



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

NATIONAL HISTORICAL
PUBLICATIONS
& RECORDS COMMISSION

The attached document contains the Grant Narrative of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Be aware that minor changes may have been made to the plan of work and other portions of the proposed project in response to comments made during the review process. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations.

Prospective applicants should consult the NHPRC's application guidelines at <https://www.archives.gov/nhprc/apply> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NHPRC staff member listed in the grant announcement well before a grant deadline. Prospective applicants are also strongly encouraged to submit a draft application by the deadline listed in the grant announcement.

The Commission welcomes collaborations that target institutional advancement for small and underserved local archives and repositories, **especially those with collections that focus on the voices and perspectives of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.**

Project Title: Arab American Archives Collaborative: Promoting Greater Public Discovery of Arab American Collections

Institution: Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services

Project Director: Matthew Stiffler

Grant Program: Archives Collaboratives (Implementation)

***Arab American Archives Collaborative: Promoting Greater Public Discovery of
Arab American Collections***

Project Narrative

I. Overview

- **Summary and Introduction**

The Arab American National Museum (AANM) requests \$100,000 from the National Historical Publications & Records Commission (NHPRC) for a collaborative archival project that will increase public access to significant collections of Arab American history and culture. Committed project partners include the Moise A. Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies at North Carolina State University (hereafter Khayrallah Center); the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, a branch of the Houston Public Library; and Dr. Maria Curtis, a scholar of the Arab and Arab American community in Houston, TX. The 18-month project period will take place between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. A Memorandum of Understanding between the four partners is attached.

This project builds upon a successful planning grant from NHPRC in 2019 in which the partners created an online index, or *database*, of archival collections related to the history and culture of Arab Americans. The resulting database, which resourced collections held by libraries, museums, and other national repositories, can be found [here](#).

An implementation grant from the NHPRC will position AANM and its partners to *institutionalize* a collaborative public digital platform on Arab American community history for researchers, scholars, students, and the general public to explore. Project activities include the following objectives:

- 1) Building out an *expanded* website using content created during our planning grant as a building block to increase scope, and allowing users to search dozens more Arab American archival collections from institutions across the country through an ArchiveGrid search;
- 2) Hosting community-based family history preservation trainings in each of the partner organizations' cities (Dearborn, MI; Raleigh, NC; and Houston, TX) for the purpose of promoting best practices for Arab American community members to preserve their family histories;
- 3) And rigorously disseminating and promoting preservation training materials and the centralized searchable website of Arab American archival collections for greater public discovery.

Taken together, funding for this final phase of this project will enable AANM and its partners to collect, preserve and present a collaborative archive that demonstrates a complexity and fullness not found in any museum or private collection to date. Importantly, it will illuminate the potential and power of bringing the immigrant experience — one that so many Americans share — to the public square, and will pave way for a deeper public understanding of the complexities of our collective history as Americans as we advance into a more inclusive future together, as public institutions, communities, *and* individuals.

- **Significance and Project Rationale**

The term “Arab American” refers to Americans who trace their ancestry to any of the 22 Arab countries that stretch from northern Africa to western Asia. Arabs have been immigrating to the United States in large numbers since the 1890s, when Arabic-speaking immigrants from the Syrian province of the Ottoman Empire (present-day Lebanon, Syria

and Palestine) left their homeland for mainly economic reasons. Lebanese Americans, who have the longest history of immigration, remain the largest ancestry group within the Arab American community. The total population of Arab Americans is estimated at 3.7 million, according to the latest statistics from the [Arab American Institute](#).

The Arab American community is vibrant and diverse, and like many other large ethnic-American groups, continues to shape American life in endless ways. Arab Americans have served in all levels of government; written highly celebrated books; produced compelling movies and other media; invented life-saving medical tools and procedures; served in high-ranking military roles; founded global businesses; won major sports championships; and continue to serve their local communities as teachers, lawyers, factory workers, restaurateurs and medical professionals.

There are very few institutions dedicated to Arab American history, however, which is why a collaborative like the one proposed here is so vital. As the Arab American community continues to grow and as the US receives new immigrants and refugees from Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, Morocco, Egypt, and other countries, it is important that the diverse histories of this community are documented and shared.

- **The Partners**

The named partners in this collaborative are linked to the most substantive resources in the country related to the topical content of this project and are equipped to realize its shared objectives. [The Arab American National Museum](#), the only museum of its kind in the nation, has a robust object, photograph, and manuscript collection that spans the breadth and depth of the community's history. What is more, AANM houses the most comprehensive collection of published materials by and about Arab Americans,

as well as one of the largest Arab American archival collections in the nation. Our published collections include the first books published by Arabs in the US (in both English and Arabic) as well as the most recent works published in the fields of Arab American history, art, literature and other fields. These texts are revered as the most important resources on Arab American immigration. Our archival collections continue to grow, thanks to donations from preeminent scholars in the field of Arab American studies. Using the collected research and scholarship of scholars like Michael W. Suleiman, Evelyn Shakir, and Mary Bisharat (all held in our archive), we can not only revisit their work on Arab American immigration, but can situate their original research in concert with more recent immigration data and stories from our diverse community. The archive is managed by one professional archivist, in addition to a librarian, and a research and content manager with a PhD in American Culture.

AANM is the lead organizer and administrator of this project, given our national scope and reach, as well as our onsite capacity to collect, document, and archive digital and material products. As such, AANM will be responsible for coordinating correspondence between partners via monthly conference calls and web conferences, and ensuring project objectives are met with full participation from all partners. AANM typically receives an annual average of 30,000 onsite visitors and serves national audiences through online engagement, group visits, and general admission. Taken together, we typically reach an average of 350,000 people annually; in 2019, we reached a total of 800,000 due to our [national touring exhibition at the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration](#). AANM temporarily closed its doors to the public in March 2020, joining public institutions across the country in order to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 and to keep

our communities safe. Over the last fifteen months, we have reconceptualized approaches to reaching our most vulnerable populations through [virtual educational](#) and [cultural programming](#), and have engaged national, and international audiences through [online film screenings](#), [virtual open mic and literary programming](#), and an [oral history project](#) that documents community experiences during this pandemic. Through the support of funders, the community, and local and national partners, we continue to offer our online programs to audiences at little to no cost. **AANM is scheduled to reopen to the public in October 2021.**

[The Moise A. Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies](#) is a relatively young institution, but has already amassed some of the most significant collections from the Arab immigrant community in the US. The Khayrallah Center, like the Arab American National Museum, has produced traveling exhibitions from its archival holdings, and routinely engages local and national audiences through its digital collections. Dr. Akram Khatar, the founding director of the Khayrallah Center, is one of the most respected scholars of Arab American studies, and works with a professional team based at North Carolina State University. AANM and Khayrallah are both small institutions with limited, but incredibly effective, archival staff.

[Dr. Maria Curtis from the University of Houston-Clear Lake](#) is deeply tied to the [Houston Metropolitan Research Center \(HMRC\)](#), which is currently processing the Skaff Family Collection, one of the largest known Arab American archival collections. Dr. Curtis will work directly with Emily Scott, Lead Archivist and Manager of the HRMC. Notably, the HRMC is part of the Houston Public Library System's Special Collections Division, which also includes the Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research and

the African American Library at the Gregory School. Anecdotally, the HMRC is located in an historic building that was literally saved from ruin and restored by a prominent Houston-based Arab American family (the Jamail Family). Dr. Curtis is dedicated to building and sharing this project's underrepresented collections and resources.

It is worth noting that since closing out our successful NHPRC planning grant, the partners in this collaborative have launched a shared digital exhibition with objects from each of the three collaborating organizations; the exhibition is in its soft launch phase, and can be viewed [here](https://www.turath2020.org/) (<https://www.turath2020.org/>).

II. Plan of Work

- **Objective 1: Building out an expanded website (January 2022–June 2022)**

The partners will be employing a combination of strategies to realize project outcomes. Our first objective is to build a searchable website of current archival holdings in our shared collective index, or database, which was borne out of this project's planning phase. We will port our original database content to a new platform (such as WordPress) to allow for a broader scope of content, as well as a deeper and more nuanced search functionality. In addition to hiring a programmer (see job description attached) and establishing a domain name, this phase of the project will make way for a more dynamic method of user interaction with our current *and* forthcoming index of archival collections. For example, users can continue to browse the current collection index, but will be able to search keywords within those descriptions and finding aids.

We will utilize ArchiveGrid, which is part of the OCLC, to upload and unify all collection data gathered during this project's planning phases to date, and will create a front-end search page on the new site that will use an API that can narrow search results

accordingly. The project's programmer (to be hired) will create a clean, accessible, and professional front-end user experience for the site's browse and search functions.

Equally important to the architecture and usability of the site will be garnering institutional buy-in from the additional libraries, archives, and museums that hold collections we will be accessing and making searchable. As a Smithsonian Affiliate, AANM has strong and established partnerships with institutions across the country and will reach out through its networks to realize this objective. Likewise, both Khayrallah Center and HMRC have an established national presence with large networks of archives, libraries, and academies across the country from which to draw. What is more, the partners in this collaborative have participated in similar projects that other archives and libraries have initiated, including programs through the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA). Taken together, we are well-positioned to engage in rigorous publicity and outreach efforts necessary to advance this phase of the project.

- **Objective 2: Adding relevant collections to the centralized website and ArchiveGrid search (January 2002-June 2023)**

Concurrent to building a website platform during the project's first phase, we will continue to reach out to archives, libraries, and historical societies to discover and gather at least ten more Arab American collections (these collections, which are yet to be identified, refer to a thematic and organized collection of objects and material documents held by individuals and/or institutions across the country).

To accomplish this, we will continue to revisit listservs utilized in the planning pilot phase, while enlisting the engagement of our collective networks of researchers and partner organizations (university centers, professional societies, etc.).

Bibliographies of recently published scholarship have proven quite helpful in finding hidden or lesser-known collections. And as we continue to expand our curatorial capacity at AANM, we have identified major collections held by individuals in southern California and Washington, DC, and have already begun efforts to digitize those collections. Acknowledging the dynamic nature of this phase of the project, and the ongoing rigor it requires to anchor our activities, this work will last the entire duration of the project period.

- **Objective 3: Hold community-based family history preservation trainings (June 2022 through December 2022)**

The partners will promote lasting engagement and public buy-in through an immersive community-based experience in each of the partner organizations' respective cities (Dearborn, MI; Raleigh, NC; and Houston, TX). This portion of the project will guide local Arab American community members on the process of preserving their own family histories through workshops for a minimum of 25 people in each city. Sessions will be led by project staff at each respective institution, and will walk participants through the significance and importance of their objects; how to properly document, handle, and submit their materials; and provide an overview of this project's website, archives, and life and impact beyond the grant period. This is a critical step in our process and will not only ensure transparency and trust for those donating their materials (as well as for those receiving the collections), but will serve as an access point to additional Arab American archives, and particularly those held privately by individuals that could benefit from being transferred to an institutional archive or library. This objective will be informed by the following activities:

a) Family history preservation training sessions will be based upon previous archival trainings conducted by HMRC and AANM. Training programs will be formalized within the collaborative between January 2022 and June 2022. We will produce a streamlined video presentation of the training session to promote online throughout the project period; this will be produced in-house at AANM and shared with partners for public dissemination. In addition, the partners intend to distribute promotional print collateral to local churches, mosques, businesses, and community-based organizations (please see attached brochure developed by HRMC as a sample). During this time, we will procure materials (archival boxes, folders, and photo sleeves) for pick-up at each organization and to distribute at community meetings in each city.

b) The partners will conduct rigorous outreach to respective local and national community organizations and member networks to promote preservation training sessions to the larger community. As part and parcel of one of the largest Arab American social service agencies in the country, AANM is fully embedded in the local and national Arab American community and has a broad and expansive reach. AANM has a mailing list of over 14,000 individuals, along with its thousands of museum members, and even broader reach within its parent organization, ACCESS. Likewise, Khayrallah Center has a vast network of community-based organizations, researchers, and universities from which to promote this project, along with its position within the North Carolina State University network. The Houston Resource Metropolitan Center has a strong presence in Houston as a repository for important local histories; its very nature as a city-based public library and archive ideally lends itself to community-based initiatives such as this one.

c) From June to December 2022, the partners will conduct at least one family history preservation training in their respective cities, with the goal of reaching 25-30 individuals (in-person) at each session. Training sessions may be held at a local community organization or onsite at each partner site, depending on capacity and projected optimal reach.

Trainings will take place in all three cities, however we are interested in more deeply engaging the Houston community for a number of reasons. Although Houston's Arab American community is well established and Gulf Coast Arab American history spans several waves of immigration from the 1880s to the present, the region's Arab American history and influences remain relatively undocumented. While Lebanese and Syrians still comprise the majority of Houston's Arab American community, Egyptian and Sudanese immigrants, as well as populations from the Gulf countries, are among its fastest growing Arab nationalities. Notably, Houston began receiving thousands of Syrian refugees in 2015.¹ These relatively recent influxes will undoubtedly continue to impact what was once a Christian Arab community, as most of the arrivals in the last decade have been Muslim. Houston is one of the most diverse cities in the nation, and now has almost as many mosques as metro Detroit.² In addition to relationships with scholars in Houston, AANM and Dr. Maria Curtis have a deep and established relationship with the respected and active [Arab American Cultural & Community Center](#) (ACC) there, which will help promote our community outreach work for this project. We will work with the HMRC, ACC, and other

1 See "Houston to receive large share of Syrian refugees," Lomi Kriel, *Houston Chronicle*, 1/9/15 : <http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Houston-to-receive-large-share-of-Syrian-refugees-6025582.php>

2 See "[Houston has become the most diverse city in the U.S.](#)," Britany Mejia, *Los Angeles Times*, May 9, 2017:

<http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-essential-education-updates-southern-houston-has-become-the-most-diverse-1494342577-htmistory.html>

local Houston-based institutions and organizations to facilitate community outreach events targeting Arab Americans across the Houston Metropolitan area. And as HMRC continues to archive the Skaff Family Collection, we intend to showcase archival work completed to date through *this* project, which will inspire other Arab American Houstonians to donate their papers in order to build a rich local archive that can be shared on multiple national platforms.

- **Objective 4: Dissemination and Promotion (October 2022-June 2023).**

This project relies heavily on strategic community outreach and dissemination of training and archival materials. Throughout the project period, we intend to engage the community with promotional messaging, accessible background information, onsite trainings, and instructional videos that will position this project's significance and ultimate success. We will promote our culminating searchable website, as well as any and all relevant programming to our regional and national networks accordingly. This phase will begin once the website and other digital materials are ready to share, and will last through the duration of the grant period and beyond.

III. Project Products

This project's tangible outcomes include the following:

- **A new and searchable website** dedicated solely to core archival collections submitted by institutions across the US, with a search functionality that will pull from various catalogs. The website will provide contact information for all collections-based activities; updates about new archival collections; information and links to new acquisition content; links to contextual programming, including,

but not limited to lectures, panel discussions, readings, and workshops; and will hold space for potential public digital exhibits.

- **A series of community-based family preservation training sessions** in Dearborn/Detroit; North Carolina, and the Houston/Gulf Coast area. We intend to host a minimum of 75 individuals throughout the grant period.
- **Promotional and educational products, including, but not limited to:**

(a) Pre-recorded instructional presentations to be disseminated electronically and made available on the new expanded website. Information will detail the partners' archival process and how to handle material objects and archival donations;

b) We will offer archival supplies and "kits" (archival boxes, photo sleeves, archival gloves, etc.) to all participants and will make them freely available to the public throughout the duration of the grant period;

(b) emails with built-in survey tools designed to collect information from prospective donors;

(c) and a circulating "Call for Donations" on [Arab American community listservs](#) and other outlets identified by the collaborative.

IV. Project Publicity

Each of this project's partner organizations has a strong and established presence on social media. AANM has nearly 40,000 followers between Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and Khayrallah has thousands of followers across all of its platforms. As part of North Carolina State University, Khayrallah will tap into the sizable networks of its university system. Likewise, HMRC is a division of the Houston Public Library, with 41,500 followers on its combined social media platforms.

When the partners shared the resulting index from our pilot planning grant, we experienced an increased interaction and new levels of traction from researchers on Twitter, specifically. We expect to have much more public engagement with the searchable archival website created through this project, which will house more diverse and immersive content, including the pre-recorded preservation trainings for family history archiving. These videos will be housed on partner organizations' respective YouTube channels.

In addition to social media and other strategic engagement with our representative communities, we will submit conference panel proposals to the Middle East Studies Association (where we presented the results of the pilot project in 2020) as well as the Middle East Librarians Association (MELA). Significantly, we intend to submit an article for a special issue on archives for *Mashriq & Mahjar*, a journal of Middle East and North African migrations (housed at the Khayrallah Center) that details the process and outcomes of this project. Due to our shared scholarly networks, and given the significance of this ground-breaking project, this article will be shared with a number of [archives-related publications](https://archivespublishing.com/journals/) (<https://archivespublishing.com/journals/>).

Lastly and importantly, we recognize the importance of bringing our communities' history into the larger public spotlight, particularly as interest in centering ethnic American and BIPOC communities in museums, the media, and American public life continues to rise. This project will serve as a model to our sister communities across the country who are part of the landscape of racially and ethnically marginalized communities beginning to find their voice within the larger discourse of American history.

V. Staff Qualifications

This project's personnel includes leading experts in the field of Arab American studies, as well as trained archivists with experience working with community-based collections. Résumés of the following key project staff are attached.

The Arab American National Museum's **Matthew Jaber Stiffler** has a PhD in American Culture and Arab American Studies from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and has been the Research and Content Manager at the Arab American National Museum for over a decade. He was instrumental in building AANM's traveling exhibition on the early Arab American community in New York, entitled [*Little Syria: An Immigrant Community's Life and Legacy*](#), which was exhibited at the Ellis Island Immigration History Museum in 2016. Dr. Stiffler will co-oversee this project's activities with AANM Director, Dr. Diana Abouali. He will participate in all conference calls and correspondence with partners and will ensure overall success and quality assurance. Phone: (313) 429-2539 Email: mstiffler@accesscommunity.org

Diana Abouali, PhD, is the Director of the Arab American National Museum. Diana has worked in the higher education, cultural heritage, and museum sectors in the United States, Palestine, and Jordan. She is a graduate of Wellesley College and has a PhD in History and Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University. She has taught at Dartmouth College and held senior positions at the Palestinian Museum, the Petra National Trust, and Tiraz: Widad Kawar Home for Arab Dress. Dr. Abouali will ensure that all grant objectives and goals are met. Phone: (313) 429-2537 Email: dabouali@accesscommunity.org

Elizabeth Barrett-Sullivan is AANM's Curator of Exhibits. She holds a master's degree in Museum Studies from the University of Sydney, Australia. Ms. Barrett-Sullivan

develops permanent and temporary exhibits involving art and historical artifacts, including research, design, and fabrication. Ms. Barrett-Sullivan will help plan and execute family history preservation trainings in the Dearborn area. She will also facilitate any and all object donations that result from those sessions. Phone: (313) 429-2577 Email: ebarrett@accesscommunity.org

Saba Al-Hachami is AANM's Librarian. Saba has over six years of experience working with Arab American library patrons. She attained her graduate degree in Information and Library Science from Wayne State University in May 2022. Ms. Al-Hachami will help execute community-based trainings and will help identify other archival collections to include in the searchable website. She will assist all promotion and outreach efforts associated with the project. Phone: (313) 429-2573. Email: SAl-Hachami@accesscommunity.org

Lujine Nasralla is the Communications Specialist at AANM. Lujine creates, develops, and manages print and digital communications for AANM and its programs, and handles press and media inquiries. She holds a master's degree in English Literature from Wayne State University. Ms. Nasralla will manage this project's promotional aspects, and will create and disseminate print and email collateral, as well as produce the video footage for the family history preservation training and its dissemination to community members. She will liaise with all partners and networks to advance community outreach, promotion, and media attention accordingly. Phone: (313) 203-3353 Email: Lnasralla@accesscommunity.org

Akram Khater, PhD is Professor of History at North Carolina State University (NCSU) as well as founding director of the Khayrallah Center at NCSU. Dr. Khater's

research, including his book Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender and the Making of a Lebanese Middle Class, 1861-1921 (2001), offers a strong foundation to the field of Arab American studies. Through the Khayrallah Center, Dr. Khater has produced a documentary film about Arab Americans in North Carolina, as well as a traveling exhibition about Lebanese Americans. Dr. Khater will manage overall operations of the grant activities at the Khayrallah Center, and will utilize his extensive networks with Arab American communities nationwide for project outreach and promotion. Phone: (919) 515-5058 Email: akhater@ncsu.edu

Amanda Forbes, also at the Khayrallah Center at NCSU, is a professional archivist with experience collecting, processing, and digitizing Arab American community-based collections. Amanda manages large collections and utilizes digital collections platforms to increase public discoveries of her institution's holdings. Ms. Forbes will work directly with the IT/Programmer to create the website, and will continue her role [established during the planning phases of this project] of identifying related Arab American collections at other institutions. She will also lead digital outreach and promotion efforts for Khayrallah. Phone: (919) 515-5058 Email: afortbes2@ncsu.edu

IT/Programmer - We will hire a grant-supported IT/Programmer, who will be housed at Khayrallah Center under the supervision of Dr. Khater and Ms. Forbes. This person will build this project's shared website in collaboration with all project partners and will adhere to best practice standards in web design and informatics, including accessibility, consistency, and transparency. A job description is attached.

Kristin Porter is Khayrallah Center's Program Associate. She supports the Center's day-to-day operations and functions, and liaises contracts, paperwork,

programming, and grant documents accordingly. Phone: (919) 515-5058 Email:
kporter@ncsu.edu

Maria Curtis, PhD, is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Studies at the University of Houston-Clear Lake where she developed minors in Middle Eastern Studies and in Museum Studies. Dr. Curtis routinely takes groups of students on cultural excursions focusing on heritage and preservation in Oman, and has worked closely with the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center and the Omani Embassy in Washington, DC on conferences, exhibits, and workshops. She participates with the UHCL Art School for Children in building curriculum around Arab artistic and cultural traditions, which reaches hundreds of children per year. She served as an education committee member of the Arab American Cultural and Community Center (ACC) in Houston working on programming for all age groups; serves on the textbook committee for the Houston chapter of the Arab American Educational Foundation; has served as an exhibits advisor to the Arab American National Museum; and has delivered cultural awareness workshop training for the Houston Independent School District, the Houston Police Department, and Asia Society Houston. As the administrator/curator to the vast Skaff Family Collection, she trains students to process the collection, which is housed at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, the archival wing of the Houston Public Library. Dr Curtis will be critical to our work in Houston, as well as to assisting with overall outreach, scope, and project design. Phone: (832) 757-2830 Email: Curtis@UHCL.edu

Emily Scott is the Lead Archivist and Manager of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center in Houston, Texas. Ms. Scott catalogues, digitizes, and preserves archival materials at HMRC. She will be central to this project's community outreach

efforts, and has helped develop a portion of the family history training materials we intend to use. Ms. Scott will work with Dr. Maria Curtis to plan and conduct the community history trainings in Houston, and will lead digital outreach and promotion activities from the HMRC side. Phone: (832) 393-1662 Email: Emily.scott@houstontx.gov

VI. Performance Objectives

Building upon a collaborative planning grant between AANM, Khayrallah Center, Dr. Maria Curtis and HRMC, this project will yield the following objectives to realize the partners' larger goal of centralizing Arab American community history collections for greater public discovery. In addition to supporting each of the partners' institutional capacity to better serve the public, we intend to:

- 1) Create and launch a web-based search of Arab American archival holdings throughout the country, expanding upon collections identified during this project's planning phase; this will take shape in the form of an interactive multi-linked website platform. We will embed qualitative and quantitative survey tools to gauge ongoing community traction and interest, and will report to funders accordingly.
- 2) Conduct at least one in-person workshop in three different cities (Raleigh, NC; Dearborn, MI; Houston, TX) for Arab Americans on preserving family history (housing for documents, care for photos, handling a/v materials, and born digital materials), reaching a minimum of 75 individuals during the grant period. Archival supplies and supportive materials will be made available to all participants throughout the grant period.
- 3) Create recorded training sessions and digital and print materials to encourage Arab Americans to preserve their family history and donate artifacts and ephemera; we will

embed capabilities to count downloads, visits, and views, and report to funders accordingly.

4) Disseminate project results through conference presentations and the publication of a jointly authored article on this project's process, challenges, and outcomes.

- **Concluding Remarks**

Anti-immigrant sentiment has not disappeared from popular culture and the media. And with an ongoing refugee crisis, an uptick in civil unrest across the globe, and greater levels of community isolation due to the pandemic, the discourse about Arab Americans and immigrants as a whole has become all the more complex and misunderstood. Media images of unrest and violence, the oppression of women, and seemingly unbridgeable cultural differences are displayed repeatedly across televisions, social media, and newspapers. What is more, immigrants and refugees from several Arab countries, such as Iraq, Syria, Libya, Sudan, and Yemen, were the focus of significant changes in US immigration policies that until just recently, were reversed. This continues to cause widespread anxiety, increased public hostility towards Arab and Muslim Americans (as well as immigrants of all backgrounds), greater public confusion about the Arab world, and further alienation of our communities

Given that the Arab American community is not a monolith—yet is considered as such by so many—it is the aim of the proposed project to document and make accessible the diverse and nuanced stories of Arab Americans, most of whom are left out of the social narratives presented by large cultural and educational institutions in the US. It is in fact, incumbent upon anchor institutions like AANM, the Khayrallah Center, and Houston Public Library system to steward information about the complex histories that comprise

this nation's identity, and foster a generative public dialogue for a deeper understanding of our collective history.

In closing, this initiative represents a rare and unique opportunity for the partners to make public a truly hidden collection of materials, with targeted funding that is nearly as rare as the subject matter we intend to uncover. We anticipate that this project's outcomes will facilitate more research about Arab American community history, not only through public viewership and research, but also through the various institutions across the country who will host and participate in this project's culminating rollout of material. The process will further grow the expertise and digital engagement of the entire project team. It will expand the partners' geographic reach in new and innovative ways, and will enhance local and national access to collections, educational resources, and programs about Arab American cultural life and history.

Supporting further collections-based activities in specific regions across the country with rich, yet undiscovered stories, will provide a gateway for meaningful public exploration of America's past, present and future. On behalf of the Arab American National Museum, the Moise A. Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies at North Carolina State University, and Dr. Maria Curtis and colleagues at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center and Houston Public Library, we hope that NHPRC will join us in this important and timely endeavor.