recent years was \$16,000. Those applying for grants above \$2,500 should discuss their idea with the Executive Director before proceeding with a formal application. Competition for grant funds can be intense, and Council staff will try to help you be competitive. Sponsors of recurrent annual events should be aware that Council support, if renewed in subsequent years, is generally renewed at decreasing levels.

#### Fundamentals of a Humanities Program

**CONTENT:** The program is centered in history, literature, philosophy, or another field of the humanities. Those fields include Jurisprudence, Comparative Religion, Art History, Languages, and Anthropology. The humanities are concerned with human values and ideas.

**APPROACH TO KNOWLEDGE:** The program is concerned with how and why rather than simply telling what. It helps people think; it provides a way of getting at the meanings of an issue, a work of art, a piece of writing.

**PLANNING:** Program planning reflects the participation of experts in the humanities as well as people in the community who hope to participate.

**AUDIENCE:** The program is designed for adults out of school. The Council is particularly interested in supporting programs that are "family-friendly" and provide activities of interest to pre-teens and youth as well as adults.

**BALANCE:** The program is politically neutral. We don't sponsor or support programs that advocate direct political or social action, although individual speakers may express opposing points of view.

## **Grant Submission Deadlines**

Grants of up to \$2,500 are due on the first working day of every month. We can notify applicants within one month.

Grants for amounts over \$2,500 are due on the first working days of May, September, November, or February. We notify applicants within six weeks of submission.

## **Help from MHC Staff**

Executive Director Michael Bouman is the MHC contact-person for grant applications. He is glad to discuss ideas for grants well in advance of submission, and he will review and critique drafts.

## **Lead Time**

Grant-funded activities should not be scheduled earlier than two months after submitting the application, which allows about a month of time for publicity after receiving a favorable decision.

## **Who May Apply, and Types of Supported Activities**

MHC only awards grants to not-for-profit organizations or to groups that operate as non-profits. MHC does not award grants to individuals. We will consider any public program format that is interactive, creating discussion between writers or expert teachers in the humanities fields and an audience of adults. We will also fund interpretive exhibits, web sites, and small-scale media projects that support humanities institutions. The Council does not provide support for private research, for in-school or youth audiences, for any phase of documentary media production, or for publication.

## **Program Inclusion for People With Disabilities**

Program sponsors should try to accommodate the interests of people who need help to participate fully in the programs. As a first step, we ask sponsors to select program venues that provide parking, entrances, bathrooms, and seating that accommodates people who use wheelchairs. When such venues are available, it is important to publicize accessibility.

It is also important to anticipate the needs of people who have limitations on their vision. When designing programs or other printed material, think in terms of high contrast between the printed word and its background. Black print on white paper is 100% contrast. Anything lower than 70% contrast is not accessible. As a general rule, 12-point sans serif type (Arial, Helvetica) is a standard for broad accessibility.

The costs associated with expanding the accessibility of a program are allowable as an expense of a grant.

## **Allowable Costs**

Grant funds may be used for honoraria and travel, instructional and office supplies, facility and equipment rental, telephone, publicity and promotion, and administrative expenses. In the case of Interpretive Exhibition projects, grant funds may finance the cost of production, including materials, labor and talent.

### **Grant funds cannot be used to support the following:**

- programs that aren't based on the humanities (for example, performing and creative arts, social services)
- programs that advocate a particular point of view
- research or publications unrelated to a public program we are funding
- out-of-state or overseas travel for research
- study to obtain an academic degree
- construction, restoration, preservation costs\*
- museum or library acquisitions, except for modest expenditures directly related to a program\*
- purchase of permanent equipment or property\*
- permanent institutional staffing, or general operating costs
- food, entertainment, or liquor
- public information campaigns
- expenses incurred prior to the grant award date
- programs which do not conform with existing laws against discrimination or exclusion on the basis of race, color, natural origin, gender, age, or physical abilities

\* These limitations do not apply to the costs of the installation of an interpretive exhibit, which will of necessity entail changes in lighting, display areas, etc. Council grants can be used to accomplish the purpose of a project the board has approved, including the "nuts and bolts" of getting the story across.