



Recordings at Risk

Applicant Webinar

December 2, 2025

Welcome! We're glad you're here.
There is no audio at the moment. Feel free to
introduce yourself in the chat box. 🙋

We'll begin the webinar at 2pm ET.

CLIR

Council on Library &
Information Resources



Recordings at Risk

Applicant Webinar

December 2, 2025

Hello, everyone and welcome to the Applicant Webinar for the thirteenth call of *Recordings at Risk*. I'm Louisa Kwasigroch, Managing Director at CLIR, and we are happy that you could join us today.

Overview:

→ Introductions

- Eligibility and Drafting Resources
- Starting an Application
- Application Overview
- Final Tips
- Questions

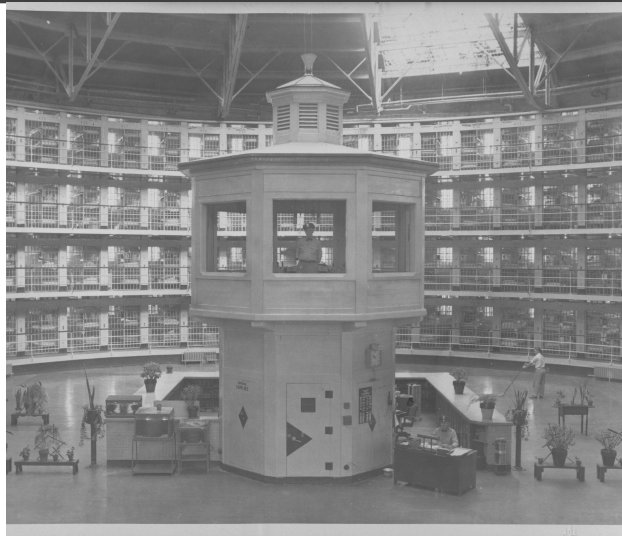


Image courtesy of Illinois State Archives
(Cycle 11 recipient)

During this session, we'll give a brief overview of eligibility for this grant program, show you how to start an application, provide an overview of application requirements, and share a few final tips. We'll then turn to questions.

We'd like to begin with few brief introductions—to this platform, to CLIR as an organization, and to our team.

Our Platform

- Click 'CC Show Captions' to turn on captions
- All attendees are muted
- Set chat to "Everyone"
- Submit questions any time through "Q&A"
- *Recording in progress*



Here are some notes about how you can use Zoom during this session.

- You can click the "CC Show Captions" button at the bottom of your Zoom window to turn on the live transcript.
- You're welcome to use chat for general introductions and conversation. In order to send a message to everyone, remember to change the default from "Host and Panelists" to "Everyone".
- We'll have a dedicated time to answer questions at the end. Use the separate Q&A feature to ask questions that are not answered during the webinar.
- And finally, the session is being recorded. The recording, slides, transcript, and a Q&A document will be made available on the [Apply for an Award](#) page of our website within two weeks of this webinar.

CLIR



For those new to CLIR, we like to begin with a reminder of our mission: The Council on Library and Information Resources (or “CLIR”) is an independent, nonprofit organization that forges strategies to enhance research, teaching, and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning.

So what does that all mean?

- CLIR takes on a number of roles including publishing research, convening meetings, and running programs.
- As an independent nonprofit, we are not part of the federal government. We are also not a private foundation. Our activities are not funded by an endowment, but rather by a combination of grants and sponsorship which gives us the flexibility to operate our programs a bit differently than government funders or private foundations.
- The Recordings at Risk program is a re-granting program, which means the funds for your projects were awarded as part of a grant to CLIR from the Mellon Foundation. CLIR reapplies periodically to Mellon for funds to operate Recordings at Risk program and award new grants.

Program Staff



CLIR's work is accomplished by a relatively small staff of about 20 geographically distributed individuals with the greatest concentration living in the DC area.

Today's webinar is led by the Grants Team, which administers CLIR's active regranteeing programs, offering support for the entire grant cycle--from application to final report.

The CLIR Grants Team includes:

Sharon Burney | Program Officer | Midlothian, VA

Alyson Pope | Program Officer | Pittsburgh, PA

Jane Larson | Senior Program Associate | Pittsburgh, PA

Lizzi Albert | Community Relations Manager | Washington, D.C.

Alice Rubin | Program Officer, Strategic Initiatives | Brooklyn, NY

Louisa Kwasigroch | Managing Director | Chicago, IL

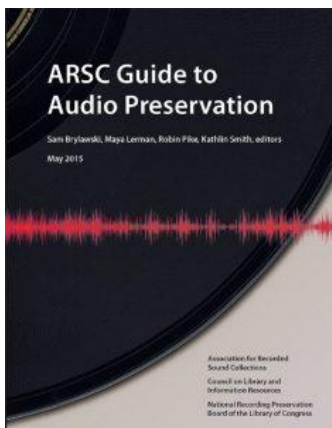
Bodwéwadmī (Potawatomi)
Canarsie
Kaskaskia
Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo)
Lenape
Myaamia
Nacotchtank (Anacostan)
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Monacan
Peoria
Piscataway
Shawandasse Tula (Shawanwaki/Shawnee)

Visit [Native-Land.ca](https://native-land.ca) to learn about Indigenous Lands where you live.

<https://native-land.ca/>

Our team would like to center today's conversation by acknowledging that, as residents of the United States, we are speaking to you from unceded land of many Indigenous peoples. I'd like to respectfully acknowledge and recognize the original and current caretakers of the land, water, and air where I live: the Piscataway and Anacostan peoples and all of their ancestors and descendants. I am grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on their homelands, and ask you to join me in acknowledging all Indigenous communities, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. May this acknowledgement remind us of our shared commitment to beginning the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism. If you haven't done so already, we'd love for you to introduce yourself in the chat and share a land acknowledgement for the area where you live, if you'd like.

CLIR's Background in the Field



CLIR has helped to build awareness of the urgency of digitizing “at risk” audio and audiovisual formats

- National Recording Preservation Board (since 2005) and *Cataloging and Digitizing Hidden Collections* (since 2008)
- ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation Download for free: clir.org/pubs/reports/pub164/

For more than 20 years, CLIR has partnered with organizations to help raise awareness about the legal and practical threats to audio and audiovisual content. We supported the creation of the *Library of Congress National Recording Preservation Plan* in 2012 and gained valuable experience in regranting through our flagship *Cataloging and Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives* programs. In 2015, we collaborated on the [ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation](http://clir.org/pubs/reports/pub164/), which is a practical introduction to caring for and preserving audio collections and is available as a free pdf download on our website.

Creation of ‘Recordings at Risk’



Image courtesy of the Muhammad Ali Center
(Cycle 12 recipient)

Unique challenges of audio/audiovisual digitization and description:

- Content is at great risk of loss
- Need for specialized expertise, sometimes even to conduct cataloging or assessment
- Prohibitive costs of storage for access and preservation
- Tricky intellectual property situations

Through our work on these projects, CLIR came to recognize that there are unique challenges facing those performing audio and audiovisual digitization and description.

- The first and biggest of these is that much a/v content is at high risk of being lost due to physical degradation and changing environmental conditions. As materials disappear, cultural history does, too.
- A second major challenge is that specialized training is often necessary to address description, storage, and maintenance needs for these materials—which staff may not possess.
- Third: Storage costs post-digitization can be prohibitive. Organizations may not have the existing digital infrastructure to store and maintain preservation copies, production copies, and access copies of the materials.
- And a final challenge that CLIR recognized was the often tricky intellectual property situations surrounding a/v content

All of the projects that have been funded through Recordings at Risk have had to work through some, if not all, of these challenges. Through the program, CLIR aims to help organizations identify priorities for digital reformatting, build relationships with partners, raise awareness of best practices, and develop practical strategies for addressing all of them. To date, CLIR has completed twelve award cycles for RaR,

funding a total of 211 projects involving more than 178 unique institutions and awarding roughly \$6.8 million.

Assessment Criteria

- **Impact:** the public impact of the project
- **Urgency:** the urgency of undertaking the reformatting to avoid risk of loss
- **Potential for preservation:** the viability of the work plan and deliverable for preserving the content over time
- **Approach to access:** the approach to legal and ethical concerns affecting access

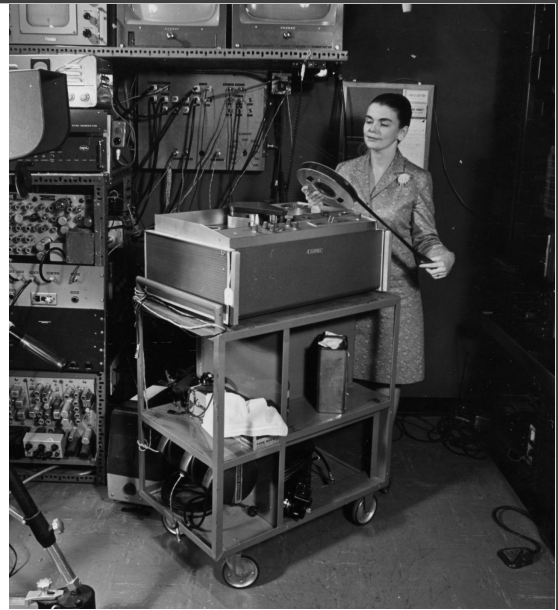
In light of the many challenges unique to A/V collections, the *Recordings at Risk* program was developed with four primary assessment criteria:

- Impact
- Urgency
- Potential for preservation, and
- Approach to access

The emphasis for *Recordings at Risk* is grounded in the need for preservation through digitization and the recognition that materials will have varying levels of appropriate access given legal and ethical concerns. *Recordings at Risk* awards are smaller with shorter timelines and have a very narrow focus on the activities directly related to digitization work.

- Introductions
- ➔ **Eligibility and Drafting Resources**
- Starting an Application
- Application Overview
- Final Tips
- Questions

Image courtesy of the University of Nebraska Medical Center (Cycle 11 recipient)



We will now move into the eligibility requirements for the program and the resources available to applicants.

Useful Links

- Program Homepage
<https://www.clir.org/recordings-at-risk/>
- Apply for an Award
<https://www.clir.org/recordings-at-risk/apply-for-an-award/>

We have provided all the information applicants should need on the *Recordings at Risk* program pages—in particular, the [program's homepage](https://www.clir.org/recordings-at-risk/) and the [Apply for an Award](https://www.clir.org/recordings-at-risk/apply-for-an-award/) page. We'll share these links throughout the presentation and also point to specific resources available.

Eligibility

- United States and Canadian nonprofit academic, research, or cultural heritage organizations
- Organization and collections must be in the United States, Canada, or an associated entity
- Government units and their agencies: eligible, if cultural heritage is primary function
- Tribal and indigenous governments: eligible

Questions? recordingsatrisk@clir.org

Chat: recordingsatrisk@clir.org

ALYSON

We'll start with eligibility. To be considered for funding, you must be a U.S. or Canadian nonprofit academic, research, or cultural heritage organization. The organization and its collections must also be located within the United States or Canadian or a related entity, such as American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Northwest Territories, or Yukon. Government units and their agencies are eligible, so long as their primary function is cultural heritage. And tribal and indigenous government units are also eligible.

If you have any questions about whether or not your organization is eligible for a grant, you can always contact us via our program email at recordingsatrisk@clir.org

Eligibility

One application per organization per call

- Different campuses of a university system are considered different organizations
- A museum and a library on the same campus would not be considered different organizations

ALYSON

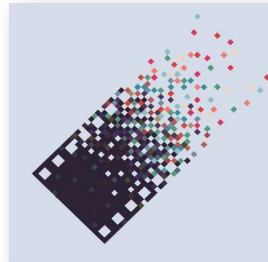
An eligible organization can only submit one application per cycle. If an organization submits more than one proposal, CLIR will contact the responsible parties and ask them to select just one for consideration.

A common question we receive concerns different campuses of a single academic entity. For the purpose of this program, we treat each individual campus of a university system as its own distinct institution. For example, UC Berkeley and UC Riverside may submit separate applications and would not be required to join forces through a single "University of California" application. However, one of these universities would not be able to submit two applications from different schools or departments within the institution (such as one from the school of law and one from the school of engineering, or one from a campus library and one from a campus museum).

Similar distinctions apply for national libraries and archives.

Allowable formats

- Audio / Video / Film
- Primarily focused on analog-to-digital transfer



ALYSON

Recordings at Risk does not have an official list of allowed formats. We welcome applications as long as the format is analog audio and/or visual, is time-based in nature (so, no still photographs or slides), and you can find a qualified external service provider or vendor that can perform digital reformatting in an appropriate way for the format and condition of the physical materials.

It is important to note that the program was designed with analog-to-digital reformatting projects in mind. While born digital a/v content is no less important and is surely at-risk, it is not the focus of this particular program at this moment.

There are, of course, a few formats that blur the lines when it comes to the analog/digital distinction, such as digital audio tape or DATs. This particular format, for instance, is eligible and certainly at-risk. Files on a hard drive, however, in need of digital reformatting are not eligible. Don't hesitate to reach out to us to double-check the eligibility of a specific format.

Cycle 13 Timeline



All project work will take place between September 1, 2026 and August 31, 2027.

Our timeline for Cycle 13 began on November 3, 2025 when the call for proposals opened. Proposals are due on February 24, 2026. Recipients will be announced in early August 2026. We always notify applicants individually before the public announcement is made.

All projects must last between 3 and 12 months. For Cycle 13, all project work should take place between September 1, 2026 and August 31, 2027.

There is another cycle set to open in late 2026. We encourage you to sign up for our [Grants and Programs Newsletter](#) for upcoming cycle announcements.

Apply for an Award Page

- Eligibility + Award Terms
- Application Resources
 - Webinars
 - Guidelines + Templates
 - Budget Documents
- Document Library
 - Key Guides, Policies, and References
 - Sample Applications
- FAQs

The [Apply for an Award](#) page has a wealth of information to assist your grant writing process. Of particular note are the template budget documents, FAQs, and a number of sample applications that may help inspire your proposal. We are regularly reviewing the resources we provide and often update these in response to common questions or issues we see.

Drafting an Application



Guidelines

Instructions for application form. Explains questions and provides context.

[Visit Guidelines](#)



Apply

Access the Recordings at Risk application form during an open call for applications.

[Apply Here](#)



FAQs

Find answers to our most commonly asked questions.

[Read FAQs](#)



Begin here!

Perhaps the most important resource on this page is the [Application Guidelines & Template](#). This is a single document providing step by step application instructions, explanation, and space for drafting responses. You can access it by clicking the “View Guidelines” at the top of the page.



Recordings at Risk

Cycle 13 Application Guidelines & Template

Carefully read the following guidelines and template before starting the application process. Additional information and resources are located on the [Apply for an Award page](#). Still have questions? Contact recordingsatrisk@clir.org. During the application period, CLIR accepts inquiries by email only.

All proposals must be submitted through the official [online application form](#).

This document is for viewing only. [Create a personal, editable copy of this Google Doc](#) (if logged into a Google account)

To download and work on your computer, select "File" then "Download as" from the menu.

All proposals must be submitted through the online application form by **February 24, 2026, at 11:59 pm Eastern**

We've shared a screenshot of the first page of that document. The Guidelines and Template can be thought of as a handbook for the application, identifying how the questions will be asked in the online application system and providing additional explanation, instructions, and the underlying rationale for the various components of the proposal. Some of what is covered in the guidelines will be mentioned here in the webinar and on the application form itself, but always reference the guidelines for a more comprehensive explanation of the application questions and requirements. This is available as a Google Doc you can copy in order to develop your proposal alongside your team. You can also download the document as a Word document or PDF by selecting "File" then "Download as".

Be sure that you are using the most recent version of this document which is labeled Cycle 13 and dated November 3, 2025. This version will have all the appropriate dates and instructions.

Bear in mind that the Guidelines and Template Google doc is only a working document. You will still need to copy and paste your responses into CLIR's online application system in order to submit a valid proposal.

Digitizing Special Formats Wiki



Digitizing Special Formats

This list of resources is curated by the Digital Library Federation for the benefit of cultural heritage professionals planning projects involving the digitization of rare and unique materials. Applicants to the Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives® and Recordings at Risk® programs of the Council on Library and Information Resources® may find these helpful in planning project proposals.

Rather than providing comprehensive coverage, this list includes introductory and reference materials that are good places to begin an exploration of issues of broad import to digitizing cultural heritage materials.

Content for this wiki page is currently being curated by program staff at the Council on Library and Information Resources®. This page was originally developed and edited by the following team: Nicholas Graham, Project Coordinator, North Carolina Digital Heritage Center®, Lisa Gregory, Digital Projects Librarian, North Carolina Digital Heritage Center, and Tamsyn Rose-Steel, CLIR/DLF Postdoctoral Fellow for Data Curation in Medieval Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

If you would like to suggest a resource for inclusion on this page, send your suggestion to info@digilib.org. The DLF is currently seeking professionals from DLF member institutions who would like to participate in a curatorial group to develop and maintain the content of this page. Prospective volunteers for this group should also send expressions of interest to info@digilib.org.

[wiki.digilib.org/Digitizing Special Formats](http://wiki.digilib.org/Digitizing_Special_Formats)

There are two other resources on the Apply for an Award page that we want to highlight. The first is the [Digitizing Special Formats Wiki](http://wiki.digilib.org/Digitizing_Special_Formats), a project co-hosted by our colleagues in the Digital Library Federation (DLF) program. This resource may be of particular use to anyone new to digitization projects and includes links to planning resources, workflow documentation, and even a list of digitization service providers.

The second is the “[Technical Recommendations for CLIR’s Recordings at Risk Program](#).” This is available under the “Key Guides, Policies, and References” on the Apply for an Award page. Developed with the input of several of the members of our independent review panel, this document communicates more specific information about reviewer expectations for various aspects of *Recordings at Risk* projects. This will be especially useful to those who may be new to digital reformatting, working with vendors, or thinking about digital sustainability. We continue to add resources and refine this document as needed.

- Introductions
- Eligibility and Drafting Resources
- **Starting an Application**
- Application Overview
- Final Tips
- Questions



Image courtesy of the Regents of the University of California, Los Angeles (Cycle 11 recipient)

Next we'll take a look at how to begin filling out the application.

Starting an Application



Guidelines

Instructions for application form. Explains questions and provides context.

[Visit Guidelines](#)



Apply

Access the Recordings at Risk application form during an open call for applications.

[Apply Here](#)



FAQs

Find answers to our most commonly asked questions.

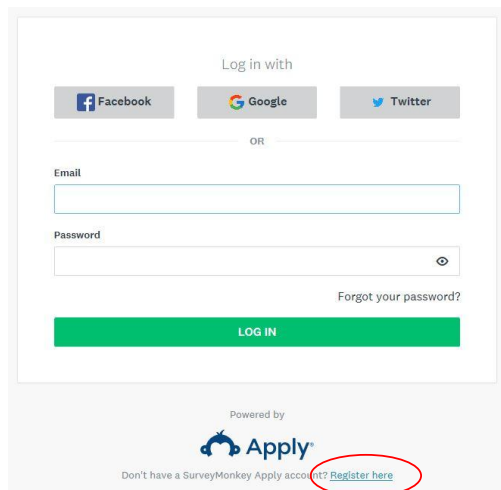
[Read FAQs](#)



Apply here!

Once you've confirmed your eligibility as well as your project's alignment to the program, you may be ready to start your application. You'll do this through our online grant management system, [Survey Monkey Apply \(or SMAApply\)](#), which you can reach by clicking the "Apply Here" button on the Apply for an Award page.

Starting an Application

A screenshot of the SMAApply login and registration interface. At the top, it says "Log in with" and provides buttons for Facebook, Google, and Twitter. Below these is an "OR" separator. Then, there are input fields for "Email" and "Password". A "Forgot your password?" link is located below the password field. A large green "LOG IN" button is at the bottom of the login section. Below the login section, it says "Powered by" and shows the "Apply" logo. At the very bottom, there is a link that says "Don't have a SurveyMonkey Apply account? [Register here](#)", where "Register here" is circled in red.

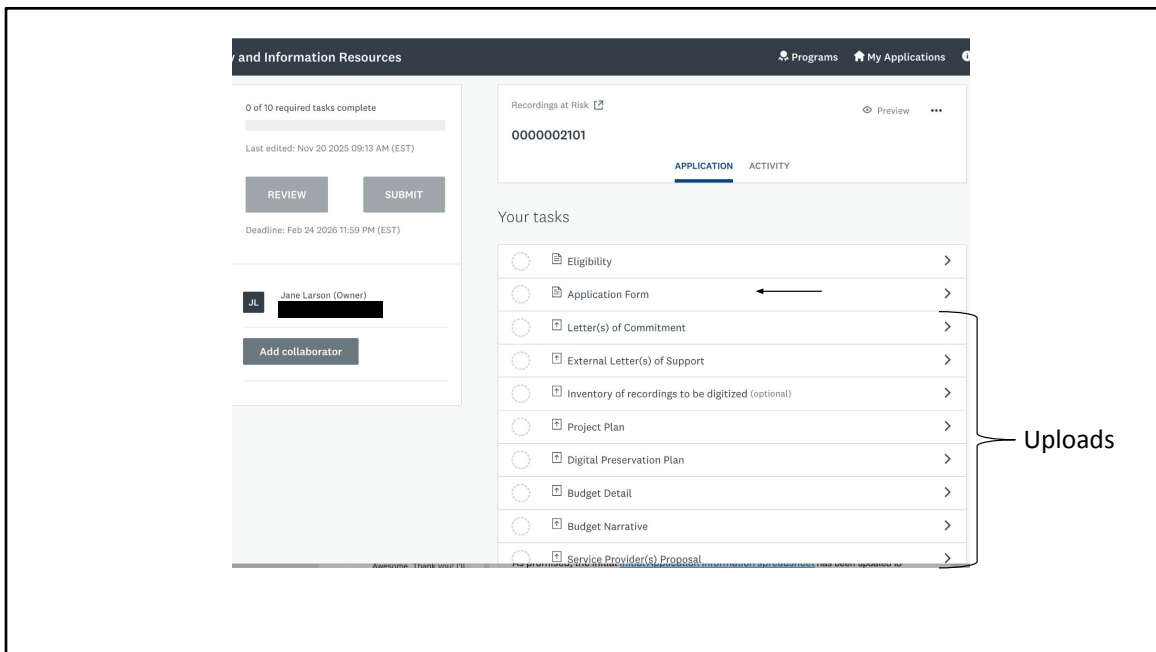
The first step in the application process is registering for an account. If you have applied to a previous *Recordings at Risk* cycle, beginning with the third call, or to *Digitizing Hidden Collections* call or another CLIR fellowship program from 2018 forward, you will be able to login with the CLIR SMAApply profile you have already set up. You can use the “Forgot your password?” prompt if you need a reminder for that information.

All others should use the “Register Here” link at the bottom of the dialogue box, circled in red on your screen. For new users, you will receive a message from the SMAApply system that will verify your registration. If you don’t receive the message right away, be sure to check your spam and/or junk folders. And if you still cannot find the verification email, contact our team before attempting to register again.

Try to avoid creating a new account when you’ve already set one up. This helps reduce the number of duplicate accounts in the system, which makes it easier for us to assist you.

Something to consider as you are setting up your account - the same login information you use to submit your proposal will be how you will login and access the reporting space should your project be awarded funding. We recommend

documenting the email and password you've used to reduce any confusion in the future.



Once you've logged in or created and verified your account, you will see your application dashboard and should be able to start a *Recordings at Risk* application. Here you can jump to the different tasks of the application, view your progress, and add collaborators to help you prepare your application in the system.

There is no need to attempt completing the entire application in one sitting. You can also complete the tasks in any order you choose. Just be sure to save your work as you go.

Most of the application content is contained in the "Application Form" task of SMAApply. The remaining tasks are all for uploads.

When referencing the Guidelines and Template, you'll notice cross-referencing to actions that require an upload. This is our attempt to help applicants understand how all of the pieces of the application fit together thematically even though the online system separates uploads to be added at the end. We've tried to make all this as clear as possible in our supporting documents, but if you have any questions or suggestions about how we can make it even better, email us at recordingsatrisk@clir.org.

- Introductions
- Eligibility and Drafting Resources
- Starting an Application
- ➔ **Application Overview**
- Final Tips
- Questions



Image courtesy of the CUNY Dominican Studies Institute
(Cycle 11 recipient)

Next, we'll do an overview of the different components of the application.

Application Overview

- Section 1. Project Summary
- Section 2. Description of Content
- Section 3. Public Impact
- Section 4. Risk Assessment
- Section 5. Rights, Ethics, and Re-Use
- Section 6. Project Design
- Section 7. Service Provider Information
- Section 8. Funding
- Section 9. Applicant Information

The application is composed of 9 sections, listed here. As noted, all required uploads are added at the end of the process even though we'll be talking about them as parts of these sections.

Section 1: Project Summary

- Project Summary
- Size of Request
 - \$10,000 - \$60,000 USD
- Project length
 - 3 – 12 months
- Letter of Commitment

The first section of the application is the Project Summary. This is where you provide basic information about the project, including the total funding request, which should match the budget documents we'll cover later. The funding request must fall within the program's award range of \$10,000 to \$60,000 USD. Canadian applicants should submit their request in USD as well, although award funds will be distributed in CAD based on the exchange rate at the time of disbursement.

This section also contains the letter of commitment upload. This letter should come from a head administrator within your organization who will be responsible for making decisions about allocating resources for preserving and maintaining access to the project deliverables over time. The purpose of this letter is to affirm your organization's dedication to the project and its long-term sustainability.

If this project is a resubmission to the *Recordings at Risk* program, you will want to check yes and explain what changes have been made in response to reviewer comments and/or because of further project development.

If funded, may CLIR use the image uploaded as part of this proposal on CLIR's website and in program-related outreach?

☐ Yes

☐ No

What is the size of the request?

Applicants may request between \$10,000 and \$60,000 per project.

\$

Has this project been previously submitted for consideration?

If this project was previously submitted to CLIR's Digitizing Hidden Collections regranting program only, it is not considered a resubmission for Recordings at Risk.

☐ Yes

☐ No

[SAVE & CONTINUE EDITING](#) [NEXT](#)

At the end of Section 1 and throughout the Application Form task in SMaply, you'll be given the choice to click "Save & Continue Editing," which will save your work and keep you on the same page, or click "Next", which will save your work and move you to the next page. These buttons will navigate you through the entire form so you don't miss any of the 9 sections.

Section 2: Description of Content

- Description of materials
- Geographic scope
- Date range of materials
- Condition
- Material Quantity and Type
- Inventory (optional)

Section 2. Description of Content - is where you provide a more thorough description of the source materials to be reformatted. We are looking for information related to their provenance, arrangement, and current accessibility. The application also allows for the upload of an optional inventory. The inventory enables applicants to share with reviewers exactly which recordings will be digitized and supply additional information about the condition, length, or rights status of each recording. We do not have specific format requirements for the inventory, so applicants have the option of providing an edited and annotated copy of pre-existing collection guides or finding aids. We just ask that your inventory make very clear which media you are proposing to digitize through the funds you're requesting in the proposal.

Finally, this section requires you to break down the materials by quantity and type. The initial dropdown menu that asks how many different media types are included in your project. For example, if your project would reformat 42 VHS video tapes and also 4 hours of wire recordings, you would need to choose "2" different media types.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "How many categories would you like to enter?" with a dropdown menu set to "2". Below this, there are two sections, "Category 1" and "Category 2". Each section contains four input fields: "Material Type" (a dropdown menu with "---" selected), "Amount of Material" (a text input field), "Unit of Measurement" (a dropdown menu with "---" selected), and "Additional Information" (a larger text input field with a small icon in the bottom right corner). The form is enclosed in a light gray border.

This slide shows the forms that are generated when 2 categories have been selected. Here you would be able to enter the quantities and types of media you propose to reformat--you could describe your VHS tapes under Category 1 and your wire recordings under Category 2.

How many categories would you like to enter?

2

Category 1

Material Type

VHS

Amount of Material

42

Unit of Measurement

Items

Additional Information

Category 2

Material Type

Other

Other Format

Wire recording

Amount of Material

4

Unit of Measurement

Recorded hours

Additional Information

The fields under each category include material type, amount, and unit of measurement. Units of measurement may be either "items" or "recorded hours". We ask that you list each category of materials only once. If you would like to include both the number of items and number of recorded hours here, you can select one as the official unit of measurement, and include the other in the additional information box below. You can also use the Additional Information box to specify media brand types (since some are more at risk than others), and/or other details that may be useful to reviewers, such as how you determined the estimated amount of materials.

Section 3: Public Impact

- One of the four primary criteria!
- Describe impact upon the public
- Letters of support
 - 1 required (up to 3 total)



Images courtesy of the Archives of Michigan, UC San Diego, Shigeko Kubota Video Art Foundation, and University of Hawaii (Cycle 12 recipients)

Section 3 concerns Public Impact. Along with risk of loss, public impact is one of the primary criteria upon which applications to this program are assessed. CLIR instructs reviewers to prioritize projects that include collections that are of high importance to a variety of disciplines and uses and will have broad national and/or international impact on the creation of new knowledge or experiences. This is your opportunity to make a compelling case of the potential impact of your nominated materials.

In addition to your own statement in this section, the application also requires that you provide at least one and up to three external letters of support from experts familiar with the collection to help you make your case. The letters cannot come from individuals directly connected to the project, and it is strongly recommended that you get support letters from individuals outside your organization and, when possible, outside the local region to help demonstrate wider interest. That being said, if there is a local expert who is really the best person to support your project, then it likely makes sense to ask them for a letter.

Guidelines for Letter Writers



COUNCIL ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

1800 DIAGONAL ROAD, SUITE 600, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Email: contact@clir.org • Fax: 202.600.9628 • Web: <https://www.clir.org>

Guidelines for Letter Writers for CLIR Grant Applications

[Digitizing Hidden Collections: Amplifying Unheard Voices](#) and [Recordings at Risk](#)

Good letters from outside perspectives are essential components of any application for Digitizing Hidden Collections: Amplifying Unheard Voices or Recordings at Risk. Letter(s) of support must come from individuals knowledgeable about the source materials nominated for digitization but may not come from those who are directly affiliated with a proposed project.

To help you gather the strongest letters of support, we've created [Guidelines for Letter Writers](#), which can be found in the Document Library of our [Apply for an Award](#) page. We encourage you to share this document with all of your letter writers to help guide the process and provide context for the request.

Section 4: Risk Assessment

Explain the urgency of the proposed project



Section 4 concerns Risk Assessment. Here is where the urgency of the proposed project is explained. Competitive applications will demonstrate the organization's understanding of these risks, their strategic priorities for mitigating these risks, and how the proposed project advances those priorities. Note that if your materials are in good condition, you aren't necessarily going to be looked at unfavorably by reviewers. Sometimes good condition is a reason **why** the recordings should be preserved now.

The review panel considers many factors when evaluating risk so we encourage you to think beyond the physical condition of your materials. Though things like age and evidence of decay are important, also take note of environmental factors affecting your geographic region, age or health of the originator of the content, and/or access to native speakers of endangered languages. Rarity of the items is also considered, so if you have the only copy of something, that certainly adds to its risk of loss.

Section 5: Rights, Ethics, and Re-Use

- Rights, embargoes, ethical/legal considerations?
- Personally Identifiable Information?
- Culturally-sensitive material?

All parties to this proposal understand that as a condition of acceptance of any Recordings at Risk award from CLIR, all metadata created in the course of funded project activities must be dedicated to the public domain under a [CCO Creative Commons license](#). Exceptions to this requirement will be made for culturally sensitive metadata.

☐ Confirm

All parties to this proposal understand that as a condition of acceptance of any Recordings at Risk award from CLIR, recipient institutions must not claim additional rights or impose additional access fees or restrictions to the digital files created through the project, beyond those already required by law or existing agreements. Exceptions may be made for those materials in the public domain without the express wishes of local, traditional, and indigenous source communities.

☐ Confirm

The Rights, Ethics, and Re-Use section helps reviewers assess an applicant's understanding of the legal and ethical issues affecting access to the nominated content, and evaluate the proposed approach.

We require you to dedicate all *metadata* to the public domain under a Creative Commons waiver and to avoid imposing additional access restrictions on the reformatted recordings than what may already be in place for the source recordings. While this program does prioritize preservation over access, reviewers strongly prefer that applicants avoid creating unnecessary barriers to access, since such barriers inhibit a project's impact. Access restrictions are allowable when well-justified due to legal and/or ethical concerns. Such restrictions will not necessarily disadvantage you in the competition and may even be viewed favorably by the review panel. This includes restricting access to recordings that include personally identifiable information or culturally-sensitive material.

Section 6: Project Design

- Project plan w/ timeline
- Technical approach
- Digital preservation plan
 - Multiple copies of digital files
 - Scheduled fixity checks
 - Periodic migration
 - Metadata creation
- Access to project deliverables



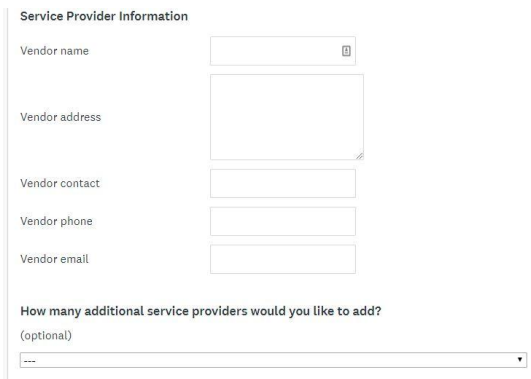
The Project Design section describes how the project would work in practice and consists of the components listed here.

- Design a Project plan with timeline that identifies all the major activities taken during each phase of your project, including the parties responsible and the deliverables.
- Develop a technical approach that provides information related to preservation reformatting specs, metadata schema, and so on.
- Present a thoughtful digital preservation plan which describes the processes and parties responsible for preserving the files created during the project and how preservation activities will be managed over time. Consider the creation of multiple copies of files, scheduled fixity checks, periodic migration of data to new storage media, and any metadata creation that enables these activities.
- Finally, provide a list of all envisioned project deliverables and how they will be made available to users. You'll also list conditions and terms that limit their availability.

All of these elements are discussed at greater length in the application guidelines.

In this section and throughout the application, be mindful of all page limit requirements. Documents that exceed page limits will be truncated before being passed along to the reviewers.

Section 7: Service Provider Information

A screenshot of a web form titled "Service Provider Information". The form contains several input fields: "Vendor name" (with a small icon), "Vendor address" (a larger text area), "Vendor contact", "Vendor phone", and "Vendor email". Below these is a question: "How many additional service providers would you like to add? (optional)", followed by a dropdown menu with a downward arrow.

Rationale for your
service provider selection

Section 7 focuses on service provider information.

Because the goal of the program is to help institutions *without* in-house capacity or expertise get started with preservation reformatting of their audio and audiovisual collections, all *Recordings at Risk* applicants *must* propose projects that name a qualified *external* service provider who will provide reformatting services; **in-house digitization is not allowed** and proposals to reformat recordings at your own institution will disqualify your application. The most frequent question we receive about this is from academic institutions who would like to use on-campus digitization services that may be run through a different department. This would be considered in-house digitization.

In addition to covering the basic information on your selected service provider or providers, you will be asked to submit a Rationale for Service Provider Selection. Here you will demonstrate that you've chosen a service provider or providers that perform technically competent and cost-effective digitization appropriate for the specific materials you are nominating. You may reference the service provider proposal(s), but make sure that you clearly explain your decision-making process. Generally, our

review panelists expect to see more than simply saying, “we’ve worked with this vendor before.” Our recipients also encourage all of you to look outside your usual vendors because you may find another service provider more suited to your particular project.

Be sure to demonstrate to reviewers that you have done your research, and that the services to be provided are right for your specific materials and your organization’s needs.

Should your organization prohibit the selection of a service provider until after grant funds are awarded, you *must* still make a tentative selection for this proposal in order to support the figures included in your project budget. The Guidelines and Template provide more detail, and CLIR staff is available to answer questions at recordingsatrisk@clir.org.

Section 7: Service Provider Information

- “Qualified” external service provider? Check:
 - Colleagues
 - Conference sponsorships
 - Webinars/panels
- What can I do to get the most accurate proposal?
 - Complete inventory
 - Photos



AMIA

Strategies for Audiovisual
Digitization Projects
a DLF-hosted webinar series



**ORAL HISTORY
ASSOCIATION**

ASSOCIATION
FOR RECORDED
SOUND
COLLECTIONS

ARSC)))))))))

While we are unable to recommend specific qualified service providers, we do have a few tips to help you in this process:

- Consider reaching out to colleagues for recommendations,
- Check to see which service providers partnered with organizations on similar grant projects,
- Explore resources provided by industry organizations, like the [Association of Moving Image Archivists \(or AMIA\)](#) and the [Association for Recorded Sound Collections \(or ARSC\)](#), that often publish lists of digitization service providers who meet their professional standards.
- Also, the [DLF's Digitizing Special Formats wiki](#) has a list of companies and organizations who have volunteered their information to the page.

You will still need to do your homework when it comes to assessing proposals from service providers. Another resource that may be helpful to you is the "Effective Outsourcing with Audiovisual Digitization Service Providers" webinar also hosted by our colleagues at DLF and available on the wiki.

We also encourage you to consult our "[Guidelines for Grants Involving Consultants or Subcontractors](#)" for guidance on bidding, selection, and budgeting, when working

with an external service provider. Our “Technical Recommendations for CLIR’s *Recordings at Risk* Program” also includes a section on soliciting and evaluating bids. Both documents are available on our [Apply for an Award](#) page.

Section 8: Funding

- Budget Narrative
- Budget Detail
- Service Provider Proposal(s)
 - 1 required, 3 max.

Section 8 is about funding, which relates directly to the Service Provider section since the primary expense for most projects will be the cost of digital reformatting. There are three budget documents that need to be uploaded:

- The first is the Budget Narrative, which has no page limits and serves to explain to the review panel what you are spending and why. You are required to use the Budget Narrative template, which is available on the Apply for an Award page, and the application guidelines provide guidance to help you build this narrative. You should explain all line items that appear in your budget, discuss how your organization will manage your project, and why you are seeking external funding for this project.
- The Budget Detail must be submitted on the Budget Detail Form which is a macros-enabled Excel template provided by CLIR. You can hover over any red numbers on the sheet to access additional instructions as well as review the instructions tab for more detail.
- The third budget document is the Service Provider Proposal. This is simply a PDF upload of the proposal or proposals that you have selected. Quotes from additional service providers that you did not ultimately select can be added as appendices.

Section 8: Funding

- Allowable Costs
 - Costs charged by service provider for stabilizing media for the purposes of preservation reformatting, conducting preservation reformatting, or basic metadata creation
 - Shipping of materials to service provider
 - Insurance for materials during shipping and handling by service provider

All allowable costs within the request, which includes any costs from your service provider, should be directly related to preservation reformatting of nominated materials and may include

- costs charged by a service provider related to stabilizing media for the purposes of preservation reformatting, conducting preservation reformatting, or basic metadata creation;
- shipping of materials to the service provider; and
- insurance for materials during shipping and handling by the service provider.

Section 8: Funding

- Allowable Costs (continued)
 - Fair compensation for labor associated with:
 - Developing culturally appropriate access
 - Conducting quality control
 - Creating metadata
 - Ingesting reformatted recordings
 - Implementing basic captioning, transcription, and translation
 - Purchase of digital storage media or re-housing supplies when specifically used for project activities

For a full list, refer to Appendix A of the Guidelines and Template

In addition to the expenses directly related to the preservation through digital reformatting of at-risk materials, this program allows for some additional yet still connected activities. All such additional costs must be specifically and strongly justified throughout the proposal and especially in the Budget Narrative. We have made these adjustments in response to frequent requests to consider allowing requests for these kinds of services and materials. Note in particular that automated captioning, some basic transcription work, and the purchase of digital storage media or re-housing supplies are allowable.

At the same time, it is vital to keep in mind that the purpose of the *Recordings at Risk* program is to support preservation reformatting and not enhanced access. To remain competitive, applicants are advised that costs *other* than vendor-provided digitization services, shipping, and insurance should total no more than 50% of the total request. Reviewers will, at their discretion, decide which applicants might need more additional support of these kinds than others, due to the apparent limitations of an the applicant organization's capacity to fund this work through other means. CLIR and its review panel expect to see fair compensation for any labor funded through this program.

All funds requested as part of your award should be shown on the corresponding

budget detail and described in the budget narrative. The total of both uploads should match one another and the award request in the project summary. Canadian applicants should complete both uploads in USD and indicate the exchange rate used for their estimates in their budget narrative.

Section 8. Funding

- Some Disallowed Costs
 - Indirect costs
 - “Miscellaneous”
 - Electronic equipment other than storage media
 - Software licenses or services
 - Conservation treatment beyond what is necessary to digitize
 - Extensive processing/editing of digital surrogates
 - Copyright assessment or research related to preparation of detailed collection descriptions

For a full list, refer to Appendix A of the Guidelines and Template

Conversely, there are a handful of disallowed costs. I’ll just point out a few that are particularly relevant:

- Indirect costs are disallowed by all CLIR’s grants programs as are any miscellaneous costs.
- Electronic equipment other than dedicated digital storage media;
- Software licenses and services are unfortunately something that we can’t cover, including digital storage services.
- Extensive conservation work beyond what is required to get a solid capture of the materials is not covered.
- Extensive processing and editing of digital audio files post transfer is also disallowed.

The most complete list of Allowable and Disallowed costs will be found in Appendix A of the Guidelines and Template document, so be sure to carefully review as you develop your proposal. You can reach out to us via email with any questions you have regarding these items.

Section 9: Applicant Information

- Proof of nonprofit status
- Contact information

The Applicant Information section is pretty straightforward. You'll be asked to provide proof of nonprofit status and contact information of the PI, and your institution's address. You will be given the option of submitting proof of non-profit status one of two ways: by entering your IRS EIN number or by supplying your IRS determination letter or equivalent Canadian or tribal documentation. Not all EINs will be recognized by the SMAApply system, so if it does not work, just plan to upload the appropriate document. And, as always, let us know if you have questions or issues.

Additional Information (optional)

Allowable appendices include:

- Summary documentation of collection assessments
- Accession documentation
- Donor agreements
- Photographs of nominated materials
- Audio/video samples relevant to nominated materials
- Sample metadata records
- Additional service provider proposals

The final component of the application is an optional additional information section, where you can upload appendices. Keep in mind that you should use this judiciously and only include additional information that clearly and directly supports your main proposal. Reviewers will prioritize the main application form and required components and will be unlikely to do more than skim additional documents that are especially lengthy or tangential to the proposal. It can be helpful to highlight particular points or details you want reviewers to notice rather than expect them to wade through 100-page finding aids or pages of photographs of very similar looking items. You want these supporting documents to build reviewers' excitement about your project rather than to frustrate or confuse them.

Allowable uploads are listed in the Guidelines and include:

- Summary documentation of collection assessments
- Accession documentation
- Donor agreements: This is handy to reference when discussing rights issues.
- Photographs of the nominated materials to show their physical condition. These are especially helpful to prove the "at-risk"-ness of your items.
- Audio/video samples relevant to the nominated materials: these can help make the case for impact.
- Sample metadata records or even mock ups of how records will appear to

- users online: These can help illustrate the technical plan and how access will be provided to deliverables.
- As mentioned earlier, extra service provider proposals can be added here as well.

- Introductions
- Eligibility and Drafting Resources
- Starting an Application
- Application Overview
- ➔ **Final Tips**
- Questions



Image courtesy of the Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries
(Cycle 11 recipient)

We're nearing the end of our presentation, so feel free to submit questions in the Q&A box for us to address. We may not have time to address all questions today, so please join us again for our Q&A webinar on January 26, which will be dedicated to answering your questions. The [link to register](#) can be found on our Apply for an Award and we will send it in the chat.

Final Tips

- Ask “is this grant program the **right fit?**”
- **Read the instructions** and requirements *carefully!*
- Leave yourself as much time as possible
- **Get organized:** project manage the application process
- Assemble your **dream team** of contributors and partners
- Ask for the amount of funds you actually need
- After reading the materials online, contact program staff about any remaining questions
- **Propose a project you believe in** and an approach that you feel good about

A few broader tips. First, ask yourself ‘Is this program the right fit for my project? Does program criteria and goals align with yours? Please read the instructions carefully! Leave yourself as much time as possible and plan everything out in advance. Assemble a team of people with different expertise to draft different parts of the proposal.

Our panelists really care that proposals ask for the amount needed to get the project done successfully. Don't just choose the lowest cost vendor because it's the lowest cost; select the vendor most qualified to do the work to the standards you've established and then justify your choice. If you need to include staffing for work directly connected to the project, explain to the reviewers why that funding is necessary and how the work is outside the normal scope of work or current institutional capacity.

Next, reach out to staff. At CLIR, we're available to answer your specific questions over email at any time.

Finally, propose a project you really believe in. Your commitment to and excitement about a project definitely comes across in your application, and reviewers take note.

Project Planning

- Estimate timelines generously
- Be in touch with service providers about their protocols and particular instructions
- Flexibilities available post-funding include
 - extensions, if projects encounter delays
 - budget reallocations

Project planning in the best of times can be challenging, so we wanted to take a moment to make a few specific notes to all of you working on applications right now.

- One of the most common reflections we hear from recipients is that additional time should be factored into project timelines. The program limits projects to no more than 12 months, so think what that may mean when you consider potential delays and any plans for accessibility to materials. Would a smaller project be more feasible? Could you achieve the same goals through a different or more flexible metadata strategy?
- For service providers, have you asked about any protocols, considerations for delays, or lessons they've learned and could pass along to you?
- We also do want to note that, should your project be funded, the program does have allowances for no-cost extensions and other modifications. Our hope for all funded projects is to see them successfully to completion, and the grants team is here to support you every step of the way.



Questions?

We're going to get into questions now. If we run out of time to answer all your questions today, we'll be sure to provide written answers in the Q&A doc that will be posted alongside the recording. And please note that we'll be holding a full, hour-long session dedicated to Q&A on January 26.



RAR
Recordings at Risk

Thank you!

Join us for a Q&A Webinar on
January 26, 2pm ET

✉ recordingsatrisk@clir.org

I see that there we're out of time. Thank you everyone for joining us today to learn about *Recordings at Risk*. Within the next two weeks, we will have the slides, transcript, written answers to today's questions, and recording from this session posted to the [Apply for an Award](#) page. If you have additional questions, you can always reach the CLIR Grants Team at recordingsatrisk@clir.org.

We ask that you please complete the [survey regarding today's Applicant Webinar](#), so we can continue to ensure a successful experience for everyone.

Don't forget applications are due February 24, 2026! Thanks to all of you for your interest in our program and for attending our session today. Have a great afternoon and happy grant writing!