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OHIO HUMANITIES
Sharing stories. Sparking conversations. Inspiring ideas.

This grant program is operated in Partnership with Ohio Humanities, the state-based partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities

America 250-Ohio Grants Program

The Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial (also known as America 250-Ohio or AM250-OH) will make funds available for grants to non-profit, educational, and local governmental organizations to support educational and commemorative programming about the two-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the independence and founding of the United States. The purpose of this grant program is to draw attention to the achievements, struggles, honors, innovations, and significance of all people in Ohio since before its founding to the present day as described in [Ohio Revised Code 149.309](#) and [Resolution 2023 – 09](#) adopted by the Ohio Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial.

By supporting projects that align with these priorities, AM250-OH will elevate our country and state's history and all its unique stories. These grants will seek to build capacity for educational and commemorative activities at museums, libraries, archives, historic sites, cultural centers, and educational institutions, benefitting more communities while amplifying the untold stories of all Americans, especially Ohioans. Funded projects should align with the themes set out by the America 250-Ohio commission and may align with the ideals represented in the Declaration of Independence regardless of the moment in history they focus on. Additionally, projects should align with telling the story of Ohio's contribution to the U.S. for the past 250+ years, to create a sense of pride about the impact that Ohio and Ohioans have had on the state, nation, and beyond. Projects could highlight stories of people, places, experiences, and events in Ohio history including those of people who have been historically under-represented, highlighting Ohio's unique firsts and original contributions and celebrating the many facets of how Ohio has contributed to the quality of American life.

The AM250-OH Commission has identified the following themes for Ohio's Celebration and Commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the U.S.

- Celebrations and Signature Events: Impacting Tourism and Economic Development
- Ohio Originals: Highlighting Points of Pride & Unity
- Engaging Youth and Lifelong Learners: Education & Scholarship
- Inclusive Statewide Engagement: Museums, Arts & Culture
- Telling Ohio Stories: Highlighting stories of Ohioans past and present

Grant Cycle Timing:

Fall 2023 Cycle

- Grant Guidelines Release: October 16, 2023
- Grant Applications due: November 17, 2023
- Grant Introduction Webinar: Friday, October 20 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Grant Decisions: by January 26, 2024
- Period of performance/use of grant funds: March 1, 2024, through February 28, 2025.

Spring 2024 Cycle

- Updated Grant Guidelines Release: December 15, 2023
- Grant Application available: January 15, 2024
- Grant Applications due: March 1, 2024
- Grant Cycle Webinar: the week of February 5, 2024
- Grant Decisions: by May 15, 2024
- Period of performance/use of grant funds: June 15, 2024, through May 31, 2025.

Grant Funding Levels:

Buckeye Impact Grants

- Grant amounts up to **\$50,000**
 - The grant request should be appropriate to the scope of the project. Program Officers will advise on a suitable request.
- Projects should have a statewide, regional, or significant local impact. The larger the grant request the more the project should aim for statewide impact.
- Project types may include significant exhibitions, regional commemorative activities, substantial digital and documentary media projects, and signature public events.
- Grants will be scored by a panel selected by AM250-OH with recommendations from Ohio Humanities and approved by AM250-OH.
- Grants over \$25,000 will submit an interim report after half of the grant period has elapsed.
- A final report will be required of all grantees along with a full accounting of how the grant and project funds were spent.

Trillium Local Activity Grants

- Grant amounts up to **\$5,000**
 - The grant request should be appropriate to the scope of the project. Program Officers will advise on a suitable request.
- Projects should have a local or community-wide impact.
- Project types may include exhibitions, exhibits, interpretative panels, local commemorative programs or activities, local public events, educational, public programs, and smaller digital and documentary media projects.
- Grants will be adjudicated by AM250-OH staff with recommendations from Ohio Humanities
- A final report will be required of all grantees along with a full accounting of how the grant and project funds were spent.

Eligibility:

- Non-profit organizations registered with the State of Ohio and located in Ohio.
 - This includes non-profit organizations beyond those with 501(c)3 status, such as membership organizations and chambers of commerce/convention and visitors' bureaus. State agencies may not directly seek support. They may use a fiscal agent/sponsor or friends' group to seek support for eligible activities.

The following organizations or institutions are eligible so long as the funds are used for the celebration and/or commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of the United States' independence and draw attention to the history and culture of Ohio from before its founding to the present day.

- School Districts and other K-12 educational institutions (Educational Service Centers, private/parochial schools, etc.)
- Local and Regional Governmental entities (libraries, park districts, cultural arts centers, local government bodies, etc.)
- Institutions of Higher Education
- Faith-based organizations (provided they do not advocate for religious beliefs)
- Fiscal Agents/Sponsors are only eligible when providing their services to an individual or state agency.
- Individual artists, authors, or performers must apply through a fiscal agent/sponsor.
- If an individual has a special case, please contact a Program Officer.

Types of Institutional Missions and/or Project Goals Eligible for Support:

- Organizations with a primary mission to provide education about the history, culture, and peoples of Ohio and the United States.
- Organizations with a primary mission to commemorate the history and culture of Ohio and its residents.
- Organizations or projects that are dedicated to the ongoing process of communicating the stories that relate to or arise out of the history of Ohio and the United States.
- Organizations that foster tourism, civic engagement, or economic development.
 - Economic development organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and Main Street organizations are eligible if the project is closely connected to the AM250-OH mission and goals.

Additional Guidance:

Arts Projects: Arts activities (art exhibitions, performances, etc.) are eligible if they include significant interpretive or educational components of the project (i.e., public programming, interpretive labels, etc.) relevant to AM250-OH.

Balanced Viewpoints: Public programs should encourage open conversations among speakers and audience members. Projects funded by AM250-OH cannot discriminate against persons or groups, and they cannot promote a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view. In other words, projects should strive to provide fair consideration and expression of alternative viewpoints. Projects and organizations that engage in hate speech or other discriminatory and defamatory words or actions are not eligible for support.

Assurance of Accuracy and Context: Projects that address historical, cultural, and civic topics should aim to involve experts to be sure that the project presents historical and civic topics in an accurate and contextualized

fashion. An expert will have some relevant expertise in the topic and effective communication methods. See the **glossary** for an expanded definition.

Types of Grants:

- The grants are available for projects, programming, and non-capital physical investments.
- A project grant supports a specific set of activities that has a clear beginning and end point and a specific set of pre-established outputs and outcomes.
- Physical plant investments must align with the purpose of the grant program (to celebrate or commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States' independence or draw attention to the history and culture of Ohio from before its founding to the present day).
 - Regular maintenance costs are not eligible.

Budget Rules:

- Cost-share: No cost-share is required. However, sponsoring organizations will report the full cost of the project in the final report. This will include reporting how the grant dollars were spent along with any local investment (cash from sponsoring organizations, other grants, gifts, or donated labor or material).
- Eligible costs include personnel, experts/scholars, travel and per diem, outreach/advertising, project activity costs (room rental, A/V, copying cost, books or DVD purchases, rights costs to screen a film, exhibition-related costs), and up to 10% for indirect costs.
- Students (Higher Education) may receive pay only for direct involvement in the project outcomes or as part of an internship.

Ineligible costs include:

- Capital expenses
- Artistic materials and equipment not related to AM250-OH activities
- Non-AM250-OH mission-related operating costs
- Equipment costs (cameras, computers, hard drives, etc.) not related to an AM250-OH activity
- Fundraising efforts
- Lobbying
- Costs related to any project whose primary purpose is to promote partisan political ideologies or religious proselytization
- Scholarship assistance
- Staff salaries at a K-12 school
- High School or College student pay
- University faculty salary and costs that are not directly related to the project
- Food and alcohol

The application will ask for the following information:

Q1. What do you want to do in this project that will be carried out with AM250-OH funds? In your response, please address 1) the specific details you have planned for the project (the who, what, where, and when of the project) 2) why it's important to address this topic now, and 3) the overall goals of the project. How will you

evaluate the success of the project? Please include a project timeline that addresses planning time and event activities.

Q2. AM250-OH grants seek to advance awareness and knowledge of the themes set out by the America 250-Ohio commission. The grants may also support projects that explore and exemplify the ideals represented in the Declaration of Independence as revealed in the long history of America. The key objective of these grants is to explore the story of Ohio's contribution to United States history and culture and fostering a sense of pride about the impact that Ohio and Ohioans have had on the state, nation, and beyond.

How does your project align with the goals and objectives of the AM250-OH Commission?

Q3. Project Personnel

- Part 1. Identify the key individuals who will contribute to the success of the project. This should include the project director, authorizing official, and project bookkeeper. It may also include other staff of the sponsoring organization that are essential to the success of the project, such as marketing and communications, program staff, and audio/visual professionals.
- Part 2. (*If relevant*) Who are the experts involved in the program? How is their background/expertise relevant to the content of the project? If it is a lecture series or similar, provide short biographies of each of the presenters.

Q4. Describe the intended audience for the project or organization. What is the expected attendance for any public events or activities? What kind of outreach will be carried out to the intended audience? For media projects, how many individuals do you expect will view the finished work? Provide a timeline of outreach activities; be sure to allow for adequate time to reach the desired audience.

Q5. Who is the sponsoring organization? Describe the mission and purpose of the sponsoring organization that is requesting the funds. How will the grant project align with the organization's mission? Are there partners involved in the project? If so, please describe them and their role in the project.

Glossary

Expertise: Subject Matter Experts are integral to every project that we fund. These individuals should ensure accuracy in the project, provide relevant context, and contribute to the interpretative work of the project from a historical and/or humanities perspective. Experts should align with one of the following:

- A K-12 educator who has been trained to teach relevant Social Studies or ELA content
- A staff member or educator of a museum or a cultural, educational, or civic institution that has a mission of historical or cultural education
- An individual with an advanced degree (MA or PhD) who researches and/or teaches relevant subject areas at the college level
- A history, humanities, or arts/culture professional
- Experienced professionals in the heritage and related aspects of the tourism industry

Living History: Special requirements for **living history and historical reenactment projects:** AM250-OH will hold living history projects to a high standard of documented research and quality performance.

- Scholar-performers must demonstrate extensive knowledge about the individual presented and the context of that person's culture and times. Composite characters may only be used for relatively anonymous figures (e.g., canal digger or steelworker).

- Scholar-performers should have training in theater performance. Projects that make use of historical interpreter must provide a video of the presenter with the application (a link to a video online).
- Projects involving historical reenactment must depict events that originally occurred in Ohio and in the general area where the contemporary project will take place. The events must be relevant to the War for American Independence and related events in the late 18th century.
- The presentation of members of historically persecuted groups, such as members of Native American tribes or enslaved peoples, must be a member in good standing of the relevant group.

Outputs: Outputs are the activities and products that the applicant does with grant funds.

Outcomes: Outcomes are the desired results and benefits that follow from the work to develop outputs.

Reenactment: Historical reenactment (or re-enactment) is an educational or entertainment activity in which individuals dress in historic uniforms or costumes and follow a plan to recreate aspects of a historical event or period.

Scholar Performer: A person who develops and presents a first-person interpretation of a historical figure grounded in significant research about the individual's life and time.