National Historical Publications and Records Commission
Records Program

Application Guidelines for
Native American Records Initiative
(Revised July 1990)

Background

The purpose of this initiative is to preserve and make available records of Native Americans, including Indian people, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. Since 1978, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), under its Records Program, has provided numerous grants for this purpose, primarily to develop tribal archives and records management programs. The NHPRC Publications Program has supported a number of projects to publish, in microform or book editions, documents relating to Native Americans. Appendix B provides a list of all NHPRC grants for Native American projects.

Over the years, the number of tribal grant requests to the NHPRC has increased steadily, reflecting a growing interest among Native Americans in preserving their documentary heritage. To respond to this interest and to provide relevant guidance, the Commission approved a joint proposal of the Records and Publications Programs and created the Native American Records Initiative in 1984. Since 1984, changes in Commission policy and procedures in this area have been enacted, and the Commission now has revised the guidelines for proposals relating to the initiative.

The revision is based in part on changes recommended at an NHPRC-funded meeting of the eight-member Native American Advisory Group held in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in January 1986. The advisory group included prominent Native Americans, persons experienced in working with Indian and Alaskan cultural programs, the Smithsonian's chief archivist, and two state coordinators experienced in working with tribes and their records. The participants came from diverse geographical areas and professional backgrounds. The Harpers Ferry meeting produced recommendations for important changes in the NHPRC Native American Records Initiative. The Commission, at its February 1986 meeting, accepted the recommendations after making some minor revisions.

Additional revisions have been made based upon a report prepared by Commission staff entitled The Native American Initiative: A Report to the Commission. This report reviewed the history of the initiative, the proposals submitted under the initiative, the current status of the initiative, and recommendations for its improvement. The recommendations of the report were approved by the Commission at its October 1988 meeting. This updated version of the initiative guidelines incorporates the recommendations from both the Harpers Ferry meeting, as revised, and the report to the Commission.

Eligibility

As for other NHPRC grants, the following applicants are eligible for Native American records grants: “nonprofit organizations and institutions, State and local government agencies, and Federally acknowledged or State-recognized Native American tribes or groups” (see the NHPRC Records Program Guidelines and Procedures pamphlet). All applicants must be legally established and located within the United States, its territories, or the District of Columbia. In some cases individuals may also apply. To date, the most common applicants have been institutions and governments of Federally acknowledged and State-recognized tribes or groups. A key consideration for eligibility under this initiative is that the grant application seeks to preserve
and make available Native American records. The Commission is particularly receptive to proposals that either promote inter-tribal cooperation for the solution of common problems, or provide innovative methods for educating tribal archivists and records managers and assisting them in program planning and development. The Commission is also interested in proposals that link Federal funding agencies and private foundations in support of a project.

**Proposals Invited**

Proposals are invited in six categories:

1. **Development of archival/records management programs in tribal organizations to deal with current records.**

2. **Surveying and copying of historical documents relating to tribes that are held by archival repositories.**

3. **Conducting of oral histories with tribal members and others knowledgeable about tribal history.**

4. **Arrangement, description, and selective microfilming of litigation files in the possession of law firms employed by tribal organizations.**

5. **A pilot project to produce a microform edition of historical documents pertaining to one tribe.**

6. **Development of training workshops in archival and records management techniques for tribal members.**

1. **Development of Archival and Records Management Programs:**

Archival and records management program development involves a number of activities. Records management procedures, manuals, and retention schedules are established for current tribal records. Non-current records are transferred to a records center, which is a “facility, sometimes especially designed and constructed, for the low-cost and efficient storage of and furnishing of reference service on semicurrent records pending their ultimate disposition” (Local Government Records: An Introduction to Their Management, Preservation, and Use, by H. G. Jones -- see Appendix C, Bibliography). Records of enduring value are identified and transferred to an archival facility, where they are arranged, described, and properly stored. NHPRC grants for these activities are very similar to those provided over the years for the records of many municipalities and counties.

For these grants, the Commission wishes to emphasize current records of tribal governments and inter-tribal organizations. The emphasis is on the creation of effective ways of distinguishing documents of enduring value from those of lesser degrees of importance.

The bulk of tribal applications to the Commission so far have been for these program development projects, probably reflecting the most important need of many tribes. The Commission places highest priority on this category of tribal records grant. Indeed, support for categories #2 and #3 below should not be requested until an archival and records program has been securely established.

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2. Surveying and Copying of Documents in Repositories:

The Commission will support projects to survey archival repositories for documentary materials concerning Native Americans and to make copies of those materials. The copies either may be electrostatic (paper) copies or microform copies. Examples of archival repositories include the National Archives and Records Administration, research libraries, universities, and state and local historical societies.

This category reflects a special exception to the NHPRC’s policy of not supporting subject-oriented surveys of repositories. In making this exception, the Commission accepted a recommendation made at the January 1986 Harpers Ferry meeting.

3. Oral History Projects:

Grant support may be provided for Native American projects to conduct oral history interviews of those knowledgeable about tribal history (e.g., tribal elders). This funding category also was approved by the Commission as a result of the January 1986 Harpers Ferry meeting.

Applicants should be aware that oral history work represents a new direction for Commission support. Therefore, proposals in this category must be particularly well-justified and cost-effective to warrant funding. For further information on oral history techniques, see Appendix C, Bibliography.

NOTE: Surveying and copying (category #2) and oral history (category #3) occasionally may be undertaken in conjunction with archival development (category #1). Applicants should be aware, however, that the tribal archival program must be on a firm footing before support is requested for work in categories #2 and #3.

4. Microfilming Of Litigation Files:

To answer the need for collections of documents pertaining to tribes' historical relations with non-Native Americans and with the Federal government, the Commission will consider proposals to make tribal litigation files more widely available. These projects involve arrangement, description, and selective microfilming of relevant records held by law firms.

In seeking economical solutions to the problem of gathering widely scattered documents, the Commission staff has discovered that some law firms already have gathered large quantities of historical documentation for use as historical exhibits in tribal claims cases. Both the historical exhibits and the records of the tribal litigation are of major importance to tribes seeking to build historical files for use by tribal members. Applicants must demonstrate that dissemination of the information in the litigation files is acceptable to both lawyer and client.

For reasons of economy, the Commission prefers to see proposals that address the entire body of records relating to a tribe held by a firm rather than proposals to arrange, describe, and film individual case files. The Commission also hopes that law firms will consider transferring the paper records to the individual tribes at the conclusion of the microfilming work.

5. Pilot Microform Publication of the Records of One Tribe:
To test the economic feasibility of a larger program, the Commission wishes to sponsor a pilot microfilm project relating to the records of a single tribe. The project would include gathering copies of historical documents from all sources (including litigation files), arranging them in proper sequence, selecting portions for microfilming, and preparing a guide to the microfilm. The Commission envisions a film edition of thirty to fifty reels.

The ideal tribe for such a project would (1) have an active, well-established archival program for tribal government records; (2) know of pertinent records in various locations (e.g., Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Federal records centers, historical societies, and private sources); and (3) be of average size in terms of the amount of documentation available.

The Commission welcomes suggestions and inquiries about this pilot project. Support could come from the NHPRC’s Records Program or its Publications Program, or both.

NOTE: Prospective applicants for categories #2, #4, and #5 should request the NHPRC Microform Guidelines, which provide important instructions for microform grant projects. Applicants in category #5 should also request a copy of the NHPRC Publications Program Guidelines.

6. Archival Workshops:

The Commission will consider proposals that plan and conduct a series of training workshops offered to members of more than one tribe and preferably held at tribal locations. The workshops should emphasize the need for and development of tribal archives and the role that archives can play in the preservation of tribal government records and of tribal customs and heritage.

Because of the complexity of workshop projects, applicants should initiate discussions with the Commission staff well in advance of application deadlines.

Access to Records

The Harpers Ferry meeting recommended that the Commission not exclude Native American records applications simply because they include access restrictions to some records due to confidentiality. The Commission accepted this recommendation and reiterated that it conforms to the Commission’s standard policy on access. This policy is stated in the Records Program Guidelines and Procedures pamphlet, as follows: “Projects are ineligible in which a major portion of the processed documents will be kept closed to researchers for an extended period of time, in which documents are not accessible to all qualified users on equal terms, or in which it is the repository’s policy to deny public access.”

Application Forms and Guidelines

In preparing a proposal, applicants should request from Commission staff the pamphlet NHPRC Records Program Guidelines and Procedures: Applications and Grants (see Appendix C). This pamphlet provides the application forms and general instructions for proposals.
The address and telephone number for requesting these guidelines and for other contacts with NHPRC is:

Records Program  
National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC)  
National Archives Building  
Washington, DC 20408  
(202) 501-5610

**Deadlines and Proposal Types**

October 1 is the application deadline for Native American Initiative proposals with activities occurring primarily at one or several tribe(s) within one state. Such proposals are considered “state” proposals. As indicated in the chart below, applicants for state projects must submit their original proposal to the NHPRC Records Program and ten copies to their State Historical Records Advisory Board (see below). Most Native American records proposals, particularly in categories #1 through #4, tend to be state proposals. Native American applicants whose projects do not fall under one of the six Native American Initiative categories outlined above should consult the Records Program Guidelines or consult Records Program staff regarding appropriate application deadlines.

Proposals with activities occurring throughout a state are “statewide” projects. An example would be a project to provide training workshops (category #6) for a number of Indian tribes throughout a state. Proposals with primary activities in more than one state are considered “regional” or “national” proposals. (Proposals in categories #5 and #6 are most likely to be regional or national).

Statewide, regional, and national proposals may be submitted for either the June 1 or October 1 deadlines. Statewide proposals are reviewed by state boards, whereas regional and national proposals are not. Applicants should submit copies of these proposals as specified in the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Reviewed by State Board</th>
<th>Copies to NHPRC</th>
<th>Copies to State Board</th>
<th>Deadline(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>original + 10 copies</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>original + 10 copies</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>June 1, Oct. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>original + 10 copies</td>
<td>1 to coordinator in each state affected by grant</td>
<td>June 1, Oct. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>original + 10 copies</td>
<td>1 to coordinator in applicant’s homestate</td>
<td>June 1, Oct. 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applicants should contact NHPRC staff if they are unsure about the type of their proposal. All Native American proposals, regardless of category, are also reviewed by the Commission’s Native American Records Advisory Panel (see below).

**Prospectus Submission**

Potential applicants are encouraged to submit a two- or three-page prospectus for the grant project to the Commission staff. The prospectus should be submitted at least two months before the application deadline (e.g., August 1 for an October 1 submission). An NHPRC staff member then will contact the applicant with comments and suggestions for the final proposal. Experience has shown that early discussion of proposals with the Commission staff usually results in better grant applications.

**State Boards**

State and statewide proposals are reviewed by the appropriate State Historical Records Advisory Board. The boards consist of archivists, historians, and others knowledgeable about historical records. For further information, see the Records Program Guidelines pamphlet.

As a result of the Harpers Ferry meeting and the report to the Commission, the Commission has encouraged state boards to take a more active role in encouraging, advising, and promoting Native American records proposals and to include effective representation of Native Americans on their boards.

and in their deliberations. State boards are also encouraged to consider the needs not only of Native Americans but of all minority groups within their states, especially when developing plans for board-sponsored statewide projects and initiatives.

**Native American Records Advisory Panel**

The Harpers Ferry meeting recommended establishing a national panel to review all Native American records proposals submitted to the NHPRC and to help the Commission better understand the archival and records management needs of Native Americans. For state and statewide proposals, the panel’s comments supplement the reviews of the relevant state board. For national and regional proposals, the panel serves as the primary source of reviews for the NHPRC.

Current members of the Native American Records Advisory Panel are listed in Appendix A. Included are both Native Americans and non-Native Americans knowledgeable about tribal cultural heritage and tribal records needs.
LIST OF APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A: NHPRC Native American Records Advisory Panel
APPENDIX B: NHPRC Grants Relating to Native American Records
APPENDIX C: Bibliography
APPENDIX A

NHPRC NATIVE AMERICAN RECORDS ADVISORY PANEL

Mr. James Fogerty
Head, Acquisitions and Curatorial Department
Division of Library and Archives
Minnesota Historical Society
690 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN  55101
(612) 296-9989

Dr. William Schneider
Director, Oral History Program
Arctic & Polar Regions Collection
Elmer Rasmussen Library
University of Alaska
Fairbanks, AK  99708
(907) 474-7481

Dr. Lotsee Patterson
Director, Library Media Services
Oklahoma City Public Schools
900 North Klein
Oklahoma City, OK  73105
(405) 272-5537

Dr. Nola Freeman
Office of Records Administration - NIRC
National Archives and Records Administration
Washington, DC  20408
(202) 501-6035

Mr. Don Allery
National Congress of American Indians
900 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC  20003

Mr. Robert Gough
4723 West Wind Trail
Eagan, MN  55122
(612) 454-3936
APPENDIX B
NATIVE AMERICAN RECORDS GRANTS FUNDED BY NHPRC
1978-1990

RECORDS PROGRAM

78-099
Alaska Native Foundation, Anchorage, AK: $39,328 to survey historical documents from the formative years of twenty-two Alaska Native organizations and plan for their preservation and accessioning.

79-136
Cherokee National Historical Society, Tahlequah, OK: $19,950 to preserve, arrange, and describe records relating to the Cherokee Nation, and to assist the society in establishing an archival program.

80-128
The Suquamish Tribe, Suquamish, WA: $13,720 to catalog the tribe’s photographic collections documenting Suquamish history and culture over the past 100 years.

82-028+
University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK: $27,097 to arrange, describe, and preserve on microfiche Cherokee Nation records, 1816-1908, to prepare a guide to the collection, and to prepare a procedural manual describing steps involved in processing the collection for filming.

82-059
University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, WI: $20,419 for a project to train Native American archivists.

83-092
Oglala Sioux Community College, Kyle, SD: $1,991 for consultation on the development of a tribal archives project.

84-128
Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, SD: $46,835 to establish and administer an archives and records management program for the Oglala Sioux tribe.

85-038
Sinte Gleska College, Rosebud, SD: $21,645 for the first year of a two-year project to develop the college archives and an archival program for the Rosebud Sioux tribe.

85-046+
Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Reno, NV: $28,911 for the first year of a two-year project to develop a records management system, produce a program manual applicable to the twenty-four tribes of Nevada, provide assistance to tribes wishing to replicate the system, survey records of the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, and develop a plan for an Inter-Tribal Archives Center.

85-135
Sinte Gleska College, Rosebud, SD: $21,715 for the second year of a project to develop the college archives and an archival program, for the Rosebud Sioux tribe.

1990-11
85-141
Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Honolulu, HI: $5,000 for consultation on the survey and accessioning of Hawaiian historical and genealogical records.

85-143
Cherokee National Historical Society, Tahlequah, OK: $18,102 for the first year of a two-year project to implement an ongoing records administration program for the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

85-144

86-001
Chickasaw Nation, Ada, OK: $6,300 for consultation to develop archival programs for the Chickasaw Nation, the Delaware Tribe of Western Oklahoma, and the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

86-021+
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: $5,630 to support a meeting to assess needs and recommend actions for improved preservation and availability of Native American records.

86-100
National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), Washington, D.C.: $22,215 to convene a national conference to promote interest in and awareness of Native American records programs. NCAI is the country's largest organization of Native Americans.

86-108
Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Reno, NV: $27,740 for the second year of a project to preserve the permanently valuable records of Indian governments in Nevada.

86-129
Colville Confederated Tribes, Nespelem, WA: $70,951 to establish an archival and records management program for the tribes. The Colville Indian Reservation, in the eastern part of the State of Washington, was established in 1872.

87-006
Cherokee National Historical Society, Tahlequah, OK: $15,465 for the second year of a project to implement an ongoing records administration program for the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

87-078
Sinte Gleska College, Rosebud, SD: $73,450 for development of a documentary collections and oral history program for the Rosebud Sioux tribe, which governs one of the nation's largest Indian reservations.

87-080
Lummi Indian Business Council, Bellingham, WA: $2,500 for consultation on developing a professional archival program for the Lummi Indian tribe, the third largest tribal group in Washington State.

88-031
Washington State Historical Records Advisory Board, Olympia, WA: $9,340 for a project to assess the need for and feasibility of a regrant program for the more than thirty-five tribes in the State.
88-073
Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians, Onamia, MN: $29,715 to establish an archival and records management program for the tribe.

88-078

89-048
Pueblo of Zuni, Zuni, NM: $2,862 for a consultant to assist in developing a plan for the archival preservation of Zuni Pueblo tribal records and other historical materials.

89-061
Lummi Indian Business Council, Bellingham, WA: $56,500 to develop an archival program in conjunction with a newly established records management department.

89-087
Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, SD: $43,130 to develop an archives and records management program for Oglala Sioux tribal records and to provide on-the-job training in archival work.

90-018
Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians, Red Lake, MN: $83,600 to develop a tribal records management and archival program.

90-104
Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency, MT: $22,142 to survey the ca. 1,500 cubic feet of records of the Crow tribal government. The resulting report will provide the basis for further administrative action concerning development of an archival and records management program for the tribe.
PUBLICATIONS PROGRAM

Microfilm Editions

American Historical Association, Washington, DC: $71,944 for:
  Papers of Carlos Montezuma
  Indian rights leader (9 reels, completed 1983)

Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA: $99,800 for:
  Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus
  Alaska Mission Collection (42 reels, completed 1980)

  Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus
  Indian Language Collection: The Alaska Native Languages (28 reels, completed 1976)

  Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus
  Indian Language Collection: The Pacific Northwest Tribes (21 reels, completed 1976)

  Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus
  Pacific Northwest Tribes Mission Collection (34 reels, completed 1987)

Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS: $10,000 for:
  Isaac McCoy Papers, 1808-1874
  Indian missionary (13 reels, completed 1967)

  Jotham Meeker Papers, 1825-1864
  Indian missionary among the Shawnee (2 reels, completed 1967)

  John G. Pratt Papers, 1834-1899
  Indian agent and missionary (12 reels, completed 1967)

Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN: $10,000 for:
  Lawrence Taliaferro Papers, 1813-1868
  Indian agent (4 reels, completed 1966)

New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, NM: $81,711 for:
  Spanish Archives of New Mexico, 1621-1821 (22 reels, completed 1967)

  Mexican Archives of New Mexico, 1821-1846 (42 reels, completed 1969)

  Territorial Archives of New Mexico, 1846-1912 (189 reels, completed 1974)

Smithsonian Institution, National Anthropological Archives, Washington, DC: $235,723 for:
  John Peabody Harrington Collection (in progress)
  Part One: Alaska/Northwest Coast (30 reels, completed 1981)
  Part Two: Northern and Central California (101 reels, completed 1985)
  Part Three: Southern California/Basin (182 reels, completed 1986)
  Part Four: Southwest (58 reels, completed 1986)
Part Five: Plains (17 reels, completed 1987)
Part Six: Northeast/Southeast (17 reels, completed 1987)
Part Seven: Mexico/Central America (36 reels)
Part Eight: Notes and Writings on Special Linguistic Studies (35 reels)

Wheelwright Museum, Santa Fe, NM: $20,400 for:
  Washington Matthews Papers (10 reels, completed 1985)

Juniata College, Huntingdon, PA: $18,000 for:
  Papers of the Society of American Indians, 1909-24
  The nation's first secular, pan-Indian association (10 reels, completed 1987)

Book Editions

University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ: $520,391 for:
  Documentary Relations of the Southwest (in progress)

  A series of volumes on civil-military relations that will include material on the development of the
  presidial system, colonial land use, water systems, mining, transport, frontier protection, exploration, and
  accounts of early European contact with both seminomadic and sedentary native peoples. This will be a
  bilingual presentation of selected documents relating to native cultures, Spanish colonial expansion, and
  missionary accomplishments along the southwestern frontier from 1570 to 1820. Seven volumes are projected
  as a part of a larger series.

  Volume 1: The Presidio and Militia on the Northern Frontier of New Spain (published 1986)

Southwest Oklahoma State University, Weatherford, OK: $112,989 for:
  Papers of Chief John Ross

  A selective edition of the papers of the influential Cherokee chief who led his tribe to Oklahoma in
  1838-39 after resistance to Federal westward removal policy had failed. Complete in two volumes (published
APPENDIX C

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Publications of general interest


Publications relating to oral history

The following three publications are available from the Order Billing Department, AASLH, 172 Second Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37201 (telephone: 615/255-2971). Add $3.50 shipping and handling for all orders.


$10.95 for non-members.


