REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION'S
Inclusive Storytelling Grant Opportunity

Grant Applications Due: Wednesday July 27, 2022

The National Park Service (NPS) and the National Park Foundation (NPF) are excited to announce a request for proposals in support of Inclusive Storytelling. This grant opportunity is funded by the National Park Foundation.

As part of the emerging Deferred Storytelling Initiative and spurred by our vision for America at 250, the goal of the Inclusive Storytelling Grant is to support projects that help the National Park Service share more inclusive and comprehensive narratives. Indigenous people, women, people of color, people with disabilities, communities striving for environmental justice, and other under-represented people have shaped America, the National Park Service, and specific parks and programs. Too often, however, these people have been excluded or muted due to systemic injustice, colonization, oppression, and discrimination. This grant supports your work to document, preserve, and share through various interpretive products and services, the voices and actions of people who are not often recognized as having shaped our history, or for whom the struggle for social, racial, and environmental justice continues. We recognize the term storytelling has several meanings. For the purpose of this grant opportunity, "storytelling" is used to describe the art and craft of interpretation, the art of organizing and sharing a story not the technique of storytelling.

This grant will also support the work to document, interpret, and share stories about communities that have been historically excluded from participation in the outdoors – either through a community's physical presence on public lands (e.g. segregation, forced removal, lack of accessible accommodations, environmental racism) or through the narrative of who belongs in the outdoors. Also consider submitting a proposal if your work strives to document or interpret stories that eliminate barriers, promote access, and cultivate connections to the many benefits of spending time outside, in cultural and historical spaces or to promote identification with parks as a beneficial element in society.

Transforming contemporary research into relevant interpretative products requires capacity to decipher fresh scholarship and deploy it in engaging, accurate and succinct ways that may underpin interpretive programs, websites, videos, updated Visitor Center and Wayside exhibits, among many other products. Consider how this grant can help strengthen your team's ability to more fully engage in the process of building inclusive storytelling and lead to needed fresh products or services.

Optional Informational Call: An optional informational call to discuss this RFP and the proposal process will be held on:
July 12, 3-4pm ET https://nationalparks-org.zoom.us/j/84479309412
July 14, 2-3pm ET https://nationalparks-org.zoom.us/j/82195959858.
All parties interested in submitting a proposal are encouraged to attend the call, but it is not a requirement.

To access the grant application, click here: https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/
Deadline: Applications are due no later than **Wednesday July 27, 2022, 11:59PM ET.**

Award Amount: A total of up to $2,000,000 is available in support of this Inclusive Storytelling RFP. Grant requests may not exceed $100,000 per park, Regional Program Office, or National Heritage Area. Priority will be given to projects that align with any of the four America at 250 focus areas: 1) Advance Equality and Justice for All, 2) Acknowledge and Honor Indigenous Peoples, 3) Acknowledge and Honor People of African Descent, and 4) Acknowledge and Honor the Contributions of Women. Parks that share similar stories or common history are encouraged to submit a group proposal with one park taking a lead role. There is no minimum threshold and only one grant request may be submitted per park or regional program office.

Park notification: Parks will be notified in August 2022.

Selection Process: All applications will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of representatives from the National Park Foundation and the National Park Service. Grantee selections will be based on the applicant's ability to meet and exceed program requirements and outcomes. See Scoring rubric, attached below.

Questions: Have a creative idea but uncertain if it qualifies? Contact Karen Lee klee@nationalparks.org or Adrena Ifill AIfill@nationalparks.org.

RFP Contents:
- **A.** Overview
- **B.** Project Examples
- **C.** Criteria
- **D.** Requirements
- **E.** Timeline
- **F.** Evaluation
- **G.** Instructions
- **H.** Proposal Template
- **I.** Budget Request
- **J.** Supplemental Documents

A. Overview

The National Park Foundation is providing grants that increase the ability of parks to deliver inclusive, accurate, and underrepresented stories. Grants can be used to help **launch a new idea**, **pilot an outreach approach** to deliver authentic inclusivity, **focus on an area of importance** to your park such as Indigenous perspectives, gender equity, LGBTQ rights or immigrant rights movements, or **provide resources for interpreters** to examine the process of transforming historical research into contemporary, relevant interpretation which is accessible and compelling for the intended audience. Grants can also help **finish an incomplete project** that is a priority for your park or help **correct an intersectional story** or history that is inaccurate, biased, or offensive.

Inclusive storytelling is predicated on research, documentation and material culture upon which stories are based. A portion of your grant request can be used to support digital documentation or conservation of objects/materials necessary to anchor stories and provide context, so long as part of the final product

is public-facing, compliant and accessible. Creation of oral histories, podcasts, blogs, web content and other media are supported by this grant.

Partner organizations reflective of the communities you seek to expand inclusive storytelling with will also be supported through this grant, based on their role in implementing the project.

Successful projects will result in tangible products or services, even if those products or services are of a pilot nature. Projects that are purely research, collections acquisition or digitization without a public facing component will not be considered.

B. Project Examples

- **New** media, including Oral History documentation, films and videos, podcasts, mobile app and web content, waysides, publications, and other public communication that share fresh interpretation to counterbalance racism in history, culture, science, and society. Example: *The Big Lockup: Mass Incarceration in the U.S.* Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- **Revise/updated** interpretive media that contains an outdated, incomplete, inaccurate, biased, or offensive story or language. This could include assessing and reducing a dominate narrative with a wayside group or exhibit to provide space for an underrepresented narrative. Example: *History Under Construction* Muir Woods National Monument or *Mission House Wayside* Whitman Mission National Historic Site
- Fund a current furlough period of a full performance interpretive park ranger and assign them to produce an interpretive product or service that meets the criteria for this grant proposal. Example: *New Exhibit on Segregation* Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park
- Hire two seasonal park rangers to cover daily operations to free up a full performance park ranger to conduct a landscape analysis of your interpretive media to identify dominate narratives and identify gaps in storylines.
- Fund interns from communities you seek to include and engage with, to research and document Indigenous perspectives, contemporary views of people of color, disability, or women's history and other narratives to help build inclusive storytelling. Public-facing product even if prototype, required.
- Pilot/seed funding for a larger project (i.e. demonstrate viability of a new approach or idea), fund the completion of an existing project.
- Documentation/conservation of objects associated with the cultural histories you aim to interpret. Public-facing product, even if prototype, required.

C. Program Criteria

While NPF understands and respects that Inclusive Storytelling grants will take many different forms, funding will be prioritized for projects that exemplify a strong commitment to the four America at 250 focus areas: 1) Advance Equality and Justice for All, 2) Acknowledge and Honor Indigenous Peoples, 3) Acknowledge and Honor People of African Descent, and 4) Acknowledge and Honor the Contributions of Women.

When submitting your application, please keep in mind that your request must:

1. Feature inclusive stories aligned with the four America at 250 focus areas
2. Engage new or strategic audiences specifically in the development of content
3. Define outcome, impact, and product/service
4. Discuss how your project will be operationalized and be sustained
5. Provide a clear and justified budget
6. Apply strategic alignment with park or service wide goals

The best proposals will:

A. Promote meaningful engagement of interpretive staff with cultural history and other NPS Units to examine and decipher research, and expand capacity to create inclusive narratives collaboratively among NPS parks/ programs and for the public
B. Identify under-told/new stories, lift formerly excluded voices to bring new social, cultural, and environmental relevance to park interpretation

D. Requirements
1. NPF aims to award up to $2,000,000 for this initiative
2. Grant requests cannot exceed $100,000. Only one request per park or regional program office may be submitted, though parks are encouraged to submit as a group if they have similar goals, history or needs which this grant can fulfill
3. Projects are not required to include in-kind or partner match but if you have a match, please describe.
4. Funding will support project activities between August 2022-December 2023.
5. Final reports will be due January, 2024, an extension is possible.
6. Selected projects will need to collect project content (videos, photos, participant biographies, impact stories, etc.) and work with NPF to collaboratively amplify grant activities through social media, media inquiries, and other opportunities as available.

E. Program Timeline

RFP open June 27, 2022

RFP submission closes Wednesday July 27, 2022, 11:59PM ET

Applicants notified of final decisions August 2022

Sept-Oct.: Grant agreements sent out for signatures and payments issued

September 2022 through December 2023: Program implementation

Mid January 2024: Final grant report(s) due

F. Program Evaluation
Grantee's will participate in program evaluation, TBD.

G. Proposal Instructions:

1. **Read the RFP**
Please read this RFP and use the online application (Fluxx link) to submit application. Please be as specific as possible when answering application questions to help NPF and NPS reviewers fully understand the scope and expected impact of your proposed project because you may be filling out a generic application. Please indicate if this grant will complete your project, begin a multi-phase project, or finish something that was already started.

2. **Optional:** An optional informational call to discuss this RFP will be held on
   a. **Tuesday July 12, 3-4pm ET https://nationalparks-org.zoom.us/j/84479309412**
   b. **Thursday July 14, 2-3pm ET https://nationalparks-org.zoom.us/j/82195959858**

3. **Fluxx Registration & Online Application Tips**

- If you already have an account, you can access the application by logging into the grantee portal with your existing Fluxx credentials.

- If you do not have a Fluxx account, please visit NPF's grantee portal at https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/ and click on "Create an Account Now" to fill out the registration form.
  - **Reminder**: Registration can take two to three days to receive approval prior to being able to access the online application, so please allow for this time during the application period. Please register at least **three days in advance** to avoid technical delays and ensure timely submission of all grant proposals.

- Once NPF has reviewed and approved a registration request, grantees will receive an email and link to set up an account password. The registration email will come from Do-not-reply.grants07-us-east-1@fluxx.io (please check your junk/spam folders).

- To start an application, log into the grantee portal, navigate to the left-hand menu, and click on "Apply for Funding". On this page, select "**Inclusive Storytelling Application**".
  - **Reminder**: Fluxx **does not** automatically save. **Click the "Save" button** frequently to ensure that no information is lost. You may save your application to continue working on it later. We recommend you complete your application in Word first to ensure you don't lose any information.

- "Primary Contact" & "Primary Signatory": Please select the correct person based on the following descriptions. If you do not see the correct person's name, reach out to application@nationalparks.org and provide their name, email address, and title to have them added to the system.
  - Primary Contact will receive automated emails and reminders from the system. All reports will be added to this individual's account, and NPF staff may reach out to them directly as needed.
  - Primary Signatory will receive any potential grant agreements or documents that may need signature.

- "Superintendent Certification": If you are a partner without access to a Superintendent, please provide a letter from your organization's Executive Director or Board President.

- "Organization Documents": If you believe you have not received funding from us before or have had any changes to your organization's address, account information, etc., please upload a W9 Form and Vendor Profile Form in your application. These forms can be found at the bottom of the "Apply for Funding" page in the grantee portal.

For assistance using Fluxx, please contact application@nationalparks.org.

    4. Proposals are due no later than 11:59 PM ET - Wednesday July 27, 2022

H. Application Template
See below

APPLICATION STATEMENTS:
Read and answer each question below.

1. **Organization Information**
   Organization
   Primary Contact
   Primary Signatory *(Primary Signatory is the name of the person who will be signing the Grant Agreement. This is typically the Superintendent or Executive Director).*

2. **Project Title**
   Project title should capture the essence of the project.

3. **Project Abstract**
   Please provide a one-paragraph overview that concisely explains the project.

4. **Project Description**
   Please provide a detailed description of project.

5. **Project Outcomes**
   This grant is intended to support **the process of interpreting inclusive stories and providing a tangible product or service.** Transforming challenging research into relevant interpretive products requires capacity and skill to translate archival information and research into fresh, accurate and meaningful narratives that may then be integrated into interpretive programs, websites, videos, updated Visitor Center and Wayside exhibits, among many other products or services. How will this grant help strengthen your ability to more fully engage in the process of building inclusive storytelling, and lead to needed new products?

6. **Project Timeline**

What are the major milestones? Do they align with key events? Please estimate specific dates for key project components. You may attach your schedule as a Word or Excel document to the online application.

7. **Are there any other "leveraging" opportunities?**

Describe opportunities to leverage funds, in-kind donations, outreach, expertise, research, partnerships, etc. (In-kind or leveraging opportunities are not a requirement).

8. **Other**

What else do you wish to tell us about your project? Given that funding is limited, why should your project be one of just a few that might be selected**?** Will partners assist in your project (partners are not a requirement but if they have a role, please describe)?

I. Budget Amount Requested

Please identify the total amount requested from NPF.

Project Budget

Please provide an overall budget for the project including high level categories-- i.e. equipment, staffing, transportation, etc. If NPF funds won't fully cover the full budget, how will you accomplish the remainder of the project or use funds to get the project to a higher level of completion? You can attach an Excel or Word document in the attachments section.

Grant Made Payable To

Please indicate amounts and to whom checks should be made payable (including the NPS unit) along with the address where the check should be mailed. NPF will need a W-9 and Vendor Profile Form for each third party that is to be paid. (Please find the Vendor Profile Form on the "Apply Now" page of your grantee portal and attach both files in the "Organization Documents" section below.)

J. Supplemental Documents

- **Superintendent/Program Manager Certification**
  - All applications must have NPS Superintendent or regional program manager approval before submitting. By providing the information below, you are certifying that the NPS site's superintendent or regional program manager approves this application.

    - **National Park Site or Program Name**

    - **NPS Authority's Name**

    - **Title of NPS Authority (Superintendent, Program Manager, Site Manager)**

    - **Email of NPS Authority**

    - **Phone number of NPS Authority**

- **Name of person submitting this application**

- **Email of person submitting this application**

- **Phone number of person submitting this application**

Grant Terms Information
  Project Start Date:
  Project End Date:

ADDENDUM

Application Categories	Score Range	Category Definition
Project Description	1-5	How does this project: • Transform new scholarship into a relevant interpretative product that your interpretive staff can embrace and effectively interpret; • Enhance public-facing staff's ability to address their own & visitors implicit biases and increase capacity to deliver new inclusive storytelling; • Address a deferred storytelling backlog at your site; • Feature Indigenous, women, African American and liberty for all narratives as listed in the America at 250 focus areas.
Project Outcomes	1-5	How does this project: • Strengthen capacity to sustain inclusive storytelling about women, indigenous people and African Americans and expand themes of liberty & justice for all? • Clearly address a deferred storytelling backlog at your site? • Measure success and what are the project benchmarks used to measure project/program success?
Support	1-5	How does this project: • Have wide support from Park leadership, staff, partners, individual champions? • Align with park strategic goals or management plans or addresses identified needs? • Have the transformational change that you aim to achieve?
Project Budget	1-5	Consider: • Does the proposal include a budget which clearly, accurately and appropriately reflect the needs of the project with clear identified expense categories and realistic costs estimates (no lump sums)? • Does the proposal clearly describe how this project is an effective use of limited funding? • If NPF funds won't cover full budget, how will you accomplish the project or deploy other funds to achieve this work?

Score Range: 1-5
1- Meets Minimum
5- Exceptional