



2010 Heritage Grant Guidelines

Scope of Grants Program

The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area was designated by Congress and the President in November, 2003 in recognition of the magnitude and abundance of historical, cultural, and natural heritage assets in Western North Carolina and their significance to the history of our nation. The distinction helps draw national and worldwide attention to our region's rich heritage and encourages the preservation and celebration of our heritage resources.

The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's Ten-Year Management Plan calls for preserving, interpreting, and developing the heritage resources of Western North Carolina in five thematic areas:

- Agricultural heritage
- Cherokee heritage
- Craft heritage
- Music heritage
- Natural heritage

These distinctive facets of the region's heritage were the basis for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area designation in 2003.

To help accomplish the goals and objective of the Management Plan, the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area management entity, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, offers matching grants to provide and leverage funding for innovative projects across the region that preserve, interpret, and develop heritage resources within these thematic areas and stimulate economic opportunity.

Of particular interest to the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area are projects that are *regional or multi-county* in scope, that involve *active partnerships* between organizations, and that *leverage substantial matches* from project participants and other grantors.

Funds for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's matching grants program are provided by the federal government through the National Park Service.

Eligible Applicants

The grants program is targeted to the following types of organizations serving the 25-county Blue Ridge National Heritage Area region:

- units of state and local government
- federally-recognized Indian tribes
- academic institutions
- non-profit organizations with 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service

Applicants may submit no more than one application per grant cycle. Only one project may be proposed in a single application.

Eligible Projects

To be eligible for a grant, projects must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The project must be located in the 25-county region of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area or the Qualla Boundary. The 25 counties are: Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Surry, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin, and Yancey.
2. The project must fit within one of the grant categories (described in the *Grant Categories* section). If a project appears to fit within more than one grant category, the applicant should indicate which category is the closest fit.
3. The grant applicant must provide or secure at least an equal contribution of matches from non-federal sources (see the *Matching Contributions* section of the guidelines).
4. At the time of application, the project must show a strong measure of local support by either (a) inclusion in at least one of the local heritage development plans authored by Heritage Councils in the 25 counties of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and the Qualla Boundary or (b) inclusion in the grant application of letters of support from at least three of the following entities: arts councils, chambers of commerce, tourism authorities, historical societies, municipal or county government offices, state or tribal agencies, regional Councils of Government, or land trusts. Inclusion in a local heritage development plan is the preferred option for projects in counties with active Heritage Councils.

Grant Amounts

Regional or multi-county projects are eligible for a maximum grant award of \$40,000. Regional or multi-county projects are defined as projects with activities (programs, events, presentations, fieldwork) and/or locations (sites, exhibit areas) in two or more counties of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

All other projects are considered local projects and are eligible for a maximum grant award of \$25,000.

The minimum grant request/award is \$1,000.

As noted above, the grant applicant must provide at least an equal contribution of matches from non-federal sources (see the *Matching Contributions* section of the guidelines).

Grant Categories

Preservation Grants

Preservation Grants provide funding for the preservation, conservation, and revitalization of cultural and natural heritage sites and traditions in the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

Projects must be focused on one or more of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's core interpretive themes: Agricultural Heritage, Cherokee Heritage, Craft Heritage, Music Heritage, and Natural Heritage.

Grant funds may not be used to acquire real property or an interest in real property.

Preservation grant projects must fit within one of three grant subcategories:

Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites: The rehabilitation, renovation, and restoration of buildings, structures, and sites with historical or cultural significance to provide an engaging and educational visitor experience. The buildings, structures, and sites must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Properties must be owned by a government entity or a local non-profit organization. Furthermore, the project activity to be funded by the grant must include a significant interpretive or educational component focused on one or more of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's core interpretive themes (Agricultural Heritage, Cherokee Heritage, Craft Heritage, Music Heritage, and/or Natural Heritage). Funding in this subcategory is available for planning and/or implementation. Planning may include consultations and the preparation of master plans, architectural designs, feasibility studies, or applications for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Cultural Heritage Preservation: This grant subcategory includes two types of projects: (1) the development of archival systems, video documentaries, sound recordings, or oral histories which identify and document people, places, artifacts, traditions, and events that have made significant contributions to the agricultural, Cherokee, craft, and/or music heritage of Western North Carolina, or (2) the development and implementation of workshops or other educational programs to transfer knowledge, customs, and skills from tradition bearers to students. Preference will be given to projects which incorporate plans for making the heritage resources accessible to the public. Projects which involve tradition bearers should include appropriate compensation for expenses and services provided.

Farmland and Open Space Preservation: Planning at a municipal, county-wide, or regional scale for the preservation of open spaces and agricultural lands, including those that sustain the integrity of habitats, plant and wildlife populations, forest and agricultural production, water quality, and scenic values. Such projects may also incorporate planning for developing recreational resources associated with open spaces such as parks, community gardens, greenways, non-motorized trails, and blueways.

Interpretation Grants

Interpretation Grants provide funding for development and implementation of public programs, performances, demonstrations, classes, workshops, tours, videos, sound recordings, guidebooks, websites, and exhibits to educate residents and visitors about significant facets of the cultural and natural heritage of Western North Carolina. BRNHA does not provide funding for festivals.

Projects must be focused on one or more of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's core interpretive themes: Agricultural Heritage, Cherokee Heritage, Craft Heritage, Music Heritage, and Natural Heritage.

Projects which involve tradition bearers should include appropriate compensation for their services and expenses.

Development Grants

Development Grants provide funding for the marketing of cultural and natural heritage sites and resources, the development of new heritage products, and the implementation of programs that provide business planning and marketing assistance to heritage-related businesses and artists.

Projects must be focused on one or more of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area's core interpretive themes: Agricultural Heritage, Cherokee Heritage, Craft Heritage, Music Heritage, and Natural Heritage.

Grant funds may not be used to acquire real property or an interest in real property.

Development grant projects must fall into one of three grant subcategories:

Marketing: The development, placement, and distribution of promotional materials and media, trail maps, and visitor guides to market heritage events, sites, trails, and attractions. Funds are not available for paid advertising. Preference will be given to projects that market multiple sites or events across county lines. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate ecotourism principles and/or messages and environmentally responsible use of media wherever possible.

Heritage Product Development: development of new products, commodities, or merchandise that exemplify and showcase the region's agricultural, Cherokee, craft, music, and/or natural heritage.

Marketing and Planning Assistance: the development and implementation of programs, classes, or workshops that provide business planning and marketing assistance to businesses, farmers, craftspeople, musicians, and other tradition bearers interested in earning income from heritage-related activities.

Evaluation Criteria

Grant applications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- *Public benefit.* This includes the project's economic impact as well as social impacts, community impacts, and quality-of-life impacts. Also included is the project's potential to promote public understanding and appreciation of the heritage resource(s).
- *Significance of the heritage resource(s)* to be preserved, interpreted, developed, or marketed.
- *Geographic scope of project.* Greater consideration will be given to projects that are regional or multi-county in nature.
- *Partnerships.* Greater consideration will be given to projects that involve active partnerships between organizations.
- *Leveraging.* Greater consideration will be given to projects with matches that exceed the grant request and/or which consist primarily of cash contributions.
- *Quality of plans for implementing and evaluating the project.*
- *Capability.* Evidence of sufficient management and financial ability to complete the project.
- *Local support.* Evidence that the project has support within the local or regional community.
- *Consultation.* Evidence that folklorists or historians have been consulted if the project interprets historical or cultural facts.
- *Sustainability.* For projects that are intended to continue beyond the life of the grant, greater consideration will be given to those that show a strong potential for sustainability.
- *Use of local contractors.* Applicants are encouraged to use contractors from the region wherever possible.
- *Environmentally responsible use of resources.* Applicants are encouraged to incorporate environmentally friendly principles, practices, and messages in the design and implementation of their projects wherever possible.

Eligible Project Costs

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area grant funds may be used to cover project costs that are necessary and reasonable for the accomplishment of project objectives. Such costs may include labor, services, equipment rental or repair, supplies, and travel. Grant funds may not be used to purchase equipment or real property.

The grant application must include a completed Project Budget Form, which provides a framework for itemizing the project budget.

Matching Contributions

To be eligible for a grant, the applicant must provide at least an equal (dollar-for-dollar) match for the proposed project. The match may come from another grant, from the applicant organization, from its partners in the project, or from any combination thereof. All of the match must come from non-federal sources.

The match may consist of real dollars or in-kind (non-cash) contributions of labor, services, equipment rental, repair, or purchase, supplies, and/or travel expenses that are necessary and reasonable for the accomplishment of project objectives. Purchases of real property may not be counted as a match. Overhead and general administrative costs are not acceptable matches. Skilled volunteer labor and donated professional services may be counted as matches, but unskilled volunteer labor may not. Real dollar matches are preferred over in-kind contributions. Matching contributions may begin to be made before the date of the grant award, but there must be a significant overlap between the time period of the matching contributions and the time period of the grant award.

All sources of matching contributions must be documented at the time of application. This must include a letter signed by the applicant organization's financial officer or authorized representative which documents the amount of matching funds being contributed to the project budget. Matching contributions that have been secured at the time of application are preferred. If the match is pending (e.g., from another grant application), the application should note the date the match is expected to be confirmed.

Any project funded by a BRNHA grant will be required to provide verifiable documentation that matching funds have been spent and that matching in-kind contributions have been received.

Reimbursement

Grant funds are provided on a reimbursement basis—that is, grant funds are provided only after project costs are incurred and paid for by the grant recipient. To request a reimbursement, the grantee must submit a progress report and documentation of paid expenses and matches, including receipts, paid invoices, and copies of checks. Documentation of in-kind contributions must be itemized to show the amount and value of contributed labor, services, and materials.

If there is a compelling need for advance funds to start the project, the applicant may request a partial advance payment in the grant application. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis. Partial advance payments may not exceed 50%

of the total grant award. Advance payments that are approved will be made upon signing of the grant agreement.

Grant Application Submittal

The deadline for grant applications is **Friday, October 1, 2010**. If mailed, applications must be *post-marked by that date*. If delivered, applications must be received in our office by the close of business (5:00 pm) on that date. Submissions by fax or by e-mail will not be accepted.

Applications should be addressed to:

Grants Program
Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
195 Hemphill Knob Road
Asheville, NC 28803

Submit two complete copies of the application and all supporting documents. Print or type the application on 8 ½ by 11 white paper with one-inch side margins. Use a paper clip or a binder clip to hold the application together, but please *do not use staples or other kinds of binders*.

Letters of support may be included with the application (preferred) or mailed separately if post-marked by the application deadline.

Address letters of support to:

Grants Committee
Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
195 Hemphill Knob Road
Asheville, NC 28803

Timeline for 2010 Grants Program

2010 grant cycle announced	June 8, 2010
Deadline for grant applications	October 1, 2010
Applicants notified of funding decisions	by February 1, 2011

Application Review Process

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area staff will review all submitted applications and provide comments to the Grants Committee of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. The Grants Committee will then review the applications, drawing on advisors as needed, and make funding recommendations to the Board of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. The BRNHA Board will make the final decision on grant awards. Grant applicants may be asked to provide clarifications and additional information during the review process. Additional review by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office may be required for some projects.

The 2010 grant cycle is expected to be competitive. In previous grant cycles, fewer than half of grant applications received were funded.

Terms of Grant Awards

- **Project Leadership:** Grant applicants must appoint a Project Manager who will act as the primary contact between the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and the grantee.
- **Notification:** All grant applicants will receive written notification regarding grant award decisions.
- **Minimum Grant Amount:** No grant will be awarded for less than \$1,000. Hence, the total cost of proposed project must be at least \$2,000 when factoring in matching contributions.
- **Grant Administration Orientation Meeting:** After notification of the grant award, the Project Manager or a designated representative of the grant recipient organization may be required to attend a grant administration orientation meeting.
- **Grant Contract:** The grant funds will be administered through a grant contract between the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and the grant applicant. *The grant award is not official until both parties have signed the grant contract.*
- **Effective Project Start Date:** The effective date for the start of the project will generally be the date the contract is signed by both parties. At the discretion of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, the effective project start date may be as early as the date the award is approved by the BRNHA board. *Expenses incurred prior to the effective project start date are not eligible for reimbursement.*
- **Grant Period:** The grant period will be for up to 12 months from the effective project start date.
- **Project Changes:** The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area must approve any changes in the scope or timeframe of the grant contract prior to the initiation of such changes.
- **Grant Acknowledgment:** The grantee will be required to acknowledge the funding support of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area in materials produced with grant funds and to display a sign with such an acknowledgment at the project location, if applicable. The acknowledgment should incorporate the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area logo. Grantees will also be required to acknowledge the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area in all materials announcing the grant award or implementation/completion of the grant project.
- **Final Reports and Publicity:** Upon completion of the project, the grant recipient will be required to submit a final project report in a standard format provided by the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. Final reports should include an evaluation of the effectiveness

and impact of the project. Grantees may be asked to participate in scheduled media events announcing the completion of the project.

- **Default Statement:** If the grant recipient is not able to complete the project within the agreed-upon project schedule (12 months), the grant contract will be terminated. The grant recipient may apply in writing for a one-time extension of up to 6 months.
- **State Historic Preservation Office Review:** Projects may require additional review by the State Historic Preservation Office to determine if there may be any adverse impacts to historic or archaeological sites. Applicants may be required to submit more detailed project information, maps, and photographs for this review.

Grantee Responsibilities – Federal Regulations

Grant awards from the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area are made with federal funds received from the National Park Service. Because the grant dollars are federal in origin, grant recipients must comply with applicable federal regulations regarding the use and administration of federal funds. These regulations set standards for such administrative activities as procurement and record retention and govern the use of copyrighted work.

Grantees must comply with US Department of Interior regulations set forth in the “Common Rule” 43 CFR Part 12: *Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs*, Subparts C, D, E, and F. Pertinent sections are available for download on the following websites:

www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr

For non-profit organizations, the terms of the following Office of Management and Budget Circulars apply for any project activity funded by the grant:

- OMB Circular A-110: *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations* (47 pages)
- OMB Circular A-122: *Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations* (55 pages)

For educational institutions, the terms of the following Office of Management and Budget Circulars apply for any project activity funded by the grant:

- OMB Circular A-110: *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations* (47 pages)
- OMB Circular A-21: *Cost Principles for Educational Institutions* (109 pages)

For state, local, and Indian tribal governments, the terms of the following Office of Management and Budget Circulars apply for any project activity funded by the grant:

- OMB Circular A-102: *Grants and Cooperative Agreements with State and Local Governments* (10 pages)

- OMB Circular A-87: *Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments* (53 pages)

These circulars can be downloaded from the White House website:

www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars

Grantees must also:

- Comply with all applicable federal laws including but not limited to Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, Secretary of Interior Standards, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and American with Disabilities Act. More information can be found on the following web pages:

http://www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/FHPL_HistPrsvt.pdf

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nagpra/>

http://www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/FHPL_NtlEnvirnPolcy.pdf

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>

- Have an audit performed that meets the requirements of OMB Circular A-133 whenever \$300,000 or more in federal funds is expended (*cumulatively*) during a fiscal year and provide a copy of the audit to the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.
- Allow inspection of program records and project by the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and authorized federal agencies during the project and for up to three years following project completion.

Additional Federal Regulations

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Provides that: No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (Section 601).

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Provides that: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

The Age Discrimination Act of 1975

Provides that: No otherwise qualified person in the United States shall, on the grounds of age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Provides that: No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, or denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Fair Labor Standards Act

All personnel employed on projects or productions which are financed in whole or in part through federal financial assistance will be paid not less than the minimum compensation as determined by the Secretary of Labor in Parts 3, 5, 505 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. No part of any project shall be performed or engaged in under working conditions that are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to the health and safety of the employees engaged in the project.

The Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988

Requires that employees of the grantee not engage in unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances in the grantee's workplace or work site.

Information and Assistance

BRNHA staff will hold several public information sessions around the BRNHA region in July of 2010. Attendance is optional, but is recommended for those who have not attended information sessions for previous BRNHA grant cycles. Dates and locations for the meetings are posted on the BRNHA website.

If you have questions about the grants program, please contact:

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Asheville, NC 28803
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