

Basic Preservation Grants

Overview

The National Film Preservation Foundation invites applications for the spring round of its **Basic Preservation Grants**. These grants are awarded to nonprofit and public institutions for laboratory work to preserve culturally and historically significant film materials. Awards generally range from \$1,000 to \$15,000 in cash and/or laboratory services.

- **Registration Deadline: February 10, 2012**
- **Application Deadline: March 30, 2012**
- **Grant Period: June 1, 2012 to August 1, 2013**

Eligibility

Grants are available to public and 501(c)3 nonprofit institutions in the United States that provide public access to their collections, including those that are part of federal, state or local government. The grants target orphan films (1) made in the United States or by American citizens abroad and (2) not protected by commercial interests. **Materials originally created for television or video are not eligible, including works produced with funds from broadcast or cable television entities.**

The grant must be used to pay for new laboratory work involving the creation of:

- New film preservation elements (which may include sound tracks) and
- Two new public access copies, one of which must be a film print. The grant does not fund HD transfers.

The funds can be applied only to work commissioned **after** the grant start date. Funds must be used exclusively for preservation expenses and may not be applied to staffing or operational costs.

How to Apply

1. Identify film or footage collection to be preserved

Identify materials in your collection that meet the criteria listed above and decide what laboratory work needs to be done. For guidance on planning a preservation project, please consult [*The Film Preservation Guide: The Basics for Archives, Libraries, and Museums*](#).

2. Register with the NFPF

E-mail the NFPF at grants@filmpreservation.org regarding your archive's interest in applying. Provide your name, institution, address, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and a brief description of your project. The NFPF will then contact you to discuss your project.

If your project meets the eligibility requirements, you will be invited to submit a letter of application. **The registration deadline is Friday, February 10, 2012.**

3. Complete a proposal with laboratory cost estimate

Write a proposal in the form of a letter (4 to 6 pages), with one laboratory estimate (NFPF grants do not cover administrative costs). Applicants may provide up to five digital still images or a video copy of the proposed project. Your letter should cover the following points and may include illustrations or tables as appropriate:

1. Research significance

Provide a title and describe the subject matter of the film material in your proposal. Why is the

material important for cultural, artistic, or historical study? If your material pertains to a particular region, locale, or culture, please explain how it is an example of broader national trends or is a significant illustration of your organization's cultural mandate. Please check [Films Preserved Through the NFPE](#) for examples of regional films funded in past years.

For footage collections or groups of films, discuss why the materials are important to preserve as a group. Does your institution hold complementary documents (personal papers, still photographs, sound recordings, ledger books, artifacts, etc.) that enhance the research value of the multimedia collection as a whole? If you are proposing to preserve selected reels or titles from a collection, describe your rationale for making the selection.

2. Uniqueness of your archive's film copy

- How did your organization acquire the material?
- What organizations, databases, and other resources have you checked to make sure that your archive's copy represents the "best surviving material" for that film and that the proposed work does not duplicate efforts by others in the public/nonprofit sector?
- For silent films, check your title against the most recent version of the FIAF *Treasures from the Film Archives Database* and include the results of your search.
- For independent documentaries and avant-garde works, indicate if you have contacted the filmmaker, the production company, or the filmmaker's heirs.
- Are rental or video copies of this film available through commercial distribution or video channels?
- Please describe any other steps have you taken to assure that you are working from the best available source material.

3. Physical film description

- What is the length, gauge, and condition of the proposed film or collection?
- From what type of source material will your archive be working?

For more information on handling film, please consult [The Film Preservation Guide: The Basics for Archives, Libraries, and Museums](#). These PDF files also include a Print Condition Report worksheet.

4. Description of preservation work and cost estimate

- What laboratory work is requested? For sound films, indicate how you propose to preserve the sound.
- Provide a written estimate for the preservation work. Estimates should be obtained from laboratories specializing in film and sound preservation and be included with your proposal.
- As applicable, outline the preservation work already completed on the film or that would still need to be done after work funded by the grant. Please be specific; include the date of the original preservation work and condition of the original.
- If you are collaborating with another institution, include a letter from that institution briefly outlining its involvement with the project.

5. Storage

Describe your archival storage facilities and **provide their temperature and humidity levels**. Confirm that any new preservation masters created through the project will be stored under archivally acceptable conditions. If your organization does not have an archivally acceptable storage area for film, please include your plans for off-site storage. For more information on recommended storage practices, please see Chapter 6 of [The Film Preservation Guide](#).

6. Access plans

- In addition to providing a viewing copy of the film for on-site research, how does your institution plan to make the film available to the public?

- Does your institution have permission to show this material for Internet viewing, and/or on-site public screenings at which no admission is charged? Be sure to indicate if there are any other relevant donor restrictions regarding public access to the proposed material. (These are important considerations, given the public access mission of the NFPF.)
- Describe plans for sharing the completed access copies outside of your institution. Do you plan exhibition loans or dissemination on video, television, or the Internet?

7. Public service mission

Briefly summarize your institution's mission, collections, and public programs; include your Web site address and any brochures.

8. Tax-exempt status

Nonprofits, list your institution's tax identification number; government/public sector archives, provide some record or a letter demonstrating that your institution is part of state, regional, or local government.

9. Supplemental funds

Please indicate that your institution is prepared to provide supplemental funds to complete the project, should it go over budget.

10. Contact information

Provide the name, title, address, phone number, fax, e-mail, and professional biography of the project coordinator (one paragraph).

4. Submit application

All applications are due in hard copy by **Friday, March 30, 2012:**

National Film Preservation Foundation
870 Market Street, Suite 1113
San Francisco, CA 94102

The proposals will be read by NFPF staff and outside reviewers. Awards will be made by a grant panel serving on behalf of the NFPF Board of Directors.

Notification

Applicants will be notified regarding grant decisions in June 2012.

Terms

Successful applicants must sign an agreement affirming the responsibilities of the grant. Nonprofit grant winners may be asked to provide a copy of the IRS determination letter verifying their status as a publicly supported 501(c)(3) organization.