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Nuestra Herencia Grant Program

Cycle 3 Guidelines

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Latinos in Heritage Conservation (LHC) is committed to supporting a strong, national movement for Latinx heritage preservation. To further this mission, we offer the Nuestra Herencia Grant Program, which is exclusively dedicated to funding Latinx heritage and historic preservation projects. With $600,000 in annual funding, this initiative empowers grassroots, Latinx-focused nonprofit organizations and community groups working to protect and uplift Latinx history and cultural contributions across the United States.

Through this inclusive, equity-centered grant program, LHC is committed to elevating a diverse range of projects by prioritizing organizations and communities historically left out of traditional funding opportunities. To ensure greater accessibility, we provide resources like Spanish-language application materials and personalized support so that our stories and legacies can endure for future generations.

The Nuestra Herencia Grant Program is made possible by the generous support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, in partnership with the Social Impact Fund, which has dedicated $1.8 million to the program over three years.

HONORING DIVERSE VOICES

At LHC, we understand and deeply respect the diversity of Latinx experiences across the United States. We recognize that Latinx identity is rich and varied, shaped by unique customs, cultural practices, and regional or personal preferences for identifying labels. Whether you use the term Latino, Latinx, Latine, Hispanic, or another descriptor, such as Chicano/a or Tejano/a, we encourage you to apply. This grant program was created to empower and fund all Latinx communities in preserving their heritage. We honor this diversity and welcome everyone to share their stories and projects, ensuring that no voice is left unheard. In your application, you can indicate your preferred term, as we strive to communicate in a way that reflects your identity and respects your choice.

WHAT LHC FUNDS

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We offer $5,000 to $100,000 in grant funds to non-profit, Latinx led organizations in the United States and Puerto Rico doing grassroots work related to the conservation and preservation of Latinx heritage and history. Nuestra Herencia prioritizes historic preservation projects.

Latinos in Heritage Conservation defines Historic Preservation or Conservación, as a diverse discipline committed to recognizing and safeguarding culture and history. Over time, Latinx communities have preserved their homelands, family stories, cultural traditions, heritage, and sacred sites, contributing to our collective legacy. Historic Preservation involves protecting historic buildings, archeology, public lands, the environment, artifacts, and cultural traditions significant in our shared history. For Latinxs and our communities, at its core, historic preservation honors and sustains elements shaping our cultural heritage, and Latinidad.

Borderlands Focus

Nuestra Herencia is open to nonprofits from across the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The program does place a special emphasis on organizations located in the Borderlands region, including Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, California, Nevada, Wyoming, and Utah. This region stands out for its rich tapestry of Indigenous, Mexican, and American cultural influences. Despite its pivotal role in shaping American history, preservation efforts in the Borderlands have frequently been overlooked. This program aims to change that by bringing much-needed attention and support to these communities.

Funding Goals

In accordance with our mission to build a movement that affirms Latinx heritage through education, conservation, advocacy, and leadership development, the Nuestra Herencia Grant Program prioritizes funding projects that align with the following objectives:

- Conservation of place-based history through documenting the history of buildings, landmarks, neighborhoods, communities, or cities, along with its significance to Latinx heritage and history.
- The physical preservation and restoration of places and spaces connected to Latinx heritage and history for public use.
- Identification of historic sites throughout the country connected to Latinx heritage and history through historic context surveys, oral histories, or other methods.
- Nominating Latinx historic sites to local, state, and national historic registries to increase representation.
- Representations of minoritized histories within the Latinx community, such as Afro-Latino, LGBTQIA+, and Indigenous narratives.

- Increasing the capacity of Latinx historic preservation nonprofits by supporting organizational capacity building.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

Your organization:

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit
    - This includes preservation-focused community groups, museums, cultural centers, historic preservation groups, historic sites, historical societies, etc.
    - If your organization does not yet have 501(c)(3) status, your project can be fiscally sponsored.
- Latinx led and/or serving organization
- We do not fund local, state, tribal, or federal agencies. We do not fund schools or school districts. We do not fund individuals.
- These funds are intended for grassroots organizations and community-driven initiatives that lack sustained financial support. We prioritize applicants with annual operating budgets that are below $500,000. Staff size and other operating parameters will also be considered.
    - Applications from organizations with budgets that exceed $500,000 are still eligible and will be considered.

Fiscal Sponsorship
If your organization or community group is not a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, you may apply with a Fiscal Sponsor.

A Fiscal Sponsor is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that agrees to receive and manage grant funds on your behalf. They assume legal and financial responsibility for the grant, while your group—the Project Organization—leads the work and must meet the other eligibility criteria. Fiscal Sponsors do not need to be Latinx led and/or serving, but Project Organizations must be.

Project Organizations can apply with a Fiscal Sponsor only if the sponsor's fee is less than or equal to 10% of the grant award.

You will be asked to provide the Fiscal Sponsors EIN number when beginning the application, and there will be questions about both the Project Organization and the Fiscal Sponsor in the application. Unless otherwise noted, please answer all questions from the perspective of the Project Organization.

If you plan to apply with a Fiscal Sponsor, we encourage you to speak with LHC staff before submitting your application. For more information and resources regarding Fiscal Sponsors, visit the National Council of Nonprofits.

IS YOUR PROJECT ELIGIBLE?

Your Project:
This grant provides funding for projects and organizations that preserve Latinx heritage and history. There are different levels of financial support available for projects in four categories: Capital Projects, Project Planning, Building Organizational Strength, and Preservation Education. You may only apply in one category, and your request amount must fall in the listed range for that category.

- Capital Projects ($50,000 - $100,000): Grants for the physical preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of significant Latinx historic and cultural sites. Strong applications clearly explain the site's significance and include comprehensive project planning documents, such as preservation or restoration specifications, and construction drawings with timelines. Applications should also provide a detailed budget covering contractors, materials, and associated costs.
    - Eligibility: Construction plans **must** follow the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Privately owned properties that do not serve the public (for example, historic homes used solely as private residences) are not eligible for funding. Total or complete demolition of a historic building is not eligible.
    - Examples: Conserving historic masonry such as bricks or stone; restoring original windows, doors, or decorative finishes; historic mural conservation; roof replacement or other emergency stabilization; renovations that increase accessibility while preserving historic character; adaptive reuse projects; structural stabilization of foundations or framing; and masonry repointing with appropriate materials.
- Project Planning ($10,000 - $40,000): Financial support for architectural planning, research, documentation, and technical activities that advance the identification, restoration, evaluation, and preservation of historic Latinx places and spaces. Strong applications will demonstrate the

significance of the site or area, outline clear preservation goals, and show how the proposed work will inform future preservation and recognition efforts.
    - Eligibility: Your project team must include an architect or historic preservation professional, whether that be a staff member, volunteer, or consultant.
    - Examples: Hiring architects, historic preservation professionals, or other qualified consultants to complete feasibility studies, condition assessments, historic designations, architectural or engineering plans, or historic structure reports for future Capital Projects; preparing National Register nominations; conducting cultural resource surveys to identify important sites within an area; conducting research and gathering documentation to support heritage markers that celebrate local Latinx history; and developing emergency preparedness plans for historic Latinx sites.
- Building Organizational Strength ($15,000 - $25,000): Funding to help Latinx history and heritage-focused organizations build capacity by strengthening operational and managerial skills in areas like board training, fundraising plans, grant writing, and historic preservation best practices.
    - Eligibility: Your organization's mission must relate to the conservation of Latinx history and heritage. Latinx community service or arts and culture organizations that are not engaged in preservation or conservation work cannot apply to this category. Please consult the Preservation Grants Manager on your organization’s eligibility.
    - Examples: Hiring consultants for strategic planning, business plan creation, fundraising plans, and board training.
- Preservation Education ($5,000 - $20,000): Support for public and community-focused projects that advance awareness of Latinx history and preservation of historic Latinx places and spaces through interpretation and preservation-related learning opportunities designed to strengthen cultural connections and encourage community stewardship.
    - Eligibility: Projects should be connected to place or related to historic preservation. The audience for preservation-related workshops must be predominantly Latinx. Please note that we do not fund theatrical performances, festivals, production of new works of art (including murals), concerts, or general arts programming. Intangible heritage is a critical part of preservation, but our funding goals are currently focused on place-based projects.
    - Examples: Historic markers or interpretative signage; public workshops and trainings on preservation and historic trades for Latinx communities.

Grant Period:

A grant period is the time frame when a grant's funds can be used, as specified in the grant award agreement. For Cycle 3 of the Nuestra Herencia Grant Program, the grant period is **June 1, 2027 to May 31, 2028/2029.** The earliest your proposed project's grant period can begin is June 2027.

It will be a one-year grant period for projects in the Project Planning, Building Organizational Strength, and Preservation Education categories. Applicants in the Capital Project category will be asked to choose between a one-year or two-year grant period.

WHAT'S NOT ELIGIBLE?

This grant does not fund:

- Money spent before the grant award date
- General operating support, including staff salaries
- Operational or indirect/overhead costs
- Festivals
- Documentaries
- Creation of murals or any production of new art
- K-12 Education Programs
- Food, beverage, and entertainment costs
- General academic research not tied to a specific preservation outcome (for example: scholarly research, dissertations, books, independent historical research without a site application)
- Conference related expenses
- Preservation of private property that does not serve the public (ex. Historic private residence)
- Interior decorative or cosmetic work, such as furnishing or decorative elements
- Total or complete demolition of a historic building
- Commercial property
- Acquisition of property
- New construction
- Mortgages
- Debt repayment
- Taxes

LHC staff reserves the right to make additions to this list, as needed.

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HOW TO APPLY

Submittable

Applications open November 4, and you will submit your application via Submittable.

To create your account:

1. Go to https://manager.submittable.com/signin
2. Click the Sign Up link.
3. Enter your email address, first and last names, and a display name.
4. Enter your password.
5. Click the button to send a verification email to yourself.
6. Enter the code from the email.

To apply for the Nuestra Herencia Grant Program:

1. Once your account is made, follow this link to begin your application in Submittable: APPLY NOW
2. You will be prompted to use the Organization Search feature to input your organization's (or Fiscal Sponsor's) EIN or UEI information. This is to verify that you are a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
    a. Do this as early as possible to make sure there are no issues with finding your EIN or UEI in Submittable's system.
3. Fill out the Eligibility Form
4. Complete the application
5. Submit your application

Submittable's Help for Applicants hub offers guidance on submissions, tracking, account management, and troubleshooting.

Support Materials

Support materials in a grant application refer to additional documents, data, or evidence beyond the main proposal narrative that are used to justify your project's need, feasibility, and impact. The Nuestra Herencia Grant Program application asks for the materials listed below, and we recommend you begin collecting this documentation early in the application process.

Required for all categories:

- Project Budget
- Form W-9 from the Project Organization or Fiscal Sponsor (if applicable)
- Request for Proposals (RFPs) for relevant contractors/consultants (if contractors/consultants are part of the project)
- Photographs that showcase the area in which your project will happen or the work of your organization. Can be photographs of historic structures, community events, past exhibits, etc. (No more than ten)
    - For Capital Projects, be sure to include photos of areas that need rehabilitation.

Optional:

- Letters of Support
    - While not required, Letters of Support are highly recommended, especially ones from partner organizations you plan to work with.
- Strategic Plan
- Architectural designs
- Architectural vision boards
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Proposals from relevant contractors/consultants

Project Budget

As part of your grant application, you will need to provide a project budget. This will tell us how you plan to spend the money you are requesting from LHC. There is a template available on the website. Please provide a general description for each budget category, then fill in expenses and indicate where LHC funds would be applied. You may customize the budget categories to fit your specific project needs. The pre-written categories are examples. Feel free to rename, remove, or replace them with categories that better reflect your project. Use the blank rows to add any additional expense types. **Cash match or cost sharing is NOT required.**

The "Project Budget Notes" column serves as your Budget Narrative. You will use this space to explain and justify the 'how' and/or 'why' a line item helps to meet your projects' deliverables, and if the amount budgeted is an estimate or based on a proposal.

If the requested grant funds make up the entirety of what you will spend on the proposed project, then that's all you need to account for in the budget. If the grant amount is a portion of a larger budget for the proposed project, please include details about the remaining expenses and how they will be paid

for. While cost-sharing is not required, if there is a big difference in what you need versus what we can give, filling out the cost-sharing section and showing that you have secured other funds lets us know that the project can be successful.

Request for Proposals (RFPs)
A request for proposal (RFP) is a document that invites contractors or consultants to submit proposals for services related to your project. It is used to gather bids before selecting a business or vendor that will do the work. We have an RFP template available to applicants.

If the project you are proposing to Nuestra Herencia involves hiring a contractor or consultant, you are required to include the RFP as part of your application. Reviewers will want to see that you are prepared to recruit the appropriate professionals to execute your project.

You are not required to include bids in your application. However, having the RFP process started and including the proposals submitted by contractors in your application will make it more competitive.

HELPING YOU SUCCEED

At Latinos in Heritage Conservation, we are committed to supporting you every step of the way to make your application journey smooth and successful! The following resources are available on our website.

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Glossary of terms
- Examples of funded applications
- Live and recorded webinars are available.

Webinar Schedule

- Thursday, November 12 at 2:00 p.m. CST – Nuestra Herencia Grant Program Overview (English & Spanish)
- Wednesday, November 18 at 2:00 p.m. CST – How to Apply for and Manage a Grant (English & Spanish)
- Wednesday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m. CST - Category Deep Dive: Capital Projects (English & Spanish)
- Wednesday, December 9 at 2:00 p.m. CST – Category Deep Dive: Project Planning (English & Spanish)

- Friday, December 11 at 2:00 p.m. CST - Category Deep Dive: Building Organizational Strength (English & Spanish)
- Wednesday, December 16 at 2:00 p.m. CST – Category Deep Dive: Preservation Education (English & Spanish)

Office Hours

LHC's Preservation Grants Manager will hold several office hour sessions to assist applicants as they begin their applications. Registration is required in advance and questions will be answered in the order in which they are received. Please note that this is open to the public and any question asked in this setting will be shared with all in attendance.

- Friday, December 4 at 3:00 p.m. CST – Office Hours (English)
- Wednesday, January 13 at 3:00 p.m. CST – Office Hours (English)
- Wednesday, January 20 at 3:00 p.m. CST – Office Hours (English)
- Wednesday, January 27 at 3:00 p.m. CST – Office Hours (English)
- Wednesday, February 3 at 3:00 p.m. CST – Office Hours (English)
- Wednesday, February 10 at 3:00 p.m. CST – Office Hours (English)

REVIEW PROCESS

Criteria

We fund our grants through a competitive process. Reviewers with expertise in this field will evaluate your project based on the scoring rubric available on our website.

Emphasis on Equity

Latinos in Heritage Conservation is committed to fostering equity and inclusivity in heritage preservation. This grant program is specifically designed to provide funding to Latinx organizations that have historically been left out of traditional funding opportunities. Our goal is to dismantle structural and racial inequities, systemic injustices, and the exclusionary practices often found in conventional grant processes.

To achieve this, we incorporate demographic questions that help inform our review process and scoring rubric. This allows us to prioritize applicants based on factors such as geographic location, operating budget, the communities they engage with, and the audiences they serve. By focusing on these key areas, we create space for a diverse range of grassroots, community-driven initiatives and nonprofits to receive the support they need and deserve.

Timeline

- Application opens: November 4, 2026
- Application Deadline: February 12, 2027
- Application Review Period: February-May 2027
- Grant Awards Announced: June 2027

GRANT MANAGEMENT

Contracts and Payment

If your project is selected for funding, LHC staff will connect you with our friend and Fiscal Sponsor, the Social Impact Fund (SIF). Together, we will create a grant agreement that establishes the purpose of the grant and how funds will be used, along with instructions for reporting and financial documentation. All award recipients must sign the agreements in a timely fashion to secure award funds.

If your award amount is $50,000 or under, you will get a full payment at the start of the project.
If your award amount is over $50,000, payment will be made in two disbursements. You will receive the first half at the start of your project. You will be required to meet with LHC staff prior to requesting your second payment to ensure adequate progress is being made.

To prepare for a potential grant agreement and receiving funds, please make sure you have an established chain of command. This is especially relevant when working with a Fiscal Sponsor, as the sponsor is the one who will handle the banking and transfer funds to the Project Organization. SIF will need to know:

- Who the grant contact will be at both the Project Organization and Fiscal Sponsor.
- Who will be authorized to sign the official grant agreement.
- And who will have the authority to share banking information for payment purposes.

Reporting

Grant reporting is the process of providing regular updates and detailed information to a grant maker about how grant funds are being used, the progress of the funded project, and the overall impact of the grant. At LHC, we have designed our reporting process to be straightforward and user-friendly, so focus can stay on your project throughout the grant period.

All grantees, regardless of the award amount, are required to complete a Mid-Point Check-In and submit a Final Report.

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The Mid-Point Check-In happens at the mid-point of your grant period. If your grant award is over $50,000, then you will not receive the second half of your payment until the check-in is complete. This is not a written report, rather it is a conversation between grantee and LHC's Preservation Grants Manager about the progress made to date, a review of the grant project timeline and milestones that have been reached, and update on how grant funds have been spent.

Final Reports are due within one month after the end of your grant period. The purpose of this report is to ensure funds have been spent correctly and to assess the impact of funded projects across the country.

Expenditure Tracking

All grantees will be required to submit an Expenditure Log with their Final Report. Expenditure tracking means keeping a clear and simple record of how you use your grant funds. Using the LHC Grant Expenditure Log, you'll note each expense, who it was paid to, and when. This helps show that funds are being used as planned and keeps everything transparent and organized throughout your project.

You will not be required to submit scans of receipts or invoices for the expenses listed in your log, but please keep financial documentation on file in case your grant is randomly audited.

Historic Preservation

If a proposed project would affect a historic property, then the applicant will be required to show that their project complies with all applicable local laws and regulations as outlined in the city's local historic preservation ordinances, and often The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. This may include project reviews, approvals, permits, monitoring, mitigation, adherence to standards, or other conditions required by public policy.