2020 Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives
Applicant Webinar Q&A
January 28,2020

Q: **If we have a proposal concept that is similar to one that has been previously funded, can we see that proposal or reviewer comments?**
A:We cannot provide the proposal or reviewer comments for funded projects. We have quite a few sample proposals on the Applicant Resources page that you can view to help frame your proposal, and if you'd like to learn more about any funded project, you might try connecting directly with folks at that institution to learn more about it.

Q: **I understand that salaries for staff that are directly related to the project are allowable expenses. If the PI on the project is also doing work on the project can CLIR funds be used for the salary of the PI?**
A: Yes. Any person who is doing work for the project can have their salary funded. We go into more detail in our 2020 guidelines, Appendix A: Budget. If the PI is a permanent staff member, you will need to explain why grant funds are needed and how the PI's normal responsibilities will be covered while they are working on the grant.

Q: **Are vendor quotes and selection criteria required for initial phase or final proposal submission?**
A: They are required for the final proposal phase, but not the initial round. However, if you are considering the use of a vendor, in the first round, you'll want to include estimates and an explanation of how you came to them in your budget narrative to help reviewers understand how you got the numbers in your budget.

Q: **Can an institution apply for more than one CLIR program, for multiple projects?**
A: Yes. You can submit applications concurrently. It's best if they are distinct projects. We do have a limitation that you may only serve as PI for one concurrent *Digitizing Hidden Collections* project, but a single individual may serve as a PI on concurrent *Digitizing Hidden Collections* and *Recordings at Risk* projects.

Q: **Are resources for staff solutions vs subcontractors weighted any differently, specifically toward managed time and fair compensation?**
A: It's different for every project. We want to support what's best for you project specifically. Reviewers will look for the applicant to present a compelling case for the solution you present.

Q: **The Hidden Collections are only from the United States or can be a partnership with other institutions in Mexico by instance?**
A: We currently only allow collections in the US and Canada. The program landing page includes additional information on Institutional Eligibility.

Q: If we have begun preliminary work on a project, can it still be considered? The work is preliminary and done at least in part, to determine feasibility.
A: Yes. There are a lot of applicant institutions who have done pilot projects to help explore feasibility and refine project work flows. The proposed *Digitizing Hidden Collections* project will need to be distinct from other ongoing work, though. It will need to have a start and end date, and no award funds may be used for activity outside the approved project timeline.

Q: Is there a cost sharing component?
A: Cost sharing is not required, but it is allowed, and helps to show institutional support. If you *are* going to talk about it in your application, put it in the budget narrative section (not the budget detail). Only costs directly related to awarded funds should be listed in the budget detail.

Q: Our collection involves material that was from quite a few years ago and is pretty obscure, so we think getting the copyright to make them available to the public might be a challenge. Do you have any examples of how past grantees might have navigated this?
A: Examples are included in sample proposals on the Applicant Resources page. In some cases, we include a cover page that will show the reasons why reviewers suggested the proposal as a model application, and some are because of their Rights, Ethics, and Re-Use statement. You can also look at other resources such as Creative Commons and RightsStatements.org. If you send us a specific question we may be able to find a good model for you to look at.

Q: If our project involves digitization of materials that, because of copyright concerns, we might deem unavailable to the public, will this be detrimental to our application?
A: The reviewers are mainly looking for scholarly significance when assessing projects. If limitations on access are required because of copyright or other legal, ethical, or cultural reasons, there are allowances for those exceptions, and they should be fully explained in your Rights, Ethics, and Re-use statement. Be sure to clearly justify any restrictions so reviewers understand and can evaluate appropriately.

Q: Can proposals relating to preservation equipment, such as scanning equipment, computers for digitizing and so forth be considered?
A: The primary cost for any project should be for the digitization and description expenses. You'll want to make sure the materials, supplies and equipment is directly related to the work. Appendix A: Budget in the Application Guidelines & Template go into more detail concerning the limits on this budget line and what may be included.

Q: Would the development of an online distribution mechanism (website with searchable database) be considered directly related to digitization, or, would IT staff support (vs archival staff) be looked upon unfavorably by reviewers.
A: This program does allow some website development within the allowable cost (see Appendix A: Budget in the Application Guidelines & Template). We recommend that it not be a large portion of the budget—digitization needs to be the main part of the budget. If some support will

be included, you will need to explain why it is necessary and how it will be sustained once the project is done.

Q: **Can you give an example of culturally sensitive reason for watermarking?**
A: So far we have not seen any cases of this in the funded projects. There are some practices that are being used to provide a warning or signal about the content presented. The TK label program may have some guidelines. *Digitizing Hidden Collections* no longer allows watermarking except for culturally sensitive reasons.

Q: **Can you define the difference between Hidden Collections and Recordings at Risk guidelines?**
A: *Recordings at Risk* is aimed at at-risk audio and audio-visual formats only, the awards are from $10,000 to $50,000, with shorter time frames (up to 12 months), and the project must be completed by a qualified external digitization service provider. The focus for *Recordings at Risk* is more about preservation through digitization where *Digitizing Hidden Collections* emphasizes access. Be sure to explore the *Recordings at Risk* program pages for more information and to view that program's guidelines.

Q: **When figuring out costs of digitization, can you include the costs of proofreading and correcting OCR materials that you are digitizing? Can limited equipment and costs for this be included if this is being done off-site in community center settings?**
A: Yes. That would be included in some of the quality control that would be expected in a project like this. For equipment to use off-site, such an expense would need to be justified as to why it is outside regular capacity. Reviewers would expect to see why you would do this off-site, if it will be used to do similar work after the project is over, etc. Single institutions have a cap of $7500 for all equipment and supplies, and multi-institution projects are capped at a total of $12,000 for all equipment and supplies.

Q: **I'm in the archive as a part of small non-profit with under 12 employees. Do you have a record of funding organizations such as mine? It seems that many of these guideline are written for large institutions.**
A: It is possible for a small organization to receive funding from this program. One major hurdle small organizations often face is the sustainability plan required for every project— in other words, a plan for maintenance / long-term preservation of the project deliverables. Partnering and finding organizations with strengths that complement yours may help make your project more competitive, and we often see collaborative projects where this is the case. Explore the funded projects page for examples.

Q: **We are still learning about the process of making our digitized collection available to the public (the nuts and bolts), Is that going to make our application less attractive (or does it help meet the staff education portion of the application)?**
A: When it comes to the technology surrounding digital collections, we expect that there will be some learning involved throughout the project. However, you are expected to have a somewhat

detailed outline of your digitization process and have established which platforms (whether this be at the institutional, state, or national level) you will use to share your collections at the time of proposal writing.

Q: **CLIR has some additional grant info sessions scheduled. Will those have substantially different content than today's?**
A: This one is an overview of the application process and program, the upcoming two will be focused solely on Q&A. Visit the Applicant Resources page for links to register.

Q: **Can the majority of materials, be in a language other than English?**
A: Yes. We have funded many projects that include other languages. There is no stipulation on the language of content, and proposing non-English content is encouraged.

Q: **If the proposal is for joint nonprofit and government entity, would that require special approval?**
A: Email hiddencollections@clir.org so we can advise you on your specific case before you get started.

Q: **Our archives do not have a lot of work space for active projects. Would the CLIR grant cover expenses related to renting a processing/digitization work space for the project?**
A: This would be disallowed, falling into overhead costs. Email hiddencollections@clir.org so we can provide additional information.

Q:**Are there matching funds, or is it no match?**
A: The is no required match or cost-share for the program. Those who are able, use this to help emphasize institutional support.

Q: **Does the job description need to include all the responsibilities of the staff person, or just those responsibilities related to the project requesting funding for?**
A: If it's staff already hired or only a portion will only be covered by the grant, we only need to know about the project work and related duties.

Q: **Is the chat Q&A page documented and shared?**
A: Yes. The Q&A will be available on the website within a couple of days.

Q: **There was a note about the majority of funds being allocated towards digitization and description and not for infrastructure. Does infrastructure included building a digital platform to access digitized content? Could you describe infrastructure? Thanks,**
A: Building a digital platform is something that you can include as a portion of your budget, but you should have a plan in place to tell how it will be sustained after the project. Historically, reviewers are most interested in funding infrastructure (for instance a new website, portal, or application) when these are shared, inter-institutional platforms for aggregating content.

Q: I**n regards to funding for staff, would it be appropriate to include students who might either be enrolled in an MLIS program or graduate program with digital humanities component?**

A. Yes. Student positions are often funded through the program and reviewers will look for well-designed student positions that offer support/learning opportunities. Note that we do not pay tuition remission through the program. If you are using students, positions should be limited in scope and they should not replace full-time positions.

Q: **Consultants? What kinds are included in this program?**

A: We've seen a lot of different kinds of consultants used effectively through this program. Some will bring them in at the beginning to help with workflows or to help with metadata or description. The program also allows for and encourages the use of advisory councils, especially when tribal entities are involved.