



400 Years of African American Heritage Commission, the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program, and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History

PROJECT GRANT GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Through the generosity of the 400 Years of African American History Commission (400YAAHC), the National Park Service National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program (NTF) is pleased to announce there will be two categories of grants that are available in 2022.

The 400YAAHC has generously provided \$150,000 in funding for the NTF to award for a 2022 round of grant funding. Commission members will be participating in the review of proposals submitted along with NTF program staff. \$100,000 is set aside for project grants and \$50,000 are to be awarded to applications for new listings in the Network to Freedom. The Association for the Study of African American Life and History will administer the grants.

These instructions are for Project Grant Proposals.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NETWORK TO FREEDOM PROGRAM?

The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998 (P. L. 105-203) directs the National Park Service (NPS) to establish a program that tells the story of resistance against the institution of slavery in the United States (and related territories) through escape and flight. This story is illustrative of a fundamental tenet of this nation that all human beings embrace the right to self-determination and freedom from oppression. Through the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program (NTF), the NPS acknowledges the significance of the Underground Railroad not only in its contribution to the eradication of slavery in the United

States, but also as the cornerstone for a more comprehensive national civil rights movement that followed.

The Program is coordinating preservation and education efforts nationwide, and is working to integrate local historical sites, museums, and interpretive programs that have a verifiable association with the Underground Railroad into a mosaic of community, regional, national, and international stories.

The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program is grateful to *the 400 Years of African American History Commission* for funding the grants for this round. The Network to Freedom Program is grateful to *the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)* for partnering with the Network to Freedom to administer this grant program.

WHAT IS THE 400 YEARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY COMMISSION?

The 400 Years of African American History Commission Act, signed into law January 8, 2018, established a 15-member commission to coordinate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in the English colonies.

Beyond the anniversary year, the Commission's purpose is to plan, develop, and carry out and support programs and activities throughout the United States that recognize and highlight the cultural contributions and resilience of Africans upon arrival and bridge divides for generations beyond 400 years. The Commission will promote inclusion, public education and will encourage work by civic, patriotic, historical, educational, artistic, religious, and economic organizations, particularly efforts to increase understanding and respect for the trials and triumphs of Africans Americans and inclusively with those who have aided in the story of this nation and its greatness. Dr. Rex M. Ellis serves as Chair of the 400 YAAHC.

WHAT IS THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY?

Founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in 1915, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) has the mission to promote, research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community. In 1926, Dr. Woodson initiated the celebration of Negro History Week which was expanded in 1976 to Black History Month and ASALH sets a theme each year for this celebration.

2022 PROJECT GRANT INFORMATION

The category of project grants is allocated at \$100,000. Project grants will be awarded competitively and will range between \$1000 and \$10,000. Funds can be used for preservation and restoration of buildings associated with the Underground Railroad (UGRR), for interpretation, and for additional historical research related to previous Network to Freedom listings. New listings that are accepted from the January 15, 2022, round will also be eligible to apply. Preference will be given to those listings that have not previously received Network to Freedom grants and to those with matching funds.

IMPORTANT DATES

- April 6, 2022- Application period opens.
- April 21, 2022- Zoom presentation to announce grants and answer applicant questions
- May 13, 2022- 11:59 PM EST- Application period closes. Matching funds must be documented to be in hand by this date to be awarded extra points.
- May 17-18, 2022- Proposal Review Dates.
- May 31, 2022- Target for Grant Awards Announcement.
- June 30, 2023- Mandatory Project completion date.

WHO CAN APPLY

The 400 YAAHC and the NTF invite private and non-profit organizations, as well as Federal, state, tribal, and local governments to submit applications for these 2022 grants. For project grants, individual, private, or non-profit organizations as well as Federal, state, tribal, and local governments that have sites, programs, or facilities that have been listed as members in the Network to Freedom may apply. Federal agencies cannot directly receive these grants, but partner organizations can receive a grant for federally owned property with the written consent of the managing agency.

Please note that eligible proposals from religious properties listed in the Network to Freedom are restricted to research projects, preservation projects or NTF signs only. These projects must have a specific connection to Underground Railroad history, rather than religious history.

Applications submitted under this program are requests for consideration for a grant, and not a promise for funding. No work covered in this application is to begin until the applicant has been notified in writing that funds have been awarded, and has accepted in writing the terms and conditions of the grant. The owner of the site, program or facility applying must provide written consent. The target date for announcing awards is May 31, 2022, but please allow some flexibility. Projects **MUST** be completed by **June 30, 2023**.

Grants will be administered in accordance with all applicable Federal and state laws,

regulations, policies, requirements and guidelines, including OMB Circular A-102 and A-110 (as applicable), Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, non-discrimination on the basis of handicap (Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973), and equal employment opportunity and labor law requirements of Federal grants.

PREREQUISITES FOR NETWORK TO FREEDOM PROJECT GRANT ASSISTANCE

1. **NTF Grant Assistance:** Listed NTF Project funds are available for preservation and related research of sites, programs, and facilities accepted in the Network to Freedom. “Applied” research projects which make previous research available to the public such as through interpretive or educational products are also eligible.
2. Preservation/restoration projects funded under this program constitute “undertakings” as defined by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 USC 470). Accordingly, for properties listed in, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, grant recipients must complete the consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation prior to the receipt of funds. The consultation process aims to ensure that proposed work will not cause any adverse effect to the historic features of any National Register listed or eligible property.

All work on National Register listed or eligible properties must be conducted in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Rooted in over 120 years of preservation ethics in both Europe and America, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties are common sense principles in non-technical language. A series of concepts about maintaining, repairing and replacing historic materials, as well as designing new additions or making alterations, they were developed to help protect our nation's irreplaceable cultural resources by promoting consistent preservation practices. Information about the Standards can be found on the Internet at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm> or by contacting a NPS Network to Freedom regional program manager.

For preservation or restoration work, grantees must ensure that staff or consultants who are thoroughly familiar with the concepts, methods, and techniques of historic preservation are employed to perform the grant-assisted work. Proposed work must contribute effectively to the long-term preservation of the historic property. Grant awards will be made for specific structures or landscapes. Grants will not be awarded for projects already underway.

In accordance with the terms of the authorizing legislation, no change or alteration may be made to a property for which a grant is used except with the agreement of the property owner and the NPS. Conversion, use or disposal of a property receiving a grant for purposes contrary to the purposes of the Network to Freedom Act, shall result in a right of the United States to reimbursement of an amount equal to the grant.

WHO MAY APPLY

The 400 YAAHC and the NTF invite private and non-profit organizations, as well as Federal, state, tribal, and local governments to submit applications for these 2022 grants. For Project grants, individual, private or non-profit organizations as well as Federal, state, tribal, and local governments are welcome to apply.

A letter of consent from the property owner must be included for all grants.

WHAT IS FUNDED

Congress authorized the creation of the NTF within the NPS to research, interpret, and preserve sites and resources associated with the Underground Railroad. As part of the national network program, the NPS supports projects that achieve the goals of preservation, interpretation, and education of Underground Railroad history. Specifically, the projects should support or enhance the Underground Railroad associations for which site, program, or facility was listed in the NTF. Examples of grant projects that support these objectives and are eligible for consideration this round include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Markers or signs identifying the site as being in the NTF
- Interpretive markers, brochures, exhibits, websites;
- Historical research in support of interpretation or publications;
- Oral history and documenting oral traditions;
- Educational curricula and lesson plans;
- Cultural Resource surveys;
- Archeological surveys;
- Preservation and restoration of historic buildings, structures, landscapes;
- Projects to enhance accessibility of sites and programs (including installation of ramps or lifts)
- National Register documentation and nominations;
- Workshops and public educational programs;
- Technical assistance in associated site and/or landscape identification; and
- Preservation and stabilization of cultural artifacts, collections, and documents. **Please note that eligible proposals from religious properties listed in the Network to Freedom are restricted to preservation projects or NTF signs only. These projects must have a specific connection to Underground Railroad history, rather than religious history.**

WHAT IS NOT FUNDED

The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program does **NOT** fund acquisition projects. Other projects that are not funded include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Projects already started or currently underway;
- Purchase (in fee simple or interest) of historic sites, buildings, structures, objects, or cultural artifacts; Operational funds or administrative salaries;
- Equipment purchase;
- New construction (in contrast to repair of existing features), with the limited exception of new construction required to create access for the disabled to historic resources.

- Please note that eligible proposals from religious properties listed in the Network to Freedom are restricted to preservation projects or NTF signs only. These projects must have a specific connection to Underground Railroad history, rather than religious history
- Projects designed to raise funds.
- Projects that do not have a direct connection to the Underground Railroad values described in the Network to Freedom application. For example, a project to preserve a building in which an exhibit is housed, if the building is not connected to the Underground Railroad history.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. A Project Sign must be erected at the site of the grant-assisted preservation work during the duration of the project to acknowledge NPS grant assistance. For non-construction projects, NPS grant assistance must be acknowledged on any products resulting from the grant.
2. All grant projects require monitoring and approval by NTF staff before payment will be released. For interpretive products, markers, websites, etc, NTF staff must approve content and design in the draft stages.
3. Grant recipients must ensure that projects are carried out in a timely and professional manner. Grant funds not expended by will expire and be “re-captured” by the federal government.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS

1. Proposals for research projects must provide a research plan that explains the research question that the project will address. The plan should also describe the primary sources (i.e., newspapers, diaries, letters, tax records, census records, military records, etc.) that will be consulted as part of the research and the type of information that the sources are expected to provide that will address the research questions. Also list research facilities to be utilized for the project

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESERVATION/RESTORATION PROJECTS

1. The grant recipient must ensure that all architectural or engineering services necessary for the investigation, documentation, design, or construction work will be conducted or supervised by a professional meeting the qualification requirements of the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards. (The NPS can advise whether an individual's education and preservation- related experience meet the Professional Qualification Standards.)
2. Grant recipients that do not have a structural engineer, architect, or historical architect on their staff must indicate in their grant application how they will contract for, or otherwise

obtain, the expertise needed to enable them to monitor and approve the grant-assisted work. Because Federal funds are involved, professional service contracts must be awarded through the competitive negotiation method. If vendors/consultants/contractors are already selected, it is critical the procurement (hiring) process meets the requirements of the grant program.

3. Each grant recipient is responsible for ensuring that all necessary predevelopment research, investigation, or design development has been completed, reviewed by the SHPO and NPS, and approved **prior to** the commencement of work for the construction phase of repair work. This must be accomplished before construction work is advertised or let for bids.
4. Grant recipients must provide a sufficient summary description of proposed work to confirm that proposed treatments are in compliance with the appropriate Secretary's Standards. Adequate photographs and color slides of the property to be repaired must accompany the grant application (see item 5 in the Application).
5. All work done on the property during the grant period, whether funded by the grant or not, must meet the Secretary's Standards.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS

1. Progress Reports will be required during the term of the grant, as specified by the Grant Agreement. Onsite inspections during construction projects may be conducted by NPS staff or contractors on a regular basis. Draft work products must be reviewed and approved by NPS staff for other project types.
2. A Final Progress Report must be submitted that describes whether the work was carried out as proposed. For preservation projects, it should describe the work accomplished, and whether the Secretary's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties were met. Additional guidance on the reporting requirements will be provided in the Grant Agreement.
3. Costs for construction work that does not meet the Secretary's Standards will not be reimbursed. Photographs of the overall property and close-up shots of the grant-assisted work performed must be attached to the Final Report.
4. For projects supported by matching funds, requests for reimbursement must show that part of the project costs were covered by the match. For example, if the grant proposal outlines a 50 percent match, then for each payment request transmitted to NPS by the grantee, 50 percent of the costs incurred will be borne by this NPS grant's Federal share, and 50 percent will be paid by the non-federal matching share contributed by the grantee. Failure to provide the required non-Federal matching share will be grounds for terminating the Grant Agreement.
5. Grantees must submit a request for reimbursement form for payment, according to the procedures outlined in the grant agreement. All expenses charged to the grant (including the non-federal matching share) must be: directly related to the approved objectives and budget

of the NPS-approved Grant Agreement; eligible in accordance with OMB Circular A-21; and supported by approved contracts, purchase orders, requisitions, bills, or other evidence of liability consistent with generally established purchasing procedures and generally accepted accounting principles.

6. The grants are made on a reimbursable basis. Receipts or invoices should be provided with requests for reimbursement under the grant. Payments will be made within 30 days of requests for reimbursement.

FUNDING LEVELS AND MATCH

The grant award for fiscal year 2022 is up to \$10,000 for the Federal share. The minimum grant award will be \$1000.

Matching funds are not required for these grants, though they are encouraged. Matching funds must be cash match, in-kind match does not qualify for bonus points. At least a 50% cash match is required in order to receive bonus points. Proposals submitted with matching funds of 50% will be awarded 5 bonus points and those with a 100% match or greater will be awarded 10 bonus points in the review process, which will rank projects on a 100 point scale. To qualify for these bonus points, applicant must submit sign and dated Match Certification Form and provide appropriate supporting information documenting the match as “in hand” with the submission of this application, by **May 13, 2022**. Any proposal that includes matching funds that cannot provide the documentation of availability by that date will not receive the bonus points in their final ranking by the review committee.

SELECTION PROCESS

A committee of reviewers, including NPS Network to Freedom regional program managers, other NPS staff, reviewers selected by the 400 YAAHC, and a reviewer selected by ASALH will rank applications and make funding recommendations. The target date for announcing awards is May 31, 2022.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used by the above Committee to rank project applications:

Need for the Project (Section 5A). How this project addresses the goals and objectives of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program. How the project enhances the values and associations for which the site, program, or facility was listed in the Network to Freedom. **(30 points)**

Work Plan and Timeline for Project Completion (Section 5B). How project objectives,

activities, and desired results are to be designed and achieved, and a reasonable time schedule that provides for the completion of the project. List project personnel, including their qualifications and experience, and describe their responsibilities in carrying out the project. Describe the process used. For research projects, clearly articulate the research design in terms of research questions to be addressed and source materials to be consulted. **(20 points)**

Project Benefit/Outcomes (Section 5C). The proposed project must produce tangible products or benefits for the NTF member. **(20 points)**

Project Budget and Justification (Section 6). The budget must describe all aspects of the project with dollar figures and all listed items must be eligible, reasonable, and relevant to the project. Column totals should add up correctly and request total dollar figures be the same where ever cited across the document. Please note that equipment may be rented for the project but grant funds cannot be used for acquisition of construction or similar equipment. **(30 points)**

Bonus: New Grant Recipients (Section 7A). Projects proposed by listings that have previously not been awarded grant funding will receive bonus points. **(5 points)**

Bonus: Matching Funds (Section 7B). Projects which include funds matching at least 50% of the grant amount requested will be awarded 5 bonus points in their evaluation, and those with 100% or greater will be awarded 10 points in their evaluation. To qualify for these bonus points, all of the match must be cash, not in-kind. The match must also be documented as “in hand” by the time of the submission of this grant application on **May 13, 2022 to receive the bonus points**. Any proposal that includes matching funds that cannot provide the documentation of availability of the funds by that date will not receive the bonus points in their final ranking by the review committee. **(5-10 points)**

Bonus: Lesser Known Underground Railroad Associations (Section 7C). Projects that highlight lesser-known aspects of the Underground Railroad will be awarded 10 bonus points. Some lesser-known aspects include, but are not limited to, such stories as the movement south to Spanish Florida, Mexico, or the Caribbean, escapes to maroon communities, or the involvement of indigenous nations. Make the case in the project description and the review committee will determine if bonus points are to be awarded in their evaluation. **(10 points)**

APPLICATION SUBMISSION- Deadline May 13, 2022, 11:59 PM EDT

Applications must be submitted electronically by e-mailing completed applications to **network_to_freedom@nps.gov**. All submitted applications, should use the following naming convention in the subject line of the email: 2022 NTF Grant_[NTF listing name]. If you are unable to submit the application electronically, please contact the email provided above or by phone at 470.388.8045. **To avoid glitches with the internet, send Applications ahead of the deadline if you can**. Applications received after the deadline of **Friday, May 13, 2022, 11:59 pm EDT** and incomplete applications will not be considered. Additional materials sent separately from an application will not be considered

part of the application and will not be included in the evaluation of the application.

COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKAGE INCLUDES

- One electronic application, using the attached template. Must be typed, handwritten applications not accepted.
- An Owner Concurrence Form signed and dated by the owner of record.
- A signed and dated Applicant Certification Form.
- For preservation projects, minimum of four (4) digital photographs which illustrate the property in general with details of the area proposed for preservation.
- For application writing projects, include the resume of the proposed author of the application.
- Detailed budget, including Match Certification Form and documentation of the non-Federal match, if applicable. The Match Certification Form must be signed by a person legally authorized to commit the funds to the grant project. In-kind matches are not eligible. Please make sure to **black out** any **account numbers** or **personally sensitive information** contained in financial documentation that is submitted.

Tips for Successful Applications

In order to ensure that your proposal receives the best consideration possible, here are some suggestions from our office that you may find useful in preparing your application.

- proofread your application!
- make sure the grant amount requested on the first page of the application matches the grant amount indicated in the budget section.
- check your math in the budget section to make sure that all the budget detail amounts add up to the budget summary.
- the budget justification should include all cost elements of the proposed budget and how the figures were derived.
- remember that application reviewers may not be familiar with your proposed project, so you will need describe the historic resource so that they can understand why it is important
- clearly state what it is you want to accomplish with grant funding - a reviewer should be able to read your application and know what you are proposing
- there must be a connection between the proposed budget and the project; every budget item should be discussed in the narrative section(s) of the application so that reviewers can understand why items are necessary
- a longer response is not necessarily better
- remember to answer every part of each question
- be realistic with a proposal's timeline and remember to budget for reports and reporting requirements
- if possible, use good photographs to illustrate your project
- submit ahead of the deadline if you can, to avoid internet submission issues that would have your application miss the deadline