



Alabama Historical Records Advisory Board

GRANTS FOR HISTORICAL RECORDS PRESERVATION Guidelines, Application Instructions and Application Form 2008-2009

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GRANT PROJECT GUIDELINES

The Alabama Historical Records Advisory Board (HRAB), using funds provided by the National Historical Preservation and Records Commission (NHPRC), is offering grants to “assist local governments and historical repositories in developing comprehensive, accessible, and efficiently managed documents and records preservation programs.” Government Records Division archivists of the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) serve as HRAB staff and will work with grant recipients to complete their projects.

Who is Eligible for a Grant?

Any county or municipal government or agency is eligible to apply for a grant. Unlike our earlier grant program (1993-96), this one is also open to non-profit historical entities, such as historical associations, genealogical societies, and non-government archives and museums. Another difference from the earlier program is that circuit courts and their records may be included in grant projects. We especially encourage cooperative efforts in which government agencies and non-profit entities work together to preserve their community’s historical records.

What Kinds of Projects Can Be Funded?

During this initial phase of the grant program, the HRAB has only \$50,000 to allocate statewide. Grant projects will therefore need to be relatively small and inexpensive. Large-scale reformatting projects (microfilm or digital imaging) are too costly to be funded at this time, although such projects may be eligible if funds increase. The HRAB can support most other types of projects, on the understanding that individual awards will not exceed \$3,000. Examples of eligible projects might include:

- **Conducting an inventory and “clean-up” project.** Localities can hire temporary workers (perhaps students from a local college) to inventory neglected records storage areas, supervised by office staff. Applying ADAH records disposition authorities (RDAs), they can dispose of outdated temporary records occupying needed space, allowing better access to historical records that must be preserved.
- **Improving storage conditions for historical records.** Once disposable records have been removed from storage areas, grant funds may be used for clearing out non-record clutter; making minor repairs or renovations; purchasing equipment to control humidity, temperature, mold, and ultraviolet light; and acquiring archival shelving, boxes, and file folders to house historical records. Other equipment eligible for purchase with grant funds includes humidifiers, dehumidifiers, hygrothermographs, and HEPA vacuum cleaners.
- **Cataloging, indexing, or preparing finding aids for historical records.** Grant funds may be used (within the \$3,000 project limit) to purchase computers, scanners, and software for cataloging, indexing, and creating finding aides for records having historical

or genealogical value. Labor for such projects can be counted as part of the agency's cost-share.

- **Hiring an archival consultant.** Although ADAH staff can offer limited on-site assistance free of charge, a consultant can provide long-term, comprehensive guidance in—for example—planning a local archives program, assessing potential repositories for historical records, assessing environmental conditions in existing storage areas, or identifying additional funding sources for preserving records. ADAH can refer applicants to experienced archival consultants, and grant funds will cover up to \$300 per day of the consultant's fee.
- **Undertaking limited conservation or reformatting projects.** Examples of such projects might include restoring early minute books, encapsulating fragile documents, scanning historical photographs, or microfilming old county newspapers (those not microfilmed under the Alabama Newspaper Project). All items eligible for conservation must qualify as historical records. Projects must be limited enough in scope to meet restrictions on grant funding. Applicants must describe the methods to be used for conserving/reformatting records in detail, to ensure they comply with recognized archival practice.

Because ADAH will conduct disaster planning workshops under a forthcoming program sponsored by the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), disaster planning projects are not eligible under this grant program. The HRAB will consider other ideas for projects, so long as they fall under the aegis of historical records preservation. If an applicant wishes, HRAB staff will review a draft application and counsel the applicant on making the proposal as competitive as possible.

Are There Any Restrictions on Grant Funds?

Grant funds may not be used as salary for existing staff positions, for any records lacking an Alabama connection, or for any records that will not be open to the public. When evaluating grant proposals, the HRAB may give preference to projects that make record information more widely accessible, rather than preserving original records as artifacts. Although projects to scan or microfilm historical records may be eligible for limited support, the amount awarded is unlikely to cover major equipment purchases or large-scale reformatting work.

Travel. In some cases, grant funds may be used to cover project travel costs. For example, a county government developing an archives might wish to visit other county archives. To qualify for grant funds, all travel must be included in a project's application or—if an unexpected opportunity arises during the grant period—must be authorized beforehand by HRAB staff.

Equipment, Supplies, Materials, and Services. To qualify for grant funds, all equipment, supplies, and services must be purchased during the grant period and relate directly to the project. Itemized cost estimates from vendors must be included with the application, and supplies and services acquired from vendors must be approved by HRAB staff. Records

reformatting work must meet archival standards (such as ANSI/AIIM standards for silver halide microfilm). For assistance in identifying standards and locating qualified vendors, consult HRAB staff.

What Are the Responsibilities of Grant Recipients?

Each applicant must be prepared to provide a 50% cost-share of the total project budget. The local share may consist of direct financial contributions (such as hiring staff or purchasing equipment), a percentage of time devoted to the project by current staff, or a combination of the two.

Grant recipients will be required to document all project expenditures (both grant funds and cost-sharing) and to file a final financial report. HRAB staff or other authorized government entities have the right to audit projects. Each grant recipient must also submit a final narrative report, describing how successfully the goals outlined in the project's application were accomplished.

How Do I Apply for a Grant? How Are the Awards Decided? When Must Grant Projects Be Completed?

A grant application form and detailed instructions are included in this booklet. Completed applications will be reviewed by HRAB staff (archivists of the ADAH Government Records Division), evaluated by the HRAB's grant review committee, and submitted to the entire board for decisions on awards. Grant proposals may be fully funded, partially funded, or rejected by the board

Here is a timetable for the 2009 grant cycle:

July-August 2008:	Information on grant program publicized.
October 2008:	HRAB staff holds grant writing training sessions.
November-December 2008:	HRAB staff accepts and reviews draft grant applications.
January 31, 2009:	Final grant applications due.
February-March 2009:	Review of grant applications by HRAB and grant review committee.
April 1, 2009:	HRAB announces grant awards. Projects begin work.
September 30, 2009:	Final reports due from grant projects.

Note: Actual starting and ending dates for individual projects may vary within the parameters listed for a grant cycle. A project may complete its work before the formal ending date. It *must* complete work—and submit a final report—by the formal ending date, unless the project has received an extension in advance.

GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

(the Local Records Grant Application form follows these instructions)

Front Page (Summary Information)

The purpose of this page is to provide a quick summary of the grant proposal for review by HRAB project staff and board members.

Agency/Entity Applying. List the name of your local government agency or historical entity, e.g.: “Kudzu County Probate Office, Town of Bug Tussle, Malaria County Genealogical Society.”

Federal Employee Identification Number. If your agency or entity has a Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN), or a tax-free number, list it here.

Project Director. This should be the person primarily responsible for directing grant activities; ensuring that the project is successfully completed; complying with grant guidelines; supervising project workers; and coordinating with vendors, consultants, and HRAB staff. The director is also responsible for submitting the project’s reports. The director might not be the grant’s financial administrator (usually the agency’s chief financial officer) or the project’s authorizing official (usually the head of the agency), but both of them should sign the application form. Please provide all contact information for the director that is requested, as this person will be the HRAB’s primary contact for the project.

Description of Grant Project

Title of Project. The title should be a brief description of what the project proposes to accomplish, e.g.: “Inventory and Reorganization of Courthouse Records Storage Areas,” “Municipal Archives Development Project,” “Disaster Plan for Kudzu County Public Library,” “Microfilming Historical Newspapers Held by the Bug Tussle Historical Society.”

Starting Date/Ending Date. List the dates the project will begin and end its work. (Dates for the grant cycle are found on page 3 of the application guidelines.)

Description of Grant Project. This should be only a brief summary, confined to the space provided. The grant application narrative permits applicants to use up to five (5) double-spaced pages for describing the project in detail.

Funding Required for Project. Here, list the summary budget information for the project, using the “TOTAL GRANT COST” figures compiled at the end of the application form. Remember that the HRAB requires all grant recipients to provide a 50% cost-share of the total project budget. The local match may be either cash or in-kind contributions (such as the value of staff time, supplies, and services the recipient devotes to the project).

Certificate of Authorization. The certificate should be signed by the person who is authorized to speak for the agency's governing body, verifying that information in the application is complete and accurate and that the agency will comply with all terms and conditions of the grant award.

BUDGET FORM

Salaries and Wages. List the names and titles of all persons (staff, volunteers and consultants) who will work on the grant project. Include the salary or wages each will receive during the grant period. Examples of methods for calculating salary are shown below:

- A salaried agency employee who devotes 10% of his/her time to a four-month project would calculate grant-related salary by multiplying 4 months x 1 month's salary x 10%. The resulting figure would be listed under "local funds" as part of the agency's cost share.
- A person hired full-time to work on the project, and paid with grant funds, would calculate salary as 4 months x 1 month's salary x 100%. The total would be listed in the "grant funds" column.
- Applicants may increase the working hours of existing part-time staff to fulfill grant-related duties and may pay staff with grant funds for work directly related to the project. However, grant funds may *not* be used to replace local funding for existing full-time positions.
- Volunteers may be used on projects, and the value of their work included as part of the grant recipient's cost share. The HRAB has directed that volunteer labor may be calculated at the rate of \$8.00 per hour.
- **Consultants.** List the names of any consultants hired for the project. In the application narrative, explain fully what the consultant is expected to do (subjects on which advice is sought, specific tasks to be performed). *Be sure to include the consultant's résumé with the application.* The consultant will be expected to provide the project director with a written report, including detailed recommendations, which should accompany the project's final report. Unless a flat fee can be quoted, calculate payment by multiplying the anticipated daily/hourly rate by the number of days the consultant will work. List this total under "grant funds" or "local funds," as appropriate. Grant funds may be used to pay consultants up to \$300 per day for a maximum of 10 days. Travel expenses may also be included, reimbursed at the rate outlined for travel.

Equipment, Supplies, and Materials/Services. Estimated costs should be itemized and listed under "grant funds" or "local funds" as appropriate. For all grant-funded equipment, supplies, and services, product specifications and vendor price quotations must accompany the application.

Travel. If the project's work plan includes travel, list the anticipated number of trips, the number of people participating, and the estimated cost. Include *per diem*, room and board, and/or the travel reimbursement rate, as applicable. The use of grant funds for travel is limited to the maximum amounts authorized by your locality's travel reimbursement policy. Non-government entities may use the state's *per diem* rates: 58½ cents per mile for mileage, \$75 per day for overnight travel (including meals and lodging), \$30 for day trips over 12 hours, and \$11.25 for trips of 6-12 hours.

Summary Budget. Here, enter the subtotals for the various project categories listed, using the "grant funds" or "local funds" columns as appropriate. Add up the subtotals to obtain the "TOTAL GRANT COST." The final figures should be identical to the "Total Cost" figure on page 1 of the application form. Double-check that all expenditures proposed in the narrative are accounted for in the budget, and that all expenses listed in the budget are described and justified in the narrative.

Financial Administrator of Grant. List the name, title, and contact information for the person who has responsibility for overseeing and documenting expenditures on the grant project. (Normally, this person will be the agency's chief financial officer.) The financial administrator will be responsible for ensuring that all financial terms and conditions of the grant are met and for preparing the project's final financial report.

The Grant Application Narrative

The grant application narrative should be typed on 8½ x 11" paper, double-spaced, with numbered pages. It should be no more than five (5) pages long and should be organized as follows:

Statement of the Problem. Describe the records the project intends to preserve: their content, quantity or volume, age, condition, and historical value. What conditions impede access to them or threaten their long-term preservation? Who has legal custody of them? Will that person or agency cooperate in the grant project? How are you, as the grant applicant, qualified to help?

Proposed Project. Describe how the project will solve the problems you have outlined. What are your goals? What specific activities are proposed during the grant period? What short- and long-term benefits will they provide? If the project establishes an on-going program, what evidence can you offer of continued funding once the grant expires?

Plan of Work. The plan of work is all-important. It should set up an orderly process for completing project goals during the grant period and describe specific steps. The duties of all project staff, consultants, and vendors should be outlined in detail. A logical timeline of activities will demonstrate that the project has been well planned and, if funded, can successfully complete its work within the time provided.