



Virginia Foundation for the Humanities
Grant Program

Funding Opportunities
Guidelines and Application Instructions
Grant Application Cover Sheet and Budget Pages

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The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (VFH) was established in 1974 as a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the humanities, and to using the humanities to address issues of broad public concern. Currently, the VFH includes:

- The VFH Grant Program
- The VFH Fellowship Program
- The African American Heritage Program
- The Virginia Folklife Program
- A network of Regional Humanities Councils
- The Virginia Center for the Book
- The Virginia Festival of the Book
- Motheread[®] and Fatheread[®] of Virginia
- Online Virginia Encyclopedia
- The South Atlantic Humanities Center
- The Bill of Rights, The Courts, and The Law
- The Institute on Violence and Survival
- Re-imagining Ireland conference, film, and book
- Virginia Arts of the Book Center
- VFH Radio
- VFH Media Center
- Collaborative projects including:
 - Support for the Virginia Association of Museums
 - Administration of the Southern Humanities Media Fund
 - Production of "With Good Reason," a weekly radio series

In all its programs, the VFH works to make scholarship accessible; to promote thoughtful discussion of important issues; and to broaden the range of educational opportunities available to all citizens, throughout Virginia and nationwide. We believe that "Ideas Matter," that the humanities are—and always have been—necessary to a secure and sustainable democracy.

THE HUMANITIES

The Humanities are sometimes defined as a set of disciplines: the study of history, literature, and philosophy. But they also include other kinds of explorations into the legal, religious, and folk traditions (both past and present), for example, that define human experience. They can also include critical approaches to the arts, science, technology, or politics, and the search for meaning in any human endeavor.

Reading and writing, storytelling, research, and many forms of public dialogue and conversation are the tools of the humanities. They can be used to assist individuals and groups who are seeking their own answers to complex and difficult questions: about the nature of community and what it means to be a free and responsible human being; about the importance of tradition or the meaning of the past; about how to define what is most valuable and preserve it in the face of rapid economic and social change.

The humanities are not static; they are continually being enriched by new works, new discoveries, and new ideas.

Above all, the humanities are accessible: they belong to every person, regardless of educational or cultural background. They can also be sources of great enjoyment and excitement, connecting us with great books, ancient wisdom, fresh insights, and the achievements of many cultures.

THE GRANT PROGRAM

History and Goals

The VFH Grant Program responds directly to the interests and concerns of local communities in Virginia, and to the needs of the educational organizations that serve them.

Since 1974, the VFH has awarded more than 2,500 individual grants, supporting tens of thousands of separate activities, and serving

audiences in every city and county in Virginia.

Grants provide financial support for exhibits, public forums and discussions, media programs (film, video, radio, and digital media), publications, research, teachers' institutes and seminars, oral history projects, lectures and conferences, and other kinds of programs that draw on the resources of the humanities, address important issues, and enrich the cultural life of the state.

The Goals of the VFH Grant Program are:

- To encourage the development of high-quality educational programs in the humanities

- To support accessible programs that reach the broadest possible audience in Virginia

- To support the work of humanities institutions—museums, libraries, historical societies, colleges and universities—as well as other non-profit organizations working within the humanities

- To explore the stories that define Virginia and its people, and to address the issues that are most important to communities in Virginia.

Priorities of the Grant Program

The grant programs offered by the VFH are open to proposals on a wide range of subjects. Six key areas of priority have been established by the VFH for its work in Virginia, and these are also subjects of particular interest for the Grant Program. They include:

- Books, Reading, and Literacy

- Rights and Responsibilities

- Media and Culture

- Violence and Survival

- Science, Technology, and Society

- Virginia History

Other areas of long-term interest and commitment for the VFH and its grant programs include:

- Teacher education programs (especially those related to Virginia's Standards of Learning)

- African American history and culture

- Native American history and culture

- The history and culture of other minority communities in Virginia

- Virginia's folklife and traditional cultures

- The future of rural Virginia

In addition, the Foundation has identified these special interests and priorities for the Grant Program:

- Preparing for 2007
- Appalachian history and culture
- Virginia's maritime communities and cultures
- Virginia's agricultural heritage

Note

While we have identified these subject areas as being of special interest, our interests and our funding for the Grant Program are not confined to these topics. Proposals on other subjects are welcome and encouraged.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The VFH offers three kinds of grants, each with its own goals and requirements.

The Open Grant Program

Consolidates our former "Core" and "Targeted" grant opportunities (including Folklife Grants) into a single program that is open to proposals on a wide range of subjects, for projects in any format consistent with our current guidelines. There is no limit on the amount that can be requested, but applicants are advised that most of our grants in this category fall within the \$3-10,000 range, and that grants over \$10,000 are rare. Proposals are considered in three annual grant cycles: February 1, May 1, and October 1. The application should include:

- A narrative, normally 4-6 pages, that addresses all of the proposal requirements outlined on page 5
- Attachments, as indicated on page 5
- Completed Cover Sheet and Budget pages

Draft proposals are strongly encouraged.

Discretionary Grant Program

Allows the VFH to make smaller grants of up to \$2,500 at any time during the year. These grants may be used to plan larger projects, or to carry out programs where only a modest amount of funding is required. Proposals are submitted in

the form of a letter—usually 2-3 pages—that addresses all of the proposal requirements outlined on page 5 [except where inapplicable], but in a very brief and concise format. The proposal must include an itemized budget for the use of the funds requested, but separate application cover sheets and budget pages are not required. For Discretionary Grants, funding decisions are normally made within ~~ten (10) days~~ following our receipt of the letter-proposal. Applicants are strongly urged to contact VFH staff before submitting a Discretionary Grant proposal.

African American History Grant Program

Originally designed as a complement to the African American Heritage Trails initiative, the goals of this grant program are to increase public understanding of African American history and culture, to support research and documentation of African American historic sites, to strengthen institutions that interpret Virginia's African American history, and to provide a solid intellectual foundation for African American heritage tourism in every region of Virginia.

Proposals for amounts up to \$3,000 are submitted in the form of a letter—usually 2-3 pages—that addresses all of the proposal requirements outlined on page 5 [except where inapplicable], but in a brief and concise format. A completed Application Cover Sheet and Budget page are required. Proposals will be considered only at the February 1 deadline. VFH staff will not review draft proposals or other written materials prior to submission of the proposal, but applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with VFH staff in advance.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility

Any incorporated non-profit organization in Virginia is eligible to apply. Incorporated non-profit organizations based outside of Virginia are also eligible if their project deals with a subject or subjects directly related to Virginia and a significant audience within the state is anticipated.

Application Deadlines

OPEN GRANT PROGRAM

- February 1 [Decisions in mid March]
- May 1 [Decisions in mid June]
- October 1 [Decisions in mid December]

DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAM


- None [Decisions normally within 10 business days following receipt of the application]

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY GRANT PROGRAM

- February 1 [Decisions in mid March]

Proposal Requirements

Except as noted elsewhere all grant applications should include the following:

- VFH cover sheet and budget pages (Budget page must be signed in original ink)
- A separate narrative that provides:
 - A rationale or statement of need, why the project is important
 - A concise but thorough description of the project
 - An explanation of the relationship between the work proposed and the mission of the applicant organization
 - A list of key project personnel and a description of their role(s)
 - Evidence of the direct involvement of humanities scholars (see Notes, page 6)
 - A plan of work, including a schedule for completion of the project
 - Identification of audiences to be served
 - A plan for promoting the project and reaching the audience(s) identified
 - A description of project outcomes and anticipated benefits
 - A description of how the project's success will be evaluated
- Resumes or vitae for key project personnel (Open Grant Program, only) 
- Letters of support (suggested but not required)
- Additional materials that may support the application (a list of exhibit items, for example)
- Any other materials or information as described in the Special Guidelines section, pages 6-8.

Number of Copies

OPEN GRANT PROGRAM

Original and 15 copies (16 proposals in total)

DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAM

Original only

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY GRANT PROGRAM

Original and 15 copies (16 proposals in total)

Other Requirements

All VFH grants must be matched with at least an equal amount of Cost Share, which can be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions from non-Federal sources. Sources and amounts of anticipated Cost Share should be indicated at the time of the proposal. Proposals must be postmarked by the application deadline. Facsimile and electronic submissions will not be accepted. Use white, letter size paper. Staple each complete copy, including the original, in the upper left-hand corner. Do not use binders, covers, or title pages.

Restrictions on Funding

VFH Grants may not be used to support the following:

- Advocacy or political action programs that promote a particular solution or point of view
- Creative or performing arts, unless they are used in a supporting role to enhance discussion of issues
- Research or writing unless these are integral to programs having a direct public audience
- Subvention of publications
- Courses for credit, except those designed especially for teachers
- Acquisition of equipment
- Building construction, restoration, or preservation
- Refreshments or entertainment
- Meals, other than necessary travel expenses for program personnel
- International travel
- Indirect costs
- Projects whose primary audience is children or youth

Draft Proposals and Staff Assistance

VFH staff is available to advise prospective applicants at any stage of the process. All applicants are urged to contact the staff prior to submission of their proposals. In cases where draft proposals are permitted (See Grant Opportunities section, page 4), these may be submitted by fax, hard copy, or as e-mail attachments. Please include the address and phone number of the applicant organization and the project director on all draft proposals, regardless of format. We recommend that drafts be submitted at least three weeks prior to the deadline to allow time for a thorough staff review.



Review Procedures and Criteria

Applications are reviewed on a competitive basis. Decisions are made by the VFH Board of Directors, in consultation with the Virginia Foundation staff. In making its decisions, the Board considers the following: the significance of the project and its overall prospects for success; the involvement of the humanities and humanities scholars in the project; the qualifications and experience of the project personnel; the immediate and long-term impact of the project on a well-defined target audience, which may and generally should include the general public; and the relationship of the project to the goals and priorities of the VFH and the Grant Program.

The number and size of grants awarded in any cycle or year are limited by the funds available. Following the guidelines and meeting all the stated eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding. In choosing among equally compelling projects, the VFH may consider geographic distribution, diversity of institutions and communities to be served, and other factors when making decisions. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions within ten (10) days following any action taken by the Board. Inquiries about the status of proposals during the review period are strongly discouraged.

Notes

The participation of all speakers, advisors, consultants and other project personnel should be confirmed by the time the proposal is submitted

The term “humanities scholar” may include

- Teaching or research college faculty

- Local historians or independent scholars who have a strong record of scholarship

- Professional museum curators, librarians, writers, and others whose work is strongly grounded in the humanities

- Persons representing various cultural traditions—a Native American tribal chief, for example—if they are recognized as spokespersons for their traditions.

In all cases, key personnel must be highly qualified and clearly able to assume the role(s) they have been assigned.

Budgets often require itemization beyond the basic categories provided on the VFH Budget Form. In such cases, the completed Budget Form and a supplemental itemization should be included.

SPECIAL GUIDELINES

Film and Video Grants

The VFH prefers to support film and video projects in the early stages of their development, usually in the pre-production stage. Typically, our funds are awarded for research and script development, or for the preparation of comprehensive “treatments.” In rare instances, the Foundation will consider providing production support, especially where the film is intended primarily for local or institutional use, not statewide or national broadcast. Proposals for production support must include a script or comprehensive treatment and a fully developed plan for broadcast and/or distribution.

Preference is given to film projects that explore the history and culture of Virginia and its communities, and to those that deal with issues of direct concern to Virginians. Film and video projects that examine the history and culture of the American South should be directed to the Southern Humanities Media Fund, which VFH administers (see Other Funding Opportunities section, pages 8-9).

All media project applications should be accompanied by samples of the producer's previous work. Applications for production support should include rough-cut footage of the proposed program. Applications for film and video projects should follow the guidelines and instructions that apply to all VFH grants. Budgets for film and video projects are often complex. Further itemization of the budget (beyond the general categories listed on the required budget form) is required unless staff advises to the contrary.

Teachers' Institutes and Seminars

Previous VFH grants have been used to support a broad range of institutes and seminars designed to serve the needs of Virginia's teachers: more than 150 programs to-date. Funding for teachers' institutes remains a high priority for us. In general, these programs should focus on content rather than on pedagogy and should include the development of curriculum materials or other resources that can be used directly in the classroom. Preference will be given to institutes and seminars that promote collaboration and dialogue among teachers from various jurisdictions, across disciplines, and between teachers and scholars—usually college and university faculty. We especially encourage applications from colleges and universities, as well as programs that are directly related to the SOL requirements (see below). Virginia's African American history and folklife traditions are two areas of particular interest.

Applications for teachers' institutes and seminars should follow the guidelines and instructions that apply to all VFH grants. In addition, these proposals should:

- Demonstrate that teachers have been consulted in planning the project
- Demonstrate support from the school systems that will be served
- Provide a detailed plan for promoting the program and recruiting teachers
- Include direct outreach to individual teachers through mailings, electronic list-serves, and other means

Explain how the program content is related to specific SOL requirements

Provide teachers with the means to acquire recertification points, graduate-level credit, or both as a result of their participation

Include a detailed syllabus or outline

Include a plan for evaluating the program's subsequent classroom impact

If curriculum materials are being developed, provide an explanation of how these will be made available to teachers, and in what format

In most cases, participation should be limited to no more than 25 teachers. Sponsoring colleges and universities whose policies permit the waiver of tuition (for graduate credit) are strongly encouraged to do so. Teachers may be paid a modest stipend to cover travel or in cases where tuition waivers are not granted.

Digital Media Projects

Digital media projects—Websites and CD-ROM publications—are eligible for VFH support when strong humanities content and the likelihood of a significant public audience are clearly demonstrated. The Foundation prefers to lend its support in the early stages of digital media project development, where the emphasis is on planning, research, the contributions of humanities scholars, and creation of the project's content, rather than on technical production or website management. Preference will also be given to projects that employ more than one format: for example, the development of an on-line exhibit that is also produced in traditional form; or research for a CD-ROM publication that also results in a printed book.

Applications for digital media projects should follow the guidelines and instructions that apply to all VFH grants. In addition, these proposals should include:

- Assurance that the website will conform to standards set by the World Wide Web Consortium (WC3)
 - Websites should be accessible via one or more commonly used Web browser(s)
 - Websites and CD-ROMS should comply with section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act

An outline or summary of the content, how it will be created and by whom, emphasizing both the involvement of humanities scholars and the technical expertise of the project personnel

A description of the website's interactive features—with emphasis on the opportunities for users to ask questions, comment, or engage in dialogue

A description of how the website will be maintained and by whom (a "Webmaster" or site administrator must be named and his/her qualifications and duties clearly described)

An indication of how long the website is to be maintained (at least one year in most cases), including a timetable for making changes and updating the site, if necessary. Humanities scholars should have a clearly defined role in this process.

A discussion of links to the main website

Primary links (those established within the VFH-funded site) may only be made to other sites sponsored and maintained by non-profit organizations

Linked sites must be educational in nature and must not promote a particular doctrine or viewpoint

A link to the VFH website must be provided and the VFH logo prominently displayed

Sites that rely entirely upon links and those that do not contain humanities content of their own are not eligible for VFH support

A promotion plan that includes both digital and non-digital media.

While the VFH recognizes the importance of digital media and their ability to reach well beyond the limits of more traditional programs, we also recognize that these media are still not universally accessible. Successful proposals for digital media projects will demonstrate that these media are the best means of reaching the desired audience, and that they are being used in concert with other program formats wherever possible.

Oral History Projects

Oral history is an important tool for documenting many aspects of community life, and it can be used effectively in a wide range of settings. In considering proposals for oral history projects, the Foundation looks for evidence that the products will be of high quality; that they will

create an accurate and meaningful picture through the memories being captured; and that they will be accessible to and used by members of the community or communities from which the histories are being gathered.

Applications for oral history projects should follow the guidelines and instructions that apply to all VFH grants. In addition, these proposals should include:

Evidence that key members of the project team have both training and experience in conducting oral history projects

Identification of the interviewers or a clear description of how they will be chosen

A detailed discussion of the interviewers' qualifications, how they will be trained and by whom, and how and by whom their work will be guided during the interview process

A list of interview questions or a well-defined set of themes to be explored in the interviews

A discussion of how the oral histories will be used

Will they be transcribed, or edited? By whom?

Will they be placed in a permanent archive? Where?

How will they be recorded (analog or digital audio, mini-disc, video)?

Will they become part of an exhibit, website, or publication?

A description of the types of recording equipment to be used

A discussion of how the recorded materials will be preserved and catalogued for future use

Clear evidence of support from the community, communities, or individual(s) being documented

A carefully developed research plan in which the scope of the project (residents of a neighborhood, workers in a particular occupation, participants in an historical event or movement, etc.) and its goals are well-defined.

OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Fellowships

The VFH awards residential fellowships to support individual research and writing in the humanities. These awards normally include a

stipend, and terms of residence generally range from one month to one year. Fellows receive offices at the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, library privileges at the University of Virginia, and modest administrative support. College and university-affiliated and independent scholars, teachers, and museum, government, library, media, and other professionals are eligible to apply. The annual application deadline is October 15. For further information, contact Roberta Culbertson, Director of Fellowships and Research, at VFH.

Southern Humanities Media Fund

The VFH administers the Southern Humanities Media Fund, which was established by a consortium of state humanities councils to support film, television, and radio projects that explore Southern history and culture and the region's changing economic, social, and political life. The Fund has an annual grant cycle with a two-step application process. Preliminary applications must be postmarked on or before the third Friday in October. For further information and detailed application guidelines, contact Andrew Wyndham, Director of Media Programs, at VFH.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For further information and assistance, contact David Bearinger, Director of Grants and Public Programs, at VFH.

Additional information on the VFH Grant Program can be found on the Foundation's Website at www.virginiafoundation.org.

The Virginia Foundation
for the Humanities

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Fax: 434-296-4714

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David Bearinger
Director of Grants and Public Programs



Grant Application Cover Sheet

Virginia House District Virginia Senate District Congressional District

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION

Address

Phone

Fax

E-mail

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Address

Phone

Fax

E-mail

FISCAL OFFICER

Address

Phone

Fax

E-mail

PROJECT TITLE

Date(s)

Location(s)

Estimated Attendance

Fee (if any)

VFH FUNDS REQUESTED

Cost Share

TOTAL

FORMAT AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT (150 words or less)

HAVE FUNDS FOR THIS PROJECT BEEN SOUGHT ELSEWHERE? No Yes
(If yes, explain in project description.)

NAMES AND POSITIONS OF THOSE INVOLVED IN PLANNING THE PROGRAM.
(Include name, address, telephone number , and academic discipline or professional field for each person listed.)

CONSULTANTS, RESOURCE PERSONNEL, AND SPEAKERS WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM.
(Include name, address, telephone number and academic discipline or professional field for each person listed.)

Proposed Budget

	VFH Funds Requested ¹	Cost Share Cash ²	Cost Share In-Kind ²	Total
SALARIES (Itemize)				
STIPENDS/HONORARIA ³ (Itemize)				
TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE (Itemize)				
SUPPLIES (Itemize)				
PROMOTION				
PRINTING				
POSTAGE				
TELEPHONE				
EQUIPMENT RENTAL				
FACILITIES RENTAL				
OTHER (Itemize)				
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS				

Signature of Project Director*

Date

Signature of Financial Officer*

Date

¹ Not more than 50% of the total cost of the project.

² Cost share funds, cash and in-kind (non-cash), to be contributed from non-federal sources other than VFH.

³ No more than \$500 of VFH funds may be paid to any one speaker for one presentation or one day's participation.

If necessary, please attach a more detailed itemization of funds requested. Recipients of VFH funds for salaries and honoraria must be named. Travel, printing, and promotion costs, in particular, should be itemized in detail or otherwise explained.

* This page must be signed in original ink. Applications submitted without original ink signatures will not be accepted. The roles of Project Director and Financial Officer cannot be served by the same individual.