

Minnesota History Coalition

Legacy Amendment Funding Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2018-19



► **\$41 million of the Arts and Culture Heritage Fund be appropriated to statewide history programs for Fiscal Year 2018-2019.** Based on experience of demonstrated need from the first four biennia, we respectfully recommend that the Minnesota Legislature appropriate funds for history activities from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, over the next biennium, as follows:

\$16.5 million for history programs and projects that are of statewide significance and are a state responsibility. These are programs primarily operated by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Examples: improved history education and original research programs; intergenerational learning projects; increased access to collections and historic sites through technology enhancements.

\$16.5 million for grants for history projects and capacity development. These are programs accomplished by local, regional, and other historical organizations and museums and are distributed through a competitive grant program.

Examples: funding for historical organizations and museums to preserve collections; create educational interpretive programs; support historical scholarship, preserve historic, archaeological, and cultural resources.

\$6.25 million for history programs and projects carried out through partnerships between organizations to encourage collaboration and improve capacity and expertise. Organizations could include local or regional historical organizations, the Minnesota Historical Society, or other organizations interested in using historical resources.

Examples: economic development through history via the Main Street Program; oral history projects; organizational capacity building; language preservation projects.

\$1 million for a statewide survey of historical and archaeological sites. The survey will identify and preserve locations, structures, and artifacts of statewide historical, archaeological, and cultural significance.

\$750,000 for Minnesota Digital Library efforts to collect and preserve historical and cultural digital objects from over 180 libraries, museums, and cultural heritage organizations; available through Minnesota Reflections and the Digital Public Library of America websites.

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► **The Historic Resources Advisory Committee (HRAC), a volunteer citizen body created in the 2009 ACHF legislation, should continue to provide its expertise for oversight of grant programs.** HRAC members spent nearly 600 hours in the last grant cycle reviewing grant applications and presentations. This excellent work should continue.

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► **The Minnesota Historical Society should continue to serve as the state entity that administers these funds.**

- MNHS has a 168-year track record of operating public programs that serve the people of Minnesota.
- MNHS has a 48-year track record of managing competitive grant programs administered by a professional staff. Grants are approved by a citizen committee.

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Why does history matter?

The field of history has the power to transform lives by preserving, sharing and connecting our past. History teaches critical-thinking skills, communications proficiency, and interdisciplinary learning for students of all ages, providing a crucial educational foundation.

History creates economic development opportunities. These include construction jobs in the historic preservation field as well as employment from educational and history program activities for both the public and private sectors, while helping to preserve our historic resources for future generations.

History is specifically included in language in the Minnesota Constitution within the Minnesota Legacy Amendment:

“...Funding may be spent only for arts, arts education, and arts access and **to preserve Minnesota’s history and cultural heritage.**” (emphasis added)

The Legacy Amendment has reenergized the field of history in Minnesota.

Highlights of activities from the three biennial appropriations include:

Proactive citizen involvement in designing history programs, particularly grant programs, through statewide town hall meetings, workshops, and citizen reviews of grant applications.

History programs and projects that benefited 600,000+ students and 1,500+ non-profit organizations that preserve our past.

Demand for funding for history and cultural heritage funding outweighs available resources over 2:1.¹

Statewide grant coverage: Almost 2,000 grants to 724 organizations in all 87 counties.

Economic benefit: ACHF dollars made an economic impact of \$2 for each dollar invested.²

Measurable outcomes and professional standards applied to all allocations, ensuring responsible stewardship and accountability in expenditures.

¹ Based on overall requested amounts for programs, partnerships, and grants in 2016

² “An Economic Analysis of Minnesota’s Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Monies: An Update” prepared by the University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality, December 2012

The Minnesota History Coalition is made up of 12 history organizations that carry out the work of preserving Minnesota’s legacy—we preserve the past for future generations.

