

MAJOR GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Major Grant program provides grants up to \$10,000 to support public humanities programs through two competitive grant rounds per year—one in the Spring and one in the Fall. There are three categories of major grants: **Civic Engagement**, **Special Initiative**, and **Open**. All Major Grants share these goals and criteria:

Goals

1. Fund high-quality programs that stimulate thoughtful and informed discussions on issues and matters critical to Marylanders;
2. Support projects that use the humanities as the central resource to engage diverse groups and individuals in informed dialogue and civic engagement;
3. Promote programs that include a wide variety of perspectives on an issue.

Criteria

1. The program topic addresses an issue or matter critical to Marylanders. Does the applicant demonstrate that this is a critical issue in their community?
2. The program format encourages informed dialogue and discussions.
3. The humanities are used to engage audiences.
4. The program will draw in and engage its targeted audience at an appropriate venue.
5. New partnerships are stimulated by this project.
6. The project leaders have the necessary facilitation skills and knowledge of the humanities.
7. The work plan and budget are reasonable.
8. The evaluation plan effectively measures the ways in which the project achieves its goals.

1. Civic Engagement Grants

- This grant category supports public programs that promote informed dialogue and civic engagement about critical issues identified by the applying organization.
- Programs in this category can be in a variety of formats, but must:
 - involve the participants in an interactive conversation that examines an important issue in the community
 - and must use the humanities as the central resource to inform those conversations. Critical issues might include race relations, population growth, immigration, environmental issues, health care, wealth and poverty, crime and safety, or other issues of importance to the applicant's community.
- Examples of possible programs in this category might include:
 - A **reading/discussion** series where a group reads African and Latin American folk tales and discusses the similarities and differences in these cultural traditions.
 - A **moderated blog** where participants read and react to historical, literary, and philosophical perspectives on the impact of climate change.
 - A **film/discussion** program where an audience watches *The Grapes of Wrath* and discusses the issues of poverty and human dignity.

- A **panel-led audience discussion** about the impact of globalization on the American economy with a moderated panel of experts with different viewpoints.
- A **public conference** that examines the impact of the population growth on the history, culture, and social structure of a county.
- A **post-performance discussion** of the play, "Inherit the Wind," which explores the perpetual friction between science and religious belief in public education.
- A **guided discussion of an exhibition** of contemporary photographs of school classrooms that investigates racial and class differences in resources and environment.

2. Special Initiative Grants

- This grant category supports public programs that promote informed dialogue and civic engagement about critical issues identified by the Maryland Humanities Council through a Special Initiative or Request for Proposals.
- Programs in this category can be in a variety of formats, but they must involve the participants in an interactive discussion about the issue(s) identified by MHC and must use the humanities as the central resource to inform those conversations.
- For 2007 and 2008 and 2009, MHC's special initiative, "*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Remembrance and Reconciliation*," encourages communities throughout the state to examine the legacy of Dr. King, the current state of race relations in their communities, and ways in which successful attempts have been made or could be made to bridge the racial divide and resolve racial differences.
- Examples of programs in this category might include:
 - **Movie/Discussion Group.** A group of people might watch a film like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, or *A Raisin in the Sun* and then participate in a facilitated discussion about the issues raised in the film.
 - **Panel-led Audience Discussion.** Two or three historians and lawyers with differing views on a race-related topic such as affirmative action, school desegregation, or the Voting Rights Act form a panel. After short presentations by each panelist, the audience and panel would engage in a facilitated discussion of the issues.
 - **Reading/Discussion Group.** A group might read Frederick Douglass's Fourth of July Oration from 1852, the autobiography of Malcolm X or Dr. Ben Carson, or Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech and then have a facilitated discussion about the issues raised and what has or has not changed since that time.
 - **Lecture/Discussion Presentation.** A cultural historian might give a presentation on the differing cultures, views, and expectations of African-Americans who are descended from slaves and African-Americans who

have more recently migrated to this country from Africa or the Caribbean. The audience would then discuss these issues with the presenter.

3. Open Grants

- This type of grant supports public humanities programs that do not fall into the Civic Engagement or Special Initiative categories.
- Programs in this category can take many forms, including lectures, seminars, symposia, interpretive exhibits, films, media projects, reading/ discussion programs, teacher institutes, local histories, living histories, public archaeology, distance learning, or any other format that effectively engages residents of Maryland in the humanities.

Major Grant Application Deadlines

Spring Round, For projects beginning on or after July 1 of each year

Letters of Inquiry Due:	March 1
Grant Proposals Due:	April 15
Decision Date:	May
Notification:	Late May

Fall Round, For projects beginning on or after January 1 of each year

Letters of Inquiry Due:	September 1
Grant Proposals Due:	October 15
Decision Date:	November 2007
Notification:	Late November 2007