



What is the THRIVE Program?

Thanks to an allocation from the State of Rhode Island, RI Humanities is excited to announce the THRIVE general operating support grantmaking program. THRIVE provides funding for small cultural heritage organizations and local historical and preservation societies that support and strengthen Rhode Island's many diverse, dynamic communities.

The THRIVE program will offer 18 general operating support grants of \$5,000 each to eligible organizations (see the [Who is eligible to apply?](#) section). Grant funds may be used for expenses related to organizational operations (see the [What can I use this grant award for?](#) section).

The application is open to any organization that fits the program's eligibility requirements (see the [Who is eligible to apply?](#) section). If there is a higher number of applications than available grants, RI Humanities staff will convene a panel that will prioritize applications based on program funding priorities (see the [What are the funding priorities?](#) section).

The program application opens January 26, 2024. The deadline to apply is 11:59 pm EST on March 22, 2024. Grant award announcements will be made by **the end of April 2024** and funds will be disbursed to grantees in **May 2024**. Awardees must conclude their grant-funded activities by **December 31, 2024**, and will be required to provide a final report to complete their grant requirements.

A reference PDF of the application questions is available [here](#). Applicants must submit a completed application form online through the RI Humanities grantmaking portal: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=rich>

RI Humanities staff will be hosting information sessions and providing one-on-one support during office hours (see the [What if I need help?](#) section). If you have any questions, please contact **RI Humanities grants staff** at grants@rihumanities.org.

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible for THRIVE funds, organizations must:

- Be located in Rhode Island and primarily serve Rhode Island residents and visitors;
- Be a non-profit registered with the State of Rhode Island (federal tax-exemption not required);

- Meet the definition of one of the two types of humanities organizations outlined below, as determined by organizational mission and programmatic activities:
 - *Cultural heritage organization*: an organization whose mission and programs include a focus on the preservation, perpetuation, and promotion of heritage, histories, and/or cultural practices and traditions representative of a particular culture and/or people.
 - *Local historical and/or preservation society*: an organization whose mission and programs are dedicated to the preservation, perpetuation, and promotion of the history and culture of a particular place.
- Have a current annual operating budget of \$150,000/year or less.
- Individuals, for-profit organizations, foreign entities, K-12 schools, institutions of higher education, state and local governmental entities, and non-profits that do not fit the above criteria are **NOT** eligible for this grant opportunity.
- Participation in any other RI Humanities grantmaking program will not affect eligibility for the THRIVE program.

What are the funding priorities? How will funding decisions be made?

The application is open to any organization that fits the program’s eligibility requirements.

RI Humanities will grant THRIVE awards based solely on eligibility in relation to the funds available. Following the application deadline, RI Humanities staff will review applications for eligibility.

If there are more eligible applicants than resources available, then priority will be given to:

- Organizations where the communities served by the organization are reflected in organizational leadership;
- Organizations that are making efforts towards strengthening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in their programs, services, and operations.

There will be questions about these two areas in the application. A diverse panel of RI Humanities Board members as well as community reviewers will evaluate applicant responses to these questions according to the rubric ([available here](#)) to make final recommendations.

If a review panel is necessary, RI Humanities will consider age, gender identity or expression, disability, sexual orientation, geography, humanities experience, and other factors when curating this grant program’s panel participants.

What can I use this grant award for?

THRIVE awardees may use the funds towards the operational costs of the organization, including:

- Staffing.
- Rent and utilities.
- Program supplies and materials.
- Website and database development and maintenance.
- Marketing and communications.
- Technology equipment.
- Capital expenditures and facilities repairs.
- Physical and digital accessibility improvements.
- Consultant fees.

If your organization has a question about a possible THRIVE expense not included in the categories above, please contact us at grants@rihumanities.org.

There is **no cost-share/cash-match requirement** for this grant opportunity.

What can't I use this grant award for?

Awardees who receive a grant through this program **may NOT** use the general operating support funds for the following:

- Expenses unrelated to the operations of the grantee organization.
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- Purchase of firearms, guns, and/or explosives.
- Competitive regranteeing, prizes, or awards.
- Pre-award costs prior to May 1, 2024.
- Promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view; advocacy of a particular program of social or political action; support of specific public policies or legislation; lobbying.
- Any fundraising or for-profit efforts, such as social events or benefits.
- Undergraduate or graduate school activities (activities which are part of a graduate or undergraduate degree program, or for which academic credit is received).

How do I apply?

The program opens **January 26, 2024**. The **deadline to apply is 11:59 pm EST on March 22, 2024**. Applicants must submit a completed application form online through the RI Humanities grantmaking portal: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=rich>

A **reference PDF copy of the application is available [here](#)**. After completing eligibility checks and providing contact information for your organization and authorized officials, the application consists of organizational overview and documentation questions; two narrative questions; and a plan to use the funds that you will provide by filling out a table in the form. You will need the following to complete the application:

- **Two authorized officials from your organization.**
 - The authorized officials of the organization are required to have legal and fiduciary oversight at your organization. Organizational positions that authorized officials hold include executive director, CEO, chair of the board, treasurer, or president. Typically, these individuals are authorized to sign contracts and checks on behalf of the organization. In the event of an award, the authorized officials are responsible for the scope of work and budget described in the grant application. They must serve as signatories on this application and for any grant awarded.
- **Organizational mission statement.**
 - This is a 1-2 sentence statement that summarizes your organization's purpose and focus. It is typically developed and approved by an organization's leadership and used for formal purposes (tax filings) as well as public communications.
- **Overall summary of your organization's budget for your current fiscal year.**
 - This could be a one-page Excel spreadsheet or PDF including total projected income and total projected expenses, with a breakdown of sources of income and categories of expenses.
- **Documentation of registration as a nonprofit corporation in good standing with the RI Department of State.**
 - We ask for a PDF of the "Entity Summary" for your organization from the RI Dept. of State's website. You can find this by searching for your organization under "Search by entity name" on the RI DoS's entity database: <https://business.sos.ri.gov/corpweb/corpsearch/corpsearch.aspx>. Once you have found the record for your organization, please click on the "Entity Name" in the entity results to see your organization's "Entity Summary." You can download this summary as a PDF. For an example of RI Humanities's "Entity Summary" PDF, please [click here](#).

What is the timeline for making decisions and for the submission of final reports for awardees?

Grant award announcements will be made by **the end of April 2024** and funds will be disbursed to grantees **in May 2024**. Awardees must conclude their grant-funded activities by **December 31, 2024**.

All awardees will be responsible for completing a final report for their grant. There will be one required written final report due on Monday, March 3, 2025, through the RI Humanities grantmaking portal, and no other reporting requirements. The report will be brief and focused on assessing the impact of the award and ongoing grantee needs.

What if I need help?

Julia Renaud, Associate Director of Grants and Strategic Initiatives, and Melissa Wong, Grantmaking Program Coordinator, are available and happy to help you with your application and answer your questions!

We are offering the following grant support options:

- **THRIVE Grant Information Sessions:** These 75-minute virtual workshops will cover the THRIVE grant program and process, and provide tips on completing the application. Both sessions will occur via Zoom, and require pre-registration via Zoom. If you cannot make it or would like a refresher, we will also be posting a recording of the session along with the slide deck on our website.
 - **Information Session Registration:**
 - **Thursday, February 8, 5:00-6:15 pm:** [Register here.](#)
 - **Tuesday, February 13, 12:00-1:15 pm:** [Register here.](#)
- **One-on-One Support Sessions:** you can sign up for a 15-minute one-on-one support session with Grants staff below. All meetings will occur by Zoom.
 - Sign up to speak with Grants staff [here:](https://rihumanitiesthrive.youcanbook.me) <https://rihumanitiesthrive.youcanbook.me>
- One-on-one support outside of the opportunities outlined above will be available as staff time allows. Please take advantage of the support provided as you consider your application. The sooner you begin the application process, the more time there will be for us to assist you!
- And, of course, you can always contact us at grants@rihumanities.org with any questions.

Where did the THRIVE general operating support program come from?

RI Humanities is an independent nonprofit founded in 1973 as Rhode Island's state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), a federal agency. Over the last 50 years, we have awarded over \$10 million in federal funds through 2,000+ grants for public humanities projects to seed, support, and strengthen public history, cultural heritage, civic education, and community engagement by and for all Rhode Islanders.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, nonprofits across the country experienced a surge in public demand for their services and simultaneously, an enormous reduction in their income. As part of the national pandemic response, RI Humanities administered over \$900,000

in federal relief funds through multiple grants, including working in collaboration with our colleagues at the RI State Council on the Arts to develop more equitable, accessible, and responsive grantmaking models.

The needs that the COVID-19 pandemic amplified did not begin with the pandemic, nor have they ended. With the insights gained from these experiences, RI Humanities pursued state funding for a regular general operating support program for the humanities sector. In 2024, the State of Rhode Island included \$100,000 in the State Budget for grants to humanities organizations. With these funds, we have developed the THRIVE general operating support program. We are proud that our state government took this historic step toward a long-term investment in one of Rhode Island's most important assets—our cultural heritage and our history—and thrilled for the opportunity to help the state's humanities sector thrive.