Recordings at Risk

Cycle 13 Applicant Webinar
December 2, 2025

RAR
Recordings at Risk

Links mentioned:

- [Land Acknowledgment](#)
- [ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation](#)
- [Recordings At Risk Home Page](#)
- [Recordings At Risk Apply for an Award Page](#)
- [Application Guidelines and Template](#)
- [SMApply](#)
- [CLIR's Guidelines for Letter Writers](#)
- [DLF Digitizing Special Formats Wiki](#)
- [Guidelines for Grants Involving Consultants or Subcontractors](#)
- [Technical Recommendations](#)
- [ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation](#)
- [ARSC Preservation and Restoration Directory](#)
- [AMIA Global Supplier Directory](#)
- [Registration for Q&A Webinar](#)
- [Applicant Survey](#)

Questions and Answers

The following questions and answers are grouped together based on general headings to better assist you in navigating the document. Consider using the "Find" feature in this document to search a word or phrase to find a more specific question topic.

All questions asked in chat and via the Q&A box during the live webinar are copied below. Any questions answered live may include additional references or clarification. If you have any other questions, email the CLIR Grants team at recordingsatrisk@clir.org.

Jump to a topic:

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General

Q: I had my Chairman of the Board write a letter of commitment, but now I'm thinking that I, as Director of the Foundation and the one who will have hands on this project, should write the letter of commitment. What do you suggest?
A: It would be fine for you to write a letter of commitment for the project. We will often have directors or deans write a letter of institutional commitment. It depends on your project and what is most feasible for you. You can find more information on letters of commitment in our [Guidelines for Letter Writers](#).

Q: Is at least 1 letter of support required for the initial application, or does that come later in the process like with _Digitizing Hidden Collections_?
A: Since _Recordings at Risk_ is only a single application process, letters of support and the letter of commitment are required in the initial application.

Q: Would it be possible to arrange a meeting with a CLIR program officer to discuss the strength of a prospective applicant's proposal prior to submission?
A: Unfortunately, we are a very small team and we are unable to schedule meetings with applicants. However, if you have a detailed question you'd like us to answer, you can always email us at recordingsatrisk@clir.org.

Q: Are organizations outside the U.S. eligible?
A: This program is open to nonprofit organizations from the U.S. and Canada. This is the first year that the grant is open to applicants from Canada, but it has never been eligible outside of the U.S. prior to this cycle, and this cycle it is not eligible outside the U.S., Canada, and their related territories.

Q: What are the reporting requirements during project execution if selected?
A: If awarded funding, you will be required to submit a report three months after your project end date and reports will be completed in [SMApply](#). You'll receive additional details and instructions on reporting if awarded funding.

Q: Will this recording be available after today?
A: Yes, we will post it on the [Apply for an Award](#) page within the next week or two.

Collections

Q: We plan to store the originals at our Foundation storage facility for 3 to 5 years, and then donate and transfer them to a known Collections and Archives Center. Is that a problem?
A: It should not be a problem. We don't dictate what happens to the materials other than the files created through the digitization project. We expect long-term sustainability and accessibility for the digital files, but we don't prescribe what you do with the originals.

Q: When CLIR emphasizes recordings that support national and international interests - do you have any advice around submitting recordings representing groups currently targeted in national politics/policies?
A: This program is not subject-specific, but format specific. It doesn't have to be related to current or national politics; focus more on the rarity of the formats and other risk factors. If it has contemporary relevance, feel free to highlight that, but it's not a requirement for this program.

> **Follow up : I meant sort of the opposite - that CLIR might NOT want recordings that don't align with these policies**
> A: The key is that we are looking for materials that have broad public impact, beyond your local community. There are not restrictions based on national politics/policies.

Rights, Ethics, and Re-use

Q: Can you speak generally about how CLIR views the challenges around making mid-20th century audio recordings publicly accessible given rights issues?
A: As far as rights, ethics, and re-use, it depends on the materials you are nominating for digitization. We do want you to have an understanding of potential rights, ethics, and re-use issues surrounding your collections and to include this information in your application. If there are instances where you cannot make the materials accessible or need to limit the metadata available due to ethical or legal concerns, you will want to explain that in your statement. We will have 3 reviewers and an IP reviewer who reviews each application. The IP reviewer in particular will want to know you have an understanding of any issues and have a plan in place to address those issues. For example, you may want to include a takedown policy. Sometimes it will require you to upload donor agreements in the additional uploads list.

Q: Due to copyright or donor agreements, our organization is not able to display or show our archived media offsite (but can be viewed onsite) from the Museum or Archive, is that infringing on the public access requirement for this program?
A: What we ask is that the metadata be made publicly available. You can explain in your rights, ethics, and re-use statement why you cannot make metadata available. If there's a fee schedule, include that; if it's restricted viewing, explain that carefully. The application will be most competitive if the metadata is publicly available, but we know that is not always possible, and that there are justifiable reasons to limit the metadata. The IP reviewers will want to see that your access is appropriate for the materials you are nominating.

Q: Can a museum house the archive or does it need to be a library or other archival institution?
A: A museum is eligible. The program is open to cultural heritage nonprofits: libraries, archives, museums, galleries, community archives, historical associations, etc. So no, you do not have to specifically be a library or archive.

Project Design

Q: How can we find digitizing vendors that were used for selected projects from previous years?
A: We don't necessarily list the vendors for previous projects but we have all our previous [funded projects listed on our website](), so you can see the project summaries for all those projects. You may be able to either see their vendor in the summary of the project or, if their project seems similar to yours, particularly in terms of format, you can reach out to them to get more information.

Q: If we worked with a vendor before, do we need/should we include quotes from different vendors?
A: Every project is different based on the type of materials and geographical area. It is okay to go with a vendor you have worked with before, but you still need to substantiate why you want to work with this vendor and how they are qualified for the particular collection you are nominating. You could include another estimate from a vendor to demonstrate you have done your research if you would like, but it is not required.

Q: When providing preservation plans (such as fixity checking) for reformatted media, how much information is relevant? Is a digital preservation workflow in the appendices too much or just enough information?
A: You will have two pages for the digital preservation plan. Remember we will truncate anything over the allowable page limit for uploads. But yes, you can add information you think is relevant and not clear in your application to the additional upload section.

Budget and Finance

Q: Our service provider has already been digitizing our reel to reel tapes on a volunteer basis, but can no longer afford to do it for free. Is it ok to now ask for funds to pay him for the remainder of the project?
A: Yes. What you've done prior to this is not necessarily relevant to the program or the application. We want to know what you're going to specifically digitize with the proposed project and these funds. If you already have a relationship with a service provider and you want to continue to use them, you can provide their information as your chosen service provider and their given quote. You may want to reference a pre-existing relationship with a service provider to make the case for why they are the correct vendor for your materials, and you can reference ongoing digitization to show your organizational familiarity with completing that type of work.

Q: Could you clarify the amount of staffing costs we are able to include in the budget?
A: Once again, this is subjective and based on your project. For this program, we do require for most of the funds be dedicated to the digitization process. You can include some staffing costs for preparing the collection to be sent off for digitization, for ingest, for metadata, and or other things necessary for digitization. To remain competitive more than 50% of your funds should be dedicated to the digitization process and any costs apart from digitization should be specifically

and strongly justified. You can read more about this in the [Application Guidelines under Appendix A.](#)

Q: Is maintenance of digitization equipment allowable in costs, i.e. calibrating and aligning the machines?
A: That is an indirect cost so no this would be a disallowed cost. Also, you should have an external service provider, so your own digitization equipment should not come into play. This is different from our other regranting program, *Digitizing Hidden Collections: Amplifying Unheard Voices*.

Q: Is there a match funding requirement for this grant program?
A: No, there is no matching requirement.

Q: If digitization estimates exceed $60,000, may we simply state that our institution will fund any costs over $60,000, or must we limit this proposal to the $60,000 amount?
A: Yes, you can explain in your budget narrative that your institution is willing and able to cover costs about $60,000 through a cost share. Remember not to include cost share amounts in your project ask, in your budget detail, or in the project total on your budget narrative. Rather, there is a specific section in the budget narrative where you can include any cost share information.

Review Process

Q: UC Berkeley is a large institution. How can I know if another unit within the university is applying?
A: We can't answer that for you; that's a question for your organization's internal processes and communication. For example, you might have a central grants office that can operate as a clearinghouse. On our part, if we receive multiple grant apps from the same organization we will contact the PIs and ask them to determine which one(s) will be withdrawn.

Q: Do you still have reviewer comments available from a previously submitted but not awarded application?
A: We still have the reviewer comments from previous cycles. If you are a prior applicant and you no longer have access to your comments, we can send those to you.

Q: We applied for a grant last cycle and got only positive feedback, but were not funded. How can I get in touch with someone about making our application stronger this cycle?
A: We are not able to do one on one meetings with applicants, that is why we provide the comments from the review panel and we advise people to go back to those. This is a very competitive program and every year there are very strong proposals that are not funded. It is not necessary that your proposal was not strong. If you received positive feedback you can build off of that in your resubmission, but not being funded does not necessarily mean you need to make significant changes to your proposal. If you have specific questions regarding the feedback you received, you can reach out to us at recordingsatrisk@clir.org and we will do our best to offer clarity as we are able.