



## Ohio History Fund Fact Sheet 2020-2021

### Ohio History Fund

The Ohio History Fund is a competitive matching grant program that funds local history, pre-history, and historic preservation projects in Ohio.

Money for History Fund grants comes from the voluntary contributions of individual Ohioans, who donate to the program in three ways:

- 1) "Ohio History Fund" tax check-off on their state tax return
- 2) Purchase Ohio History "mastodon" license plates
- 3) Tax-deductible donations to the Ohio History Connection for the History Fund.

***The more the History Fund receives in donations, the more grants the History Fund makes.***

### Who can apply for a History Fund grant?

- Ohio-based, nonprofit organizations
- Public entities in Ohio: units of local government, public libraries, educational institutions
- Independent non-profits operating Ohio History Connection sites under "site management agreements." *Functions and fiscal responsibilities assigned to the Ohio History Connection per management agreements are **not eligible** for History Fund grants.*

**Eligible applicants** include museums, public libraries, genealogical societies, university archives and special collections, historic preservation groups, archeological societies, county records management offices, "friends" groups, and others.

**Ineligible applicants** include for-profit businesses, private individuals, and the Ohio History Connection.

### What activities are eligible?

History projects that fall under one of three categories:

1. Programs & Collections
2. Bricks & Mortar
3. Organizational Development

The History Fund has supported the replacement of roofs and windows in historic buildings, museum collection storage projects, “travelling truck” educational programs, exhibit development, digitization of archival materials and historic photographs, archeological surveys, oral history, and needs assessments. Many kinds of projects are eligible.

*Buildings eligible for Bricks & Mortar grants must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places and/or be under the protection of local historic preservation ordinances. Historic buildings under private ownership are not eligible for History Fund grants.*

### **How Much Can We Request? What’s the Match Requirement?**

Grants awards can range from \$1,000 - \$20,000 and the amount of matching support from applicants can range from a minimum of 20% – 40% of the total project’s cost, depending on the grant category (Bricks & Mortar, and Organizational Development Programs & Collections).

Match for a History Fund grant can take many forms: cash, donated goods and services, and volunteer and/or staff time. Go to [www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund) - “History Fund Guidelines” for details

### **Deadlines**

Application deadline for current cycle is **October 1, 2020** (by 11:59 pm).

Grant review period is October – February. Applicants notified of award status in mid-February. Grant recipients publically announced at Statehood Day (last week February-first week March)

### **How to Apply**

Visit [www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund), the Ohio History Fund’s website for an online application, a list of funded projects, and more information. Applications are accepted online only, but the online application system is easy to use and help is a phone call away

### **Questions? Contact:**

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# How to Write a Good Grant

## Ohio History Fund – Spring 2018

- Read and understand grant guidelines and application instructions before you start writing
  - Contact the grant-maker with questions
- Follow the directions
  - Contact the grant-maker with questions
- Attend trainings the grant-maker offers
  - History Fund webinars
- Give yourself plenty of time to write the grant application – deadline are deadlines.
  - Set smaller internal deadlines to keep grant writing on track
- Assemble the materials you need to support your application
  - What materials? See handout, **Keep Handy when Writing Grants + Bibliography**
- Recruit a proofreader to review your application.
  - Identify typos
  - Narrative and budget make sense?
  - If they were the grant maker, would they fund it – why or why not? Turn the why nots into whys
- Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?
- Assume that the review panelists evaluating your application know little about your organization but A LOT about the type of project.
- Answer the question! - *SLIDE*
- One of the first sentences in your narrative should concisely describe what you plan to do.
  - “With a grant of \$3,000 from the History Fund, the XYZ Historical Society will digitize five historic county atlases and publish them on the Society’s website...”
- Explain how the project addresses standards and best practices for projects of this type - *SLIDE*
- Every sentence should convince the reviewer that this project deserves support

### ***Things we hear from reviewers that could mean trouble...***

- “This schedule is very ambitious”
- “I don’t understand this project. What exactly do they want to do?”
- “Why do they need to do this project now?”
- “Why is this in the budget? It’s not mentioned in the project narrative.”
- “Why is this in project narrative? It’s not listed in the budget.”
- “Did anybody proofread this before submitting it?”

*So...*

- Be crystal clear about what you are asking for and why you need it
- Be clear about how you will accomplish the project
- Tell us whose doing the work and why they’re qualified
- Set a realistic schedule for the completion of the project
- Make sure the items you want to pay for in the budget are mentioned in the narrative. Make sure the items you describe in the narrative are included in the budget.
- Proofread! Check your math!

### **In summary, a competitive grant proposal:**

- Outlines a problem
- Describes your solution to that problem and why it’s the best one
- Explains how that solution will benefit your organization and community
- Describes how support from the History Fund will enable you to implement that solution, according to the Fund’s guidelines



## Keep Handy when Writing Grants + Bibliography

### Ohio History Fund – Spring 2018

- Calculator
- Mission statement of museum or its governing organization\*\*
- State of Ohio Non-profit Entity Number and assurance that you are classed as an “Active” organization by the Ohio Secretary of State’s Office\*\*
- Tax exempt letter from IRS\*\*
- Most recent 990 Form – Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax\*\*
- Most recent budget, approved by the board of trustees and against which you measure your organization’s actual income / expenses for the current year
- Information about your state and federal legislators:\*\*
  - Ohio House District Number and Representative Name
  - Ohio Senate District Number and Representative Name
  - Congressional District Number and Name of Member of Congress
  - U.S. Senator’s Names for Ohio
- Year organization was founded and list of 3 – 5 of the organization’s greatest accomplishments in the past 5 or so years\*\*
- Case Statement
  - How does this organization help people?
  - Who do we help?
  - What vital services do we offer?
  - What is our organization’s track record?
  - What are our plans for the future?
  - How do we use our money?
  - Why do we deserve support?

(\*\*required for History Fund application)

## Bibliography for Grant-Writers

Brophy, S.S. *Is Your Museum Grant Ready: Assessing Your Organization's Potential for Funding*; American Association for State and Local History Book Series; AltaMira Press: Lanham, MD, 2005.

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Hruska, B. "Oh Just Write a Grant and Fix the Building: Landing Grants to Support Your Institution," in Catlin-Legutko, C. and Klingler, S. Eds., *Small Museum Tool Kit 2: Financial Resource Development and Management*; American Association for State and Local History Book Series; AltaMira Press: Lanham, MD, 2012, 57-80.