



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minnesota Humanities Center Announces Community Partner Fund Awardees and Exciting New Humanities Grant Opportunities

Nov. 22, 2019 – St. Paul, Minn. – The Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC) continues a solid tradition of funding strong and vital statewide humanities projects with the announcement of a new grant making program and currently available grant opportunities. This year, the [Minnesota Humanities Center](#) (MHC) launched an impactful new grant making program, The **Community Partner Fund**, to support projects that foster collaboration between organizations addressing community-identified goals and opportunities. MHC is pleased to announce that [Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop](#) (MPWW) and [The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#) (NABS) have been recently awarded \$100,000 each for projects that elevate the stories of communities often marginalized or absent from dominant culture. Additionally MHC has several [funding opportunities](#) currently available for community-based programs.

Community Partner Fund awardee MPWW provides high quality creative writing classes in every Minnesota prison. With this award, MPWW will connect the thriving network of incarcerated writers served by MPWW to the strong network of publishers, platforms, and artistic venues in Minnesota. At prisons in Faribault, Lino Lakes, Moose Lake, Shakopee, and Stillwater, MPWW will work in close collaboration with Writers Collectives – self-governing groups of experienced incarcerated writers – to identify the partnerships and opportunities that would be most valuable to them.

"The grant from the Minnesota Humanities Center will create new platforms for the incarcerated community; by presenting their stories and voices to broader audiences, this project will also showcase the diversity and humanity of the men and women currently living behind prison walls," said Mike Alberti, Managing Director Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop.

NABS, also a Community Partner Fund awardee, leads in the pursuit of understanding and addressing the ongoing trauma created by the U.S. Indian Boarding School policy, which forced Indian children to attend schools where their languages and cultural practices were prohibited. For this project, NABS will partner with the Upper Sioux Nation to increase access to student records from the Pipestone Indian Boarding School, unveiling narratives and histories that have been intentionally hidden in order to oppress indigenous communities.

"This project amplifies a community's solution for change," said MHC CEO Kevin Lindsey. "Upper Sioux members requested that the entire story of this history be made accessible to boarding school survivors and their descendants in order to better understand the impact of the past and facilitate healing." NABS will scan, digitize, and conduct research using the records of Pipestone Indian Boarding School. Ultimately, these records will become part of the Upper Sioux tribal archive's physical collection and NABS' digital archive as the organization works to digitize and make accessible boarding school records to the community.

Rebecca Evan, MHC Board Member and grant review panelist said, "Both of these projects make visible the stories of people who are among the most marginalized members of our society, which aligns with MHC's values of sharing absent narratives, building relationships with diverse audiences, and supporting community-driven social change."

Current Grant and Funding Opportunities from MHC

MHC administers grant funds appropriated by the State of Minnesota Legislature to support the exemplary humanities work of individuals, nonprofits, schools, and collectives across Minnesota. **Current grant opportunities supported by Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage funds include:**

- [Hmong Cultural Heritage Grants](#), which are new competitive Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage funds to Hmong nonprofit organizations. **Deadline to apply is 11:59 pm, Dec. 4, 2019.**
- [Somali Cultural Heritage Grants](#), which are new competitive Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage funds to Somali nonprofit organizations. **Deadline to apply is 11:59 pm, Dec. 4, 2019.**
- [Cultural Identity Grants](#), which are new competitive Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage funds to American Indian and immigrant individuals and nonprofit organizations. **Deadline to apply is 11:59 pm, Dec. 4, 2019.**
- [Children's Museum Grants](#), which are new competitive Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage funds to children's museums through the 2019-2021 biennium. **Deadline to apply is 11:59 pm, Dec. 13, 2019.**
- [Humanities Innovation Lab](#), which supports organizations and individuals who want to test new humanities-based ideas and methods. **Proposals due 11:59 pm, Jan. 16, 2020.**

The Hmong Cultural Heritage, Somali Cultural Heritage, and Cultural Identity competitive grants fund programs that preserve and honor the diverse cultural heritage of Minnesotans, provide education and student outreach on cultural diversity, or empower communities to build their identity and culture. These grants, totaling \$1.7 million over two years, will be awarded in multiple rounds now through 2020.

The competitive Children's Museums Grants, totaling \$1.25 million over two years, support start-up costs or new exhibits and program development.

The Humanities Innovation Lab funds individuals or organizations who use humanities practices and subject matter to make small steps toward a big idea. It supports experimenting, playing, learning, and growing as the essential spark for humanities projects with public impact.

[More information about MHC's grant opportunities is available online.](#)

About the Minnesota Humanities Center

The Humanities Center connects our past, present, and future by bringing people together to increase understanding and spark change. Using story as a catalyst and the humanities to explore the question of what it means to be human, MHC seeks to create a just society that is curious, connected, and compassionate. MHC, founded in 1971, is a statewide nonprofit organization affiliated with and supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities. MHC operates a full-service Event Center in a historic building on St. Paul's East Side. More information available at mnhum.org.

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