

Groundwork Grants: California Cultural Heritage Disaster Preparedness Project

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I Introduction

California faces an escalating threat from natural disasters, endangering cultural heritage collections and underserved communities. Wildfires, earthquakes, and floods not only jeopardize collections but also worsen socioeconomic disparities. Without proper equipment, funding, or partnerships, many small Californian cultural heritage collections are at risk. The urgency is compounded by climate change's worsening natural disasters, which can strike quickly and escalate over time.

The recent California Cultural Collection Protection Survey revealed critical gaps in disaster preparedness among cultural institutions. Responses indicated a lack of disaster planning, inadequate strategies for long-term collections preservation, insufficient funding, and limited digitization efforts, heightening the vulnerability of these collections to natural disasters.

In response, the California State Library, with funding from the state of California and in partnership with the Northeast Document Conservation Center, developed a major initiative – **Ready or Not** – to assist cultural heritage organizations in evaluating risks to their collections and begin taking preparatory or remedial steps. In the first step of this initiative, organizations are encouraged to assess how ready their organization is in the event of a disaster. *Ready or Not* preservation consultants from the Northeast Document Conservation Center conduct on-site assessments across California, free of charge, to identify risk mitigation measures and preservation priorities.

Groundwork Grants, developed in partnership with Myriad Consulting & Training, builds upon this first step by allocating essential financial support to address the identified needs, prioritizing institutions that document the experiences of individuals, groups, and communities whose contributions to California's history and culture have long been underrepresented in mainstream memory institutions. *Groundwork Grants* will also ultimately produce long-term economic benefits by reducing response and recovery costs. Most importantly, this collaborative effort will help to safeguard California's cultural heritage, in its most inclusive form, for generations to come.

II Program Overview

AVAILABLE FUNDING

For the first round of this funding opportunity, over \$1 million is available for competitive funding. Awards will take the form of cash grants and/or pre-paid goods and services to address recommended needs and concerns related to emergency readiness. Matching funds are not required. Options for support include:

- Assistance in the development of disaster plans
- Disaster recovery & spill kits
- Preservation supplies
- Environmental monitoring and alert equipment

- Staff training opportunities
- Consultation with local facilities specialists (e.g., engineers, plumbers, electricians, security technicians, or others)
- Supplies, equipment, or hardware for minor, immediate building maintenance, repairs, storage, or security needs

AWARD AMOUNTS

Maximum awards will be \$15,000. Requests may comprise any of the eligible options for support listed above, individually or as a combination of multiple options. See the Eligible Activities section below for further information on the parameters of these options.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Any organization that meets the eligibility requirements outlined further in this document is welcome to apply. Applications are encouraged especially from organizations that meet the following priority considerations:

1. Highest priority will be given to organizations that represent/document historically underserved, under-represented communities, including but not limited to: African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latinx, or Native American groups; persons with disabilities; persons experiencing poverty or homelessness; veterans; farmworkers; persons identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Queer; senior residents; immigrants and refugees; and rural communities.
2. Priority will also be given to organizations that have received recent preservation assessments, incorporating disaster readiness, through a [Ready or Not](#) preservation consultation or from other qualified preservation consultant(s).

All applicants will be asked to demonstrate the need for support, typically by providing relevant recommendations received from qualified preservation specialists. Organizations that have not received a formal preservation assessment may apply, however they are strongly urged to arrange for a *Ready or Not* consultant to assess their collection's emergency readiness. To schedule a free *Ready or Not* consultation, please contact CAready@nedcc.org, or by phone at 855-501-3020.

APPLICATION & FUNDING TIMELINE

Applications for the current round will be accepted in an ongoing manner beginning January 2024, through May 31, 2024 (or until all funds are exhausted). Award decisions will typically be made within three weeks of application submission; funds and/or service arrangements will be provided shortly thereafter. All projects must be completed by December 31, 2024. The deadline(s) for subsequent grant rounds will be posted online and publicly announced when available. Unsuccessful applicants in this current round will be welcome to reapply for support in any subsequent rounds.

QUESTIONS & CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions may be submitted by email to Program Officer Grace Bautista: grace@myriadconsultants.org; phone inquiries are also welcome at (571) 482-4025. See also the “Frequently Asked Questions” on the *Groundwork Grants* website for additional assistance.

III Eligibility

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

To be eligible to apply, your organization must be established in California as one of the following:

- Nonprofit organizations classified as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3)
- Accredited institutions of higher education (public or nonprofit)
- Local governments in California and their agencies
- Native American Tribal governments recognized by the state of California

Additionally, organizations must possess **a collection of documents, books, publications, artifacts, recordings, digital materials, and/or other sources relevant to the history and culture of California.** The materials should be accessible at least to their communities of origin, preferably to the broader public. We recognize that in certain contexts, physical or cultural considerations may not allow for full, open use of sources.

Cities, counties, or other organizations seeking funding for multiple departments or sub-units must submit a separate application for each such entity.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES & COSTS

Support may be requested for any of the following activities and expenses, individually or combined. In general, requests should be directly related to needs and objectives identified by a Ready or Not preservation consultant or other recent preservation consultation that addresses emergency preparedness.

Assistance in the development of disaster plan

Organizations that have received a recommendation to develop a disaster preparedness plan are strongly urged to include this item in their request. Myriad Consultants can provide this service and will typically employ the planning tool “dPlan” (see Resources section). Applicants may propose a different, preferred consultant; as noted in the How to Apply section, you will be asked to identify that person(s) and document their qualifications.

Disaster recovery & spill kits

Groundwork Grants staff have arranged with a vendor to provide kits containing materials typically needed promptly in various emergencies, particularly in water damage cases. Materials include towels, mops, caution tape, water-deflecting sheets, ploy bags, recovery boxes, and more.

Preservation supplies

These may include archival quality containers, protective enclosures, folders, and other materials that may help safeguard physical collections and/or mitigate their deterioration. (See the Resources section for further information on reputable vendors.)

Environmental monitoring and alert equipment

Emergency readiness assessments often point to the importance of effective environmental monitoring in addressing disaster preparedness and other aspects of preservation management. Organizations that have received recommendations to install or upgrade monitoring systems are urged to include this in their applications. As an option, *Groundwork Grants* staff have arranged with a vendor to provide cost-effective solutions including equipment installation and ongoing technical and educational support. See the Resources section for further information.

Staff training opportunities

Support may be requested for on-site staff development opportunities or attendance by staff at workshops, webinars, courses, or other offerings pertaining to emergency readiness and/or recovery, either online or in person. Applicants will be asked to provide available details on such plans or opportunities.

Consultation with local facilities specialists (e.g., engineers, plumbers, electricians, security technicians, or others)

In cases where recent assessments point to the need to address significant building maintenance concerns, further expertise from facilities specialists may be needed to establish work plans and cost estimates. *Groundwork Grants* may be used to support expenses for such consultations. Applicants will be asked to describe the nature of the issue(s) to be addressed and to identify the consultant(s) to be involved.

Supplies, equipment, or hardware for minor, immediate building maintenance, repairs, storage, or security needs

Disaster preparedness assessments often point to immediate, relatively small-scale repairs, adjustments, and equipment replacements that do not require further estimates from a facilities specialist (e.g., window replacement, shelving unit relocation, storage cabinets, door locks, security cameras, etc.). *Groundwork Grants* may be used to support such modifications, including contracting for labor assistance.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND COSTS

The following expenses may not be included in project activities or application budgets:

- Grant writing or fundraising
- Facility expansion
- Entertainment, meals, or alcoholic beverages
- Donations, honoraria, or stipends
- Prizes or incentives
- Lobbying or otherwise attempting to influence legislation
- Federal or state taxes
- Indirect costs (I.e., institutional “overhead”)
- Any expenditure not a part of the approved grant budget

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Projects completed under this grant must be completed according to the California Building Standards Code, and applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, ordinances, policies, and guides.
- Grant recipients will be required to abide by state of California regulations regarding non-discrimination and, where applicable, provisions of the Fair Employment and Housing Act. Recipients will also be expected to abide by requirements pertaining to drug-free workplace policies and the Americans with Disabilities Act. These stipulations will be further explained and incorporated in the recipient’s grant award letter.

IV How to Apply

Program staff have endeavored to keep the application process as streamlined as possible to encourage proposals from organizations of all sizes. Applications must be submitted online via the *Groundwork Grants* Application Portal [link]. Below is the information you will be asked to provide:

BASIC INFORMATION

- **Organization/Institution/Agency Name, Address, and Tax ID (EIN)**
- **Name of Parent Organization/Institution/Agency** (if applicable)
- **Project Director Name and Contact Information**
 - This is the person who will lead the project and serve as the primary point of contact
- **Grant Administrator Name and Contact Information**
 - This is the person who will manage the financial accounting, payments, and reporting. If these duties will be handled by the Project Director, respond by indicating “Same as Above”
- **Requested Award Amount**

- Provide the total funds requested, using the Budget and Resources sections below to assist in cost calculations. The number entered here should be the same as the total amount requested in your budget.

PROJECT DETAIL & IMPLEMENTATION

- **Requested Services and/or Fundable Activities:** Checklist format
 - Place a check mark by the category(ies) of eligible activities and costs for which you are seeking support, provided on the application form and described in the preceding section of the guidelines.
- **Underserved/Under-Represented Communities:** Checklist format
 - Place a check mark by any community category whose contributions to California history and culture would be better preserved by the project, provided on the application form.
- **Assessment of Emergency Readiness:** Checklist format
 - Place a check mark for the category that pertains to you:
 - Our organization received an assessment from a *Ready or Not* consultant
 - Our organization did not receive a *Ready or Not* assessment but has received a recent preservation assessment (within the past five years) that encompassed emergency readiness
 - Our organization received an assessment of its emergency readiness more than five years ago
 - Our organization has never received an assessment of its emergency readiness
- **Project Description:** Narrative format; no more than one paragraph for each section:
 - Provide your organization's mission, along with a broad description of the collection that would be preserved; offer any highlights of materials that illustrate the importance of the sources and the audience(s) they serve; identify the under-served California cultural heritage community(ies) most substantially represented in the collections, noting any exemplary sources.
 - Discuss the rationale for the project, including key preservation and emergency readiness concerns your organization faces, such as environmental, natural disaster, security, or other threats that need to be addressed; note any disaster-related damage that your collection has previously experienced; highlight any sources that are particularly at risk of loss or deterioration.
- **Project Personnel:** Simple list/table format
 - Identify and briefly describe the roles and qualifications of all key project participants, including, for example, the project director, emergency readiness consultants, contractors, digitization partners, community elders or knowledge experts, etc. If external personnel are not yet contracted, briefly detail your plan to solicit and select these participants.
- **Project Workplan:** Simple list/table format

- Provide a timeline, listing key project activities or milestones with projected start and completion dates. (Note that all project activities should be completed by December 31, 2024.)

BUDGET

The application form will prompt you to provide amounts requested for each category of eligible activities/costs, along with any additional, brief details on how you plan to use the support. If requested services or products include those offered directly through the program, those budget figures will be pre-populated in the budget form. In cases where you wish to use consultants, vendors, or goods other than those offered through the program, you will be asked to provide details and projected costs. See the Resources section below for further information on these options and source providers.

Applicants may also request funding to compensate, at least partially, staff who are responsible for leading and/or managing the project. This amount, however, should be no more than 25% of the cumulative amount requested for other eligible project expenses, and the total grant request for all project activities may not exceed \$15,000.

As indicated previously, no matching funds are required. However, in some cases, total project costs might exceed the \$15,000 limit that *Groundwork Grants* can provide. If so, please identify the anticipated sources for supplemental revenue in the “notes” entry at the end of the budget section. If total project costs do not exceed \$15,000, no information on other revenue sources is needed.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Assessment Report(s)** received from preservation specialists (*Required if organization has received a report*); include only assessments received within the past five years
- **Letters of Commitment** from consultants or contractors who would provide services supported by the grant program (*Required if using outside consultants*)
- **Resumes** for key project staff, including any consultants other than those provided by the program (*Optional*)
- **Other Supporting Documentation** illustrating the value of the collection in documenting California’s diverse cultural history and/or demonstrating why the work is needed such as images of previous damage, current disaster plans, etc. (*Optional*)

V Evaluation of Applications

Applications will be evaluated by the *Groundwork Grants* program team, with occasional input from others as may be needed on a case-by-case basis. Award decisions will typically be made within three weeks after an application is submitted. In some cases, it may be necessary for program staff to request further information from applicants before making final decisions. The following criteria will be used in assessing the quality of applications:

- The relevance and importance of the project for preserving the history and culture of underserved, under-represented communities in California.
- The clarity of evidence for needed disaster preparedness improvements.
- The degree to which requested support responds to needs and priorities identified in a recent assessment of emergency readiness.
- The relevance and qualifications of project personnel.
- The feasibility of the proposed work plan.
- The appropriateness of the budget in relationship to proposed activities.

VI Data Privacy Policy

Applications to this grant program will be treated as confidential; access to the application database will be restricted to program staff from Myriad Consulting & Training and designated liaisons from the California State Library, the program's funding partner. Organizations that receive grants will be identified periodically in public announcements from either Myriad or the California State Library. In the event that program staff wish to provide samples of successful applications, to assist future applicants, approval will be sought from such grant recipients. Aggregated data about all applications received will be provided to the California State Library and may be used in reporting about or publicizing the grant program. However, this information will not cite the identity of any organization that is not a grant recipient.

VII Resources

The following information should be useful in making project planning decisions and in budget preparation. Note that the services offered or recommended are *optional* choices; applicants will not be penalized for proposing to use other appropriate, qualified goods and service providers.

Assistance in the development of disaster plans:

Applicants who request support for this activity have the option of using a qualified consultant provided by Myriad Consulting & Training. The specific consultant would be determined, in cooperation with the

applicant, after an award decision is made. The service would include virtual meetings with the project director and other relevant personnel and guiding staff through the planning process, using the online tool, [dPlan/Arts Ready](#), developed specifically for disaster preparedness. Budget cost: \$3,000.

Disaster recovery kits:

Preservation specialists often recommend having certain supplies close at hand to assist in rapid response to disasters, particularly water intrusion. Hollinger Metal Edge has developed [recovery kits](#) and [spill kits](#) that include numerous items often needed for protecting or salvaging collections in the immediate aftermath of disasters, such as aprons; vinyl gloves; slip-on boots with skid-resistant soles; dust masks, cellulose sponges; mop and mop bucket, flashlights, and more. Applicants may request one or more combined sets of these kits, at a cost of \$665 per set, which will also include five water-resistant recovery boxes.

Preservation supplies:

Standard preservation supplies for libraries, archives, and museums, such as archival-quality storage containers and other protective enclosures for materials, may be found through several suppliers. Among these are [Archival Products](#), [Conservation Resources](#), [Gaylord Archival](#), [Hollinger Metal Edge](#), and [University Products](#). If you are proposing to purchase preservation supplies, please be sure to identify the types of supplies and the vendor in the budget notes for this line item.

Environmental monitoring and alert equipment:

Myriad Consulting & Training has made arrangements with the company [Conservy](#), specialists in environmental monitoring for cultural heritage organizations, to offer *Groundwork Grants* applicants the option of obtaining its equipment and service platform at a discount. Included are environmental sensors, wireless gateway equipment, onboarding assistance, technical support, networking with other users, and access to educational materials. Three levels of this service are offered, depending on organization size and needs:

- 1) Small (3 sensors; 1 gateway), \$5,325
- 2) Medium (6 sensors, 2 gateways), \$9,828
- 3) Large (21 sensors; 3 gateways), \$22,738

As noted above, applicants are free to propose other service providers for similar equipment. In such cases, details on costs and vendors should be provided in budget notes for this line item.

Staff training opportunities:

Several organizations and professional societies in the libraries, archives, and museums communities offer opportunities for staff to gain more knowledge pertaining to emergency preparedness, disaster planning, and recovery. Several offerings are freely available. Others, however, including professional conferences and workshops or enlisting the services of a consultant for onsite training, require payment. The *Groundwork Grants* website will post listings and/or clearinghouse information for such training opportunities as staff become aware of them [link]. These are suggestive only, not comprehensive or reflective of program endorsement.

Consultation with local facilities specialists (e.g., engineers, plumbers, electricians, security technicians, or others):

Applicants themselves are likely most aware of local contractors or building professionals who can best provide specific estimates for facility renovation or system improvements. Of course, nearby colleagues from other cultural heritage organizations may also help guide you to such specialists based on their own related experiences.

Supplies, equipment, or hardware for minor, immediate building maintenance, repairs, storage, or security needs:

(As immediately above.)

Questions?

Contact Program Officer Grace Bautista: grace@myriadconsultants.org; (571) 482-4025.