Niagara Falls National Heritage Area
War of 1812
2011 Grants Program

Grant Guidelines & Application Instructions

Applications Due:

Niagara Falls National Heritage Area
Timon Hall 119
P.O. Box 1932
Niagara University, NY 14109

www.nps.gov/nifa

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Additional critical application materials are available online at www.nps.gov/nifa including:

- 2011 Grant Application Form
- Environmental & Cultural Analysis Checklist
- Sample Scope of Work - Task and Schedule List **(and Blank Form for use in application)**
- Sample Scope of Work - Project Deliverables **(and Blank Form for use in application)**
- Sample Proposal Budget

What Is the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area War of 1812 Grant Program?

Niagara Falls National Heritage Area War of 1812 (NFNHA 1812) grants are intended to assist projects throughout the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area that support the commemoration of the War of 1812 Bicentennial. Grants assist National Heritage Area municipalities, attractions, and organizations in implementing high-quality public interpretive and educational projects that advance **NFNHA goals**:

- to preserve, support, conserve, and interpret the natural, scenic, cultural and historic resources within the National Heritage Area

- help people understand the Niagara River Gorge through its special places and stories

- to promote heritage, cultural and recreational tourism and to develop cultural and educational programs for visitors and the general public related to the primary themes of the heritage area

    - **Natural Phenomenon**- Niagara Falls and the Niagara River Gorge are natural phenomena overwhelming in physical magnitude and deeply embedded in the popular consciousness.
    - **Tourism and Recreation**- Niagara Falls has been a leading international tourist attraction for 200 years, influencing the development of tourism and nature conservation in North America.
    - **Power and Industry**- Around 1895, Niagara Falls became the foremost source of hydroelectric power in North America, stimulating the development of innovative heavy industries in Niagara Falls and Buffalo.
    - **Borderland/Border Crossing**- The Niagara River area, a boundary between the United States and Canada, has played an important role in Indian culture, the French and English colonial struggle to control North America, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Underground Railroad, and it reflects national differences and similarities between the two countries today.

Who May Apply for NHA Grants?

Grant applications may be submitted by State, local, tribal governments, other public entities, educational institutions, and private non-profit organizations within the boundaries of the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area. The applicant must be either a non-profit organization (qualified as such under section 501(c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code), local, state or tribal government or educational institution.

What Kinds of Projects Can be Funded?

Interpretive, educational and tourism related projects directly associated with the commemoration of the War of 1812 Bicentennial will be considered. Projects should focus on enhancing the visitor experience and providing for educational and interpretive opportunities to expand understanding and appreciation of the War of 1812 and its associated events. The primary focus of all projects must be within the boundary of the Niagara Falls National Heritage

Area or with an affiliated site or attraction recognized by the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Commission.

What Is Not Funded?

Activities that NHA grants **do not** fund include the following:

- projects not associated with the National Heritage Area
- general operating budgets or routine operational costs of a facility
- routine or deferred maintenance
- construction of new buildings or major renovation of existing buildings (such as visitor or interpretive centers)
- land acquisition
- costs, including legal fees, related to or involving property ownership or lease agreements, easements, or grant agreements
- proposed project costs must be in compliance with OMB Circulars A-87 Cost Principles for State and Local Governments, A-122 Cost Principles for Non-Profits, and A-21 Cost Principles for Educational Institutions.

What Are the Grant Funding Levels & Matching Requirements?

Grant Levels: The minimum grant request is $2,500. The maximum grant request is $10,000.

All grant proposals must demonstrate a reasonable budget analysis (presented in the submitted budget) ensuring the project can be completed within the proposed budget. Applicants are cautioned equally against both over- or under-budgeting for their project. Grants may be awarded at a level below the full amount requested through a process of negotiation between the applicant and NHA Commission.

Grant payments to successful applicants will occur on a reimbursement basis after costs have been obligated.

Matching Fund Requirements: The requested funds must be matched by a three to one (3:1) match (three non-federal dollars to every one federal dollar) or greater amount of non-federal support dedicated to the proposed project. The matching share may include cash or in-kind contributions of services or materials. The matching share and any work funded or provided by non-federal funds are considered part of the overall project. There must be a clear functional relation between all aspects of the project, including those supported by the non-federal match. Other Federal funds (including Federal employee work time) may not be used as a matching share.

Project Period: All project costs, both grant-funded and matching, must occur within the 24 month grant period. The start date and end date are calculated from the date the NPS contracting officer signs the award and will be confirmed by NPS staff. **Costs from either before or after the grant period may not be included.**

Calculating Matching Funds

Information and guidance concerning allowable costs and matching fund requirements associated with your proposal are described in OMB Circulars A-102 (Grants and Cooperative

Agreements with State and Local Governments) and A-110 (Grants and Cooperative Agreements with Non-Profit Organizations). The web site addresses for each are http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/omb/circulars/a102/a102.pdf and http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a110/, respectively.

The method for determining the value of donated goods and services to be used for the proposal's matching share requirement is described in OMB Circulars A-87 (Cost Principles for State and Local Governments) and A-122 (Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations). The web site addresses for each are http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004/ and http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/omb/circulars/a122/a122_2004.pdf, respectively.

Below is information excerpted from A-110 and A-122 that is important to consider in developing your proposal and project budget:

Values for recipient contributions of services and property shall be established in accordance with the applicable cost principles. Fair market value of donated services shall be computed as follows:

(a) Rates for volunteer services. Rates for volunteers shall be consistent with those regular rates paid for similar work in other activities of the organization. In cases where the kinds of skills involved are not found in other activities of the organization, the rates used shall be consistent with those paid for similar work in the labor market in which the organization competes for such skills.

(b) Services donated by other organizations. When an employer donates the services of an employee, these services shall be valued at the employee's regular rate of pay (exclusive of fringe benefits and indirect costs), provided the services are in the same skill for which the employee is normally paid. If the services are not in the same skill for which the employee is normally paid, fair market value shall be computed in accordance with subparagraph (a).

(c)Volunteer services furnished by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor may be counted as cost sharing or matching if the service is an integral and necessary part of an approved project or program.

(d)Donated supplies may include such items as expendable equipment, office supplies, laboratory supplies or workshop and classroom supplies. Value assessed to donated supplies included in the cost sharing or matching share shall be reasonable and shall not exceed the fair market value of the property at the time of the donation.

Environmental and Cultural Analysis Requirements

NHA grant applicants are required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations. NHA grant applicants must meet certain requirements designed to minimize the potential impact of their proposed projects on the human environment, natural, and/or historic resources.

Before preparing your full grant application, please follow the steps described below to determine what type of compliance and/or permitting requirements your project may require.

(1) Fill out the "Environmental & Cultural Analysis Checklist" provided in Appendix A and on the NHA's website. The checklist will help determine what type of environmental or cultural impacts your proposed project might have. Familiarity with the site is essential; a site visit, by resource experts with the necessary expertise and experience, for the specific purpose of assessing potential impacts is advised. The Environmental & Cultural Analysis Checklist will be submitted with your grant application. By signing this form, you will affirm the following: you have either completed a site visit or are familiar with the specifics of the site; you have consulted with affected agencies and tribes; and you, to the best of your knowledge, have answered the questions posed in the checklist correctly. If you have any questions about the checklist, contact NPS staff.

(2) You should consult with your local planning and zoning office for detailed guidance on their local compliance and permitting requirements. Ensuring compliance with local (county or town) ordinance or zoning is a local responsibility. Most jurisdictions require that property owners work to assure the environmental compliance of their projects through the local permitting process (e.g., building or grading permits) or through management planning that may include mitigation of unavoidable environmental impacts. Your local planning officials will advise you on additional information, consultations, compliance or mitigation that may be necessary; and will also advise you on local permits that may be necessary.

(3) Contact a NPS staff member to discuss your completed checklist (see contact information under "Grant Questions?" below). If your project requires some type of local, state or federal permit to proceed, please be sure to share that status as well. Based on your checklist, NPS staff will advise you on whether your proposal:

- is likely to be "categorically excluded" from further environmental or cultural analysis requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA).
- may require further analysis under NEPA and NHPA; or
- some additional information is needed to make the decision.

When are Proposals Due?

- Grant application packages **must be received by NOON, Tuesday, July 12, 2011.**

- Anticipated start date of grant projects: approximately September 1, 2011. No work can begin prior to official notification from the NPS. (*Confirmation of actual start date will be provided by NPS staff.*)

- Project completion date: **20-24 months after grant award**

How will Proposals be Reviewed?

Grant proposals are reviewed by the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Commission's Strategic Planning Committee and NPS staff with final approval by the full Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Commission. Proposals **must** be specifically appropriate to the 2011 eligible categories. Proposals will be further evaluated on:

- Clarity of project objectives and deliverables, and the plans for sustaining them over time

- Clarity and credibility of the project's scope of work, deliverables, timeline and budget
- Importance in contributing to the NHA's ability to reach visitors with the War of 1812 stories.
- Measurable results toward established NHA goals (see page 3)

In all cases, grant project proposals will be judged strongest when they:

- Provide opportunities for visitors to be directly involved in hands on activities as part of an interpretive or educational program to build their understanding and appreciation of the War of 1812 within the Niagara Falls NHA.

- Build working relationships among organizations within the NHA through cooperative projects that involve multiple NHA organizations in development and implementation partnerships.

- Create/ enhance Niagara Falls National Heritage Area's visibility within the surrounding communities.

- Support multiple priorities as described directly above.

- Have already completed all necessary environmental consultation, compliance and permitting requirements.

- Offer a significant leveraging of Federal funds in excess of the minimum qualifying requirement of a 3:1 non Federal match

Putting an Application Package Together

Required Elements (for all proposals)

Measurable Results: All proposals **must** indicate the measurable results that are expected to result from the project. At a minimum 2011 grantees **must** collect data on measurable results of the grants, such as:

- The number of deliverables produced (e.g., educational programs delivered, wayside exhibits developed, brochures produced, etc.)
- Projected and, as possible, actual numbers of users served by the products
- Projected and, as possible, actual number of students/teachers/participants that will benefit from an educational program
- Some qualitative measure of educational impact relative to the learning objectives
- Number of volunteer hours generated in the development and implementation of the project
- The value of funds and in kind services that have been generated or leveraged

Sustainability: The NHA grant should be viewed as "seed money"—a one-time funding source

to create the product or establish the program. The resulting product or program should not be dependent on multi-year funding from this source. The ability to demonstrate how the product or program will continue will positively impact your proposal.

Project Specific Elements (which may apply to your specific proposal)

Interpretation and Education: All project proposals involving interpretation or education **must** relate stories or themes to Niagara Falls National Heritage Area themes.

If your proposal involves some kind of programming such as first or third person interpretation, community education through lectures or children's programming your proposal should address:

- What efforts have been made to include other organizations within the NHA, with similar themes, in the program planning process?
- How might other organizations directly benefit from or utilize the program?
- What efforts are being made to reach out to under-served or non-traditional audiences?

Projects can also support the start-up of a new curriculum-based educational program or support the revision of an established program that actively engages K-12 students in meaningful education experiences within the NHA. Such programs must relate to both the NHA's interpretive goals and themes and an established curriculum for the target grade(s). These proposals need to address:

- How does the proposal relate to established school curriculum?
- How does the program incorporate any national, state, or local standards of learning (SOLs)?
- What relationships have been established between the organization and target schools or districts to assure the utilization of the program?
- How have/will educators participate in the development of the program?
- How have/will resource experts participate in the development of the program?

The Application Package

- **Five (5) paper copies and one (1) electronic copy** (disk or CD) of your complete grant package **must be received by** the National Park Service address by **Noon, Tuesday, July 12, 2011**. Late, faxed, e-mailed or incomplete applications will not be considered.

- It is suggested that the entire grant package not exceed 15-20 pages.

- Attachments must be on **8 ½" x 11" paper and legible when copied on a black & white copier.** If you have a printed attachment that absolutely cannot fit this format, you must provide 5 copies along with your proposal.

- In order to be considered for funding you must submit a complete application package. **If any of the following elements are missing the application will not qualify to be reviewed for potential award.**

- **Cover Letter**

The cover letter should be addressed to:

Dr. Thomas Chamber, Chairman
Niagara Falls National Heritage Area
Timon Hall 119
P.O. Box 1932
Niagara University, NY 14109

The cover letter **MUST**:

- be signed by the chief executive of the applicant's agency or organization
- clearly identify the organization(s) with which the proposal is associated
- certify intent to comply with all grant program guidelines
- certify intent to comply with all applicable federal, state and local environmental laws and regulations

- **NHA Grant Application Form**

The NHA Grant Application Form includes a cover sheet and a series of detailed narratives about your proposal. This application, along with your project budget, is the heart of your proposal and the primary basis on which it will be evaluated. The NHA Grant Application Form is available as a hard copy or in electronic formats. For electronic formats visit www.nps.gov/nifa for either a .pdf file or Microsoft Word version.

Cover Sheet: The cover sheet requests basic information about the project and the applicant. The cover sheet **must** be signed by the Applicant's Chief Executive.

In addition to standard contact information, the cover sheet also requires each applicant's DUNS Number. If you do not have a DUNS Number, you can find information about how to acquire one at https://eupdate.dnb.com/requestoptions.asp?cm_re=HomepageB*TopNav*DUNSNumberTab. In addition to a DUNS number you must be registered on the Central Contractor Registration (CCR). To register go to www.ccr.gov.

You will not be eligible to receive funds if you do not have a DUNS # and if your registration with the CCR is not current through the end of September, 2011.

Proposal Narratives: The application form requires response to a series of questions essential to the description of your proposal. Specific guidance for each category is provided on the form itself. In addition you must complete the SF 424 form.

- **Proposal Budget**

Your budget is an extremely important part of your proposal. You must submit a detailed project budget showing line item costs and funding sources. We strongly encourage you to use the sample budget provided on the NHA website at www.nps.gov/nifa as a model format. The

budget must show costs of all key aspects of the project as well as all sources of matching funds or in-kind services. Please check your budget for accuracy and make sure that all budget lines are complete and add up to the totals presented.

- You budget must also be submitted on the SF424A form as well. This form is required to award the grants.

➢ Scope of Work – Task and Schedule List

Your description of your proposal as presented in the Scope of Work - Task and Schedule List is a critical part of the application as it shows how prepared you are to carry out the project. A sample of the Task and Schedule List, along with a Microsoft Word version formatted for your use are provided on the NHA website at www.nps.gov/nifa. Remember that your Task and Schedule List **must** incorporate NPS staff reviews at appropriate stages of the project.

➢ Scope of Work – Schedule of Deliverables

The Scope of Work - Schedule of Deliverables provides a quick reference format for what product(s) will be produced as result of your proposal. For example if you are proposing to develop a new educational program with a learning guide you might report 1 program, and 1 interpretive brochure or booklet. This form helps to account for product development should your proposal be funded.

➢ Site Map

For all event and land-based proposals, a site map identifying the project location and showing the project area in the context of its surrounding community, town or area **must** be provided. The map should show the project location in relation to highways, local roads/streets, landmarks, etc.

➢ Supporting Information

The following supporting information is **essential:**

- Letters or other evidence from co-funders documenting matching fund commitments. (**Note**: If unable to submit at the time of application, the matching fund commitment **must** be documented before final grant approval.)
- Letters or other evidence of commitment to the project from key partners who will be responsible for carrying out specific project tasks.
- Other supporting graphics (maps, photographs, drawings) essential to illustrating your proposal.
- SF 424B

All graphic and supplementary materials must be submitted in an 8 ½" X 11" format and legible when subsequently copied on a black and white copier. Do not submit videos, CDs, or other A/V media with your application unless they are specific examples for a proposed A/V project.

➢ Completed Environmental & Cultural Analysis Checklist

You **must** submit copies of your completed Environmental & Cultural Analysis Checklist along with documentation of any consultation with your NHA grant application.

Grant Questions

You are strongly encouraged to contact us to discuss your proposal in advance. First time applicants may contact any of the following staff:

Debbie Conway
National Park Service
315-336-3113
debbie_conway@nps.gov

Additional information on the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area and the NHA grants can be found online at www.nps.gov/nifa.