

# FY26 Institutional and Financial Stabilization Grants for History & Humanities Organizations

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING A DECLARATION OF INTENT

**Purpose:** The Cultural Trust Act directs the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the New Jersey Historical Commission, and the New Jersey Historic Trust to design and administer grant programs that recommend projects to the Cultural Trust. For FY26, the New Jersey Historical Commission will recommend projects through the Institutional and Financial Stabilization Grants for History & Humanities Organizations (IFS History/Humanities) program.

The Commission employs the Declaration of Intent (DOI) to begin to plan its grants administration and evaluation process. DOIs enable the Commission to estimate the number of grant applications it may receive, the types of organizations applying, the aggregate request amount, the number of grant reviewers necessary to evaluate the applications and the qualifications and experience it will need to seek when constructing review panels.

The DOI also enables the Commission to ensure that applicants and projects meet all of the eligibility requirements of the IFS History/Humanities program. The eligibility criteria are outlined below and are also available in the [Grant Guidelines](#) on the Cultural Trust and Historical Commission websites. DOIs are not binding.

If you have further questions about the DOI process, or about the eligibility of your organization or proposed project, please contact Cultural Trust or Historical Commission staff for additional assistance:

- Cultural Trust staff:
  - o Email: [cultural.trust@sos.nj.gov](mailto:cultural.trust@sos.nj.gov)
  - o Phone: 609-292-6403
- Historical Commission staff:
  - o Email: [niquole.primiani@sos.nj.gov](mailto:niquole.primiani@sos.nj.gov)
  - o Phone: 609-943-3307

### Organization and Project Eligibility

In order to be eligible to apply, an organization must:

- Be a New Jersey-based nonprofit organization (no schools, units of government, or religious organizations) that has been **qualified** by the New Jersey Cultural Trust.

- Be registered as a charity in New Jersey with the Division of Consumer Affairs and have a Charities Registration number.
- Have a primary **history- and/or humanities-focused** mission. (Organizations with a primary arts-focused mission are eligible to apply for Institutional and Financial Stabilization Grants for Arts Organizations, which the Cultural Trust expects will next be offered in FY27.)
- Not have another active Institutional and Financial Stabilization grant from the Cultural Trust. NOTE: If an organization has an active Historical Commission grant or CHPP re-grant, the organization is still eligible to apply for a Cultural Trust grant. If an organization has an active Cultural Trust Capital Historic Preservation grant, that organization is also still eligible to apply.

Be sure to review the [Grant Guidelines](#) to ensure that your organization meets all eligibility requirements.

### Project Eligibility

The purpose of Cultural Trust funding is to provide financial support to assist qualified organizations in addressing the financial and institutional challenges that threaten their stability and to help build greater operational capacity to manage and advance their work. Awards may support a wide variety of expenses, including immediate response activities, costs associated with planning or assessment, and investment strategies that reimagine work and build resiliency.

Applicants must clearly identify a stabilization challenge or capacity issue and articulate a specific, appropriate strategy *primarily within one of the following categories* to address the identified challenge or issue:

- Establishing or growing a working capital fund/cash reserve
- Debt/deficit reduction
- Strategic planning/assessment
- Technology upgrade
- Capital equipment purchase
- Professional development for staff/board
- New staff position

Be sure to review the [Grant Guidelines](#) for more details about each project category, as well as ineligible projects and expenses.

### Completing the DOI Form

The General Information form is relatively simple to complete. The instructions provided will highlight only those areas that may require explanation.

- **Auto-Populated Fields:** You will notice that several fields of information have auto-populated, or have been filled in for you, based on information you have provided on the Organization Information and Organization Details forms. These fields include your organization's name and basic information. If these fields appear blank, or if you need to update any of the information, please follow these steps:

1. Click on the “Organization(s)” link in the black bar at the top of the webpage.
  2. Complete any empty fields and update any outdated information, then save the page by clicking the blue “SAVE” button at the top of the page.
  3. Click on the “Organization Details” link under the “My Organization Information” header.
  4. Select the “Additional Profile Information – Required for applicants to the NJ Department of State ...” link. (This should be the second item in the Organization Details list.)
  5. In the white and blue sections of the form, complete any empty fields and update any outdated information, then save the page by clicking the blue “SAVE” button at the top of the page. (The gray and green sections of the form are not required for this grant program.)
  6. Return to your DOI, then click “SAVE” to populate the new information. You may need to save several times for the information to auto-populate.
- Total Grant Funds Requested: The maximum award amount for this program is \$40,000. Successful applications are typically funded in full. While there is no minimum award amount, requests typically range from \$10,000 to \$40,000.
  - Estimated Project Start Date: The grant period for this program is January 1 through December 31, 2026. The Cultural Trust will not fund projects that have begun before January 1, 2026.
  - Length of Time to Complete: Projects must be completed by December 31, 2026. Refer to your estimated start date when considering the length of time to complete the project in order to ensure that it will be completed within the grant period.
  - Text Field Questions: When responding to the questions regarding your organization’s stability/capacity challenge and your proposed project, you will enter text into text fields. Please note that SAGE does not provide a spell-check feature. You may wish to consider preparing your text in a word-processing program, using the spell-check feature, and then cutting and pasting the text into the text field in SAGE. Please note that the text fields are measured by characters rather than words, and both allow a maximum of 1,500 characters.

Once you have completed the form, review your information for accuracy, and be sure to save your work by clicking the “SAVE” at the top of the page.

### **Submitting the DOI Form**

When you are finished, submit the DOI by hovering over the “Status Changes” link at the top of the page. Under “DOI Submitted/In Review,” click “Apply Status.” To confirm submission, check that the “Current Status” section at the top of the General Information page reads “DOI Submitted/In Review.”

The Commission will review all DOIs submitted, and all organizations that submit a DOI will be notified. Your organization will be contacted when it has been given access to create an application. Organizations that may not meet the eligibility criteria to apply will also be contacted.