

**Alyson Pope:** Hi everyone, and welcome to the first applicant webinar for CLIR's second cohort of the Amplifying Unheard Voices iteration of the Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives program. I'm Alyson Pope, a member of the CLIR grants team, and we are so glad to be here to share some information about the currently open call for applications.

We're going to start off with some introductions, first to this platform and then to our team. To start off, we want to share some notes about how you can use Zoom. During this session a live transcript is being generated. If you'd like to utilize it, to turn on this feature click the CC live transcript button at the bottom of your Zoom window.

Because so many of you have joined us today, which we're super excited about, attendees will be muted throughout the presentation. However, you're welcome to use chat for general introductions and conversations.

If a chat box isn't already displaying on your zoom screen, you can hover your mouse toward the bottom of the screen and open it manually in order to send a message to everyone. Remember to change the default from all panelists to all panelists and attendees. Because of how busy chat can get, we ask that you use the separate Q&A box to ask questions today, which can be opened the same way as the chat box. You can submit questions at any point during the webinar, and we will do our best to answer them at the end of the session.

If you're following along with those questions as they come in, you can upvote them, if they're similar to your own, to let us know that it would be helpful to you to have them answered live. If we don't have time to get to all of the questions, we'll write up responses to the remaining ones and post all of the answers within the next week in the session transcript. The Q&A, session recording, and transcript will be made available on the Apply for an Award page of our website by the end of next week.

And now Sharon will get us going.

**Sharon Burney:** For those unfamiliar with our organization, the Council on Library and Information Resources, or CLIR, is an independent non-profit organization with a mission to forge strategies to enhance research, teaching, and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning.

Although we're talking about a funding opportunity today, it's important to understand that CLIR is not actually a funding agency. Rather, our programs and publications are supported through sponsorships and external funding. For the Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives program, we receive our funding from the Mellon Foundation and CLIR Acts as the regranteeing agency. Just as we receive proposals and reports from grant recipients, we also send proposals and reports to the Mellon Foundation and other funding organizations.

CLIR's work is accomplished by a relatively small staff of about 20 geographically distributed individuals with the greatest concentration living in the DC area where our headquarters are located. Today's webinar

is led by the CLIR grants team, which administers CLIR's active granting programs, offering support for the entire grant cycle from application to final report. We'll do quick introductions of the group, so that you know who we are and how we'll be participating today.

My name is Sharon Burney. I'm a program officer with CLIR. I am currently located in Gainesville, Florida, and I will be contributing to the presentation and the Q&A.

**Alyson Pope:** My name is Alyson Pope. I'm also a program officer. I'm based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and I'll be contributing to the presentation and the Q&A.

**Sharon Burney:** And Louisa Kwasigroch is our managing director. She is currently located in Chicago, Illinois, and she will be assisting with Zoom logistics and Q&A support.

Our team would like to center today's conversation by acknowledging that as residents of the United States, we are speaking to you from unseeded land of many indigenous peoples. I'd like to respectfully acknowledge and recognize the original and current care takers of the land, water, and air where I live, the Timucua and Seminole peoples. and all of their ancestors and descendants. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on their homelands, and ask you to join me in acknowledging all indigenous communities, their elders, both past and present, as well as future generations. May this acknowledgement and the program we're speaking about today demonstrate CLIR's commitment to beginning the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism.

**Alyson Pope:** Now that we've introduced ourselves, we'd love to hear from you. Please feel free to share your name, organizational affiliation, where you live, and any land acknowledgments in the chat.

During the rest of our time together, we'll offer a program overview, including some history of Digitizing Hidden Collections, what Amplifying Unheard Voices adds, and definitions of core components of this program.

And some detailed instructions and tips for applying to the program, including what to expect in the 2 parts of this program's application process, and time to answer your questions.

**Sharon Burney:** Thanks, Alyson. Let's move into an overview of the Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives program.

The 2023 open call for proposals opens the third iteration of a clear program having roots that date back to 2008. What started as a funding opportunity for non-profit organizations to catalog hidden collections is now transformed to continue the work of the digitization program with a new thematic focus. Under the Cataloging Hidden Collections program, CLIR supported more than 170 unique institutions with 128 projects that documented more than 6 million items.

While the work of the first iteration of Digitizing Hidden Collections is still underway, more than 194 unique institutions have been part of 101 funded projects that have already created more than 8.7 million master digital files.

Where earlier programs have encouraged the submission of collections representative of any topic, the Mellon Foundation challenged CLIR to shift this program to a specific theme, bringing us to Amplifying Unheard Voices.

The thematic focus of Amplifying Unheard Voices aims to fund projects that propose to digitize materials that deepen public understanding of the histories of people of color in other communities and populations whose work experiences and perspectives have been insufficiently recognized or unattended in the digital collections. Those often hidden histories include, but are not necessarily limited to, those of Black, Indigenous, Latiné, and other people of color, women, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, non-binary and other genderqueer people and communities, immigrants, displaced populations, blind, deaf, and disabled people and communities, and colonized, disenfranchised, enslaved, and incarcerated people.

In addition to the thematic focus of the call for proposals, several other significant changes have been made to the program from earlier iterations. Eligible Canadian organizations are now able to apply as lead applicants. This also means collaborations can now take place between any combination of US. And Canadian organizations.

The initial application is much briefer than in previous years, asking organizations to consider digitization project design, but to focus more specifically on telling the story of the materials.

These initial applications will be evaluated by an expanded review panel representative of the diversity of the program from both US and Canadian organizations. A core group of these individuals will serve as reviewers through funding recommendations.

The core values of the program have also been reimagined to reflect the new broad objectives and thematic focus. You can use these core values as you develop projects, making sure that reviewers can see these elements woven throughout your application.

Our reviewers will also focus their evaluations of applications on these same values in the past. The program's values seemed to motivate the development of collections, focused projects. But we hope the new core values will encourage and challenge organizations to see how their digitization work can be people-focused, too. More information on the core values is on the program homepage and the frequently asked questions.

**Alyson Pope:** Though the program has undergone a significant refresh, some core components remain the same. So what do we mean by digitization? All projects submitted for consideration must have digitization as the primary activity. This is specifically the creation of digital

representations of unique physical artifacts or objects. While description, such as cataloging or metadata, creation, and other work to enhance access, such as transcription or translation, may be included in projects, that work must be supplemental to the digitization work.

This program does not support further description, manipulation or migration to alternative digital formats for content that was born digital or has been previously digitized. The original objects nominated for digitization may be in any format, and projects may combine digitization of materials from a variety of formats. For example, books, manuscripts, maps, 3D objects, textiles, various audio visual formats, and more. If you have any questions about what qualifies as a digitization project, get in touch with the CLIR grants team.

Next, what do we mean by hidden? For this program, applicants are asked to convincingly demonstrate that the materials nominated for digitization cannot have a meaningful impact on public understanding of people, communities, and populations whose work experiences and perspectives have been insufficiently recognized or attended in the past until those materials are digitized, discoverable, and accessible in ethical, respectful, and legal ways. It's important to remember to explain how digitization specifically is key to opening access to the materials.

We expect that collections nominated for digitization may be in various stages of description, ranging from fully processed, or accessions, to minimal or no descriptive records available at all. Applicants are encouraged to design projects that fill description, gaps, and projects, using the workflows of digitization to think about how item or collection descriptions can be enhanced, corrected, and created.

And finally, what do we mean by collections? You'll note that the title of this program more specifically mentions special collections and archives. For the purposes of this program, special collections are any kind of rare or unique materials housed in secure monitored environments and made available to the general public.

Archives are unique, often unpublished materials associated with a specific individual, topic, location, or organization that is of historical and or cultural interest. While the materials nominated for digitization may be in any physical format, they must be owned and held by an eligible organization. Because of the thematic focus, the materials must also have been created by or describe people of color or other communities and populations whose work experiences and perspectives fit the scope of the program.

There are a lot of wonderful examples of projects from the past that can give you a good idea of the scope and scale of work funded through this program.

We particularly want to shout out 2 projects funded in 2016 as possible models. A collaboration between the Sherman Indian Museum and UC Riverside titled The Sherman Indian Museum Digital Collection, Increasing Access to American Indian off Reservation Boarding School Archives.

And the collaboration between the AUC Woodruff Library, Spelman College Archives, University of Georgia, and Morehouse College. You can learn more about these projects and others on our funded projects page.

**Sharon Burney:** Now we'll work through how to apply. We have provided all the information you should need on our Digitized Hidden Collections program pages. We'll share these links throughout the presentation, and point to specific resources available to you.

The recording of this webinar, slides, and a transcript of questions and answers will also be posted on the Apply for an Award page by September 21st for your later reference.

Perhaps the most essential resource for you, as you consider an application to our program, is the application guidelines, combining instructions and insights into the program and its application process. The guidelines also serve as a space for you to draft responses to questions prior to adding them in our online grant application platform.

A view-only Google Doc is linked from the Apply for an Award program page. Users without a Google account can access this version and download the document in whatever file format they wish to use, using the file menu. For those with a Google account, we've also supplied a link to automatically create your own editable copy of the document.

An updated version of the guidelines will be shared with those invited to submit a final application into the program. The initial application is made up of 9 discrete tasks in 4 forms to collect information about your organization and project. The application guidelines addresses each task in much greater detail, but we'll cover a few important points today.

**Alyson Pope:** The first task asks you to confirm the eligibility of your organization and the collaborating organizations on your project. We also include all of the eligibility details on our website and in the guidelines. In the initial application, we do not request any documentation confirming the eligibility of organizations according to our program's instructions, but documentation will be required if your proposal is invited to submit a final application.

Of particular note - This program does require that materials nominated for digitization must be owned and held by eligible organizations. If you are proposing a project that includes the digitization of materials from multiple eligible organizations, we strongly recommend you design a collaborative project.

In the applicant information task, you'll be asked to provide information on the organizations involved in the project. In this initial application round, we're most interested in collecting the information on the potential collaborating organizations if applicable. While collaboration is not a requirement of this program, our core values do support authentic partnerships which can take many forms.

For the purposes of this program, keep in mind that organizations named as collaborators typically are contributing materials for digitization,

and or providing critical support for creating and maintaining access to the digitized items over time.

The final application will ask for more descriptive information on the nature of any collaborations. We encourage you to explore the applicant guidelines and our FAQ online for more information on collaboration.

The next tasks ask applicants to supply basic project information. As part of this section, we are asking applicants to assign up to 6 keywords or phrases that best describe the fields of study connected to your project.

Rather than using general terms, like digitization, which we assume will apply to all the projects submitted to the program, think of words or phrases that would help others quickly understand the content of the materials nominated. CLIR Staff will likely use this information to help us as we assign applications to reviewers for evaluation.

The initial project details task contains the primary content of this first application. This is where we ask applicants to tell the story of their materials, their organization, and explain the need for funding from this program.

Each of the 6 prompts allots up to 500 words to engage the reviewers in your story. The responses to each of these prompts connects to the core values of this program, and for those invited will be used to start building final application submissions.

This cycle reviewers will be using a rubric for the assessment of initial applications, and these prompts will provide the heart of your proposal in their assessment. The application guidelines offers instructions and deeper insights into each of these prompts to help guide your application writing, and it also contains the rubric that reviewers will use as an appendix.

Once you've completed all of the required tasks in the online system, you'll have the option to review and submit your proposal. This gives you one last chance to look over everything that you've written and uploaded and go back to edit any errors you might spot.

Once you are confident your application is complete, click the submit your application button, and click Submit again if prompted. Once submitted, you'll see your application in the 'My Applications' space, and be able to download a copy for your records.

A confirmation email will be sent from the SM Apply system. Be sure to check spam folders if you don't see that within 24 hours. The grants team is always happy to answer any questions about the application process.

**Sharon Burney:** Review of applications for the Digitizing Hidden Collections program is undertaken by an independent review panel. CLIR maintains a largely standing panel of reviewers who have expertise in digitization, digital collections, rights, ethics and reuse, and a wide

variety of academic subjects. Their names and affiliations will be posted on our website by the end of the initial application period.

During the initial review process at least 2 reviewers read each application, and a portion of applications will be invited to prepare a full application for the final stage.

Initial applications must be submitted online by November 1st, 2023. We anticipate that all organizations that submit an initial application will be notified if they are invited to submit a final application by February 19th, 2024.

This year we anticipate providing a greater level of support to those organizations invited to the final round to help develop initial applications into competitive final applications. This will involve a number of individuals from CLIR's community, including members of our review panel. We anticipate making the public announcement of funded projects in November of 2024

Details of the final application are still in progress. However, we anticipate that the size and scope of the application will be similar to previous Digitizing Hidden Collections cycles.

Our aim is that you'll use the groundwork of your initial application to build the full final application. It may be productive in this stage to think about how you'll expand your responses in the final round, providing more complete description of the collections, their significance and potential impact, and the project design and long-term sustainability of the digital deliverables.

We are anticipating an application that includes 10 general sections. We expect that the applicant information and project summary will remain the same from the initial round. Most of the final application will expand upon your initial application, including description and content rights, ethics and reuse, significance and context of the materials, the potential impact of the project, the institutional capacity, and budget and funding documents.

**Alyson Pope:** The section that will require the most development will be the project work plan. The final application will also require uploads, including letters of support from your organization, the communities represented in the materials, and scholars.

The application guidelines for the initial application does include the outline of the final application sections shown here to encourage forethought for expanding on the initial application if invited.

**Sharon Burney:** before we move into our question and answer time, we want to make a note of a super short survey about the webinar. This is part of our program assessment, so your honest feedback on the webinar will help us in our future support efforts. We'll share the link in the chat, and it will also be included in an automated message after the event.

Now it's time to turn to your questions. We'll do our best to get through as many as we can, and the unanswered questions will be answered in our transcript and shared to our website along with the recording. Thank you.

**Alyson Pope:** Well, thanks for joining us today. We're going to move to the live portion so that we can take questions from the Q&A.

Before we get to that really quickly. I'd like to put point out the webinar survey link that was just dropped in the chat, and we would also like to thank Jenny Feretti, Aliya Reich and Lizzi Albert for helping us today, helping the grants team make this happen. So we really appreciate you guys' assistance. Sharon, do you want to take the first question?

**Sharon Burney:** Sure, we'll try to get through as many of these questions as possible. Like we already stated, whatever we don't get through today, or if your question may need a little more insight, we will be sure to add them and get them on the website as soon as possible.

So the first question is, "Will this grant be available again next year?" So our funding for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation only extends through this cycle currently. We don't have any more information right now to share about future cycles of this program, but we do recommend that you sign up for our CLIR newsletter to stay informed on upcoming funding opportunities.

**Alyson Pope:** So I'm going to take "does the program support the recording of new materials, as in recording new oral histories with LGBTQ plus elders?" This particular program is limited to digitization of materials that were not born digital. So it's not applicable for the creation of new digital materials or reformatting of already existing digital materials. So the answer for that would be this program is not applicable for that.

**Sharon Burney:** I'll take well, there's a question. That was submitted that we probably would need more information before we can answer. So that person that did that could add some more context of the question? And that is what is the burden of administration. If you can be more specific about your question, we'll get back to that one.

The next question I want to take is, "Is it a reimbursement type of grant? Or do funds come up front for expenses?" This is not a reimbursement grant. If awarded funding, all funds will be paid directly to the organization at the beginning of that grant period. If the project is a collaborative project, however, the lead organization will receive the funding.

**Alyson Pope:** I'm going to take "My organization is about to launch a digitization project that has already received partial funding from another source. Can we still apply for CLIR funding to supplement the existing funding and support the parts of the project that would occur during the CLIR grant period?" The answer to that would be yes. As long as the activities that you're seeking funding for fall within the scope of the program. So as long as the bulk of the costs would be going



towards digitization, you can have this as a supplemental piece of funding.

**Sharon Burney:** Next question, I'm going to take, "What are the reporting requirements?" So if awarded funding, the reported reporting requirements will include both interim, and then a final reporting at the conclusion of your grant period. The amount of reports that you will do would be dependent upon the length of your project. Typically, we ask for an interim report every year. So if you do a 3-year project, then you would do 3 reports; 2 interim reports and then 1 final report at the conclusion of your project, which is usually due 3 months after the end of your project end date.

Usually we always ask for your budget detail so that you can show us the expenses that you've paid for along the way, and some narratives to explain what you've done for the past year. So if you did a 1-year project then, or you did a 2-year project, or you did a 3-year that interim would happen every 12 months, and then the final 3 months after the project end date

**Alyson Pope:** "From what you've said, I understand that digitization of motion picture film magnetic media, like audio cassettes and VHS tapes and photographs are able to be funded. But just wondering about optical media like CDs and DVDs. Thank you."

At this current time, we generally consider CDs and DVDs to be born-digital objects. I will say, however, that we do get funded projects where that may be a very small portion of an already existing collection, because it makes the collection kind of a coherent object, and that nuance and the decisions related to that are made by the independent review panel. But if the bulk of the materials were to be CDs or DVDs rather than just like a small portion of them, I would not anticipate it being as competitive in front of the review panel

**Sharon Burney:** "Can the collection be held outside Canada and the US?" Okay, so currently, this program is only open to nonprofit, academic, independent, and community based organizations in the US and Canada that collect, preserve, and share rare unique materials with the general public. In addition, all nominated materials must be owned and held by an eligible, nonprofit, academic, independent, or community-based organization within the United States and Canada. So if you're talking about the actual materials, that is no, it cannot be held outside.

**Alyson Pope:** "Can this funding support a project that is already underway, but will take several more years to accomplish?" I feel like this is related to the previous question about, can this be used to fund just a portion of a project. Yes, we do get phased projects and it's fine as long as it meets the scope of the program and has defined deliverables.

**Sharon Burney:** I think that also answers the question, can you collaborate with institutions outside of North America. The same eligibility is applicable to collaborating organizations named on your project, to. They must be within United States and Canada.

**Alyson Pope:** Yeah, I also see a question related to that in the chat. If you guys can remember to put your questions in the Q&A so we don't miss them. But there are specific questions. One, will Africa be considered for these grants. How far along is the Hidden Collections Africa initiative?" That's a program that we're in the process of designing and in communication with funders about, but it's not one that we have currently launched. So we are at this time limited to the United States and Canada with the DHC program.

**Sharon Burney:** There's another, "What's considered independent. More specifically, are for-profit social enterprises eligible?"

So the program is only open for nonprofit organizations within the US and Canada. Independent, I think when we speak about that in that context we're talking about, are is cultural heritage and preservation the specific center focus of your organization. I hope that answers the question. For some reason Siri is talking sorry.

**Alyson Pope:** "My organization has different chapters-" Oh, it moved on me! Let me find it again. "My organization has different chapters through the US. Does the grant only cover a state or region? Or can this be a nationwide digitization effort for all the chapters in different states? Yes, as long as the organization is based in the United States or Canada, and the materials are held in the United States or Canada by that organization. There's no limitation, geographically.

**Sharon Burney:** "Are these matching or non-matching funds?" We have no mandatory cost share or matching for this. Define any in your budget narrative in detail. You'll define and explain your costs as clearly as possible. This is a highly competitive grant. And you want to be able to tell your story and explain your expenditures in a cost-effective way. That's compelling to the review panel.

**Alyson Pope:** Are fiscally-sponsored projects able to apply. Yes, if your fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit organization in the United States or Canada, you are able to apply under them as an umbrella.

**Sharon Burney:** "The application permits very specific project lengths 12,24, or 36 months. What if your project is expected to be, say, 18 months?"

You want to apply with the 12,24, 36 months for the application that is. It's purposeful, for a reason, administratively, for us to administer, you know, to help organize your grant. Some projects do finish early. And if you do finish early, we have something in place where you can just send us an email and say, hey, we finished early. Can you move us to the final reporting stage? And we're always happy to help you do that in advance.

But that's something that comes along the way. So no, put your project down for the 12, 24, 36 months. If you, if funded and you do finish early we can accommodate it.

**Alyson Pope:** "For the initial application, are any secondary documents required, such as letters of support?" No, the initial application now does not have any uploads. So there's not any letters or additional documentation required unless you're invited to the final application phase.

**Sharon Burney:** I'm going to start. This one is, "Is digitization of motion picture film included?" So anything born digital is not, does not qualify for this program, but I guess it would depend on the format that it is in. Another key aspect is when you apply for this is that you hit the core values of the, this program. As I said, it depends on those. So now we start to talk about what we're including or thinking of as rare. And does it have broad appeal. I'm hopeful that your digitization project is more than just digitizing a motion picture, and that it is not born-digital. If that's the case, it wouldn't be competitive in the eyes of the review panel.

And it also depends on if it's a rare form of a motion picture. Alyson, you want to add anything to that cause that sounds like that could possibly be a better fit for the Recordings at Risk program.

**Alyson Pope:** Yeah, you're welcome to email the program for more details. I think we would have to know more about the motion pictures themselves, if they're like mainstream commercial motion pictures. What is the, what kind of IP rights do you have to them? But like, can you digitize film? Yes. So we would need to know more about the format and the particularities of the recordings.

"Is it recommended? Required, that the lead applicant's institution own, hold the collection? Or could the primary applicant be from another institution with the holding/owning institution a collaborating applicant?"

In most instances, all of the collaborating applicants are holding some portion of the collections. But there are a couple of cases where the lead institution is operating like an online portal, say, like a state repository that has an online portal, and these other collaborating organizations are going to host their materials there long term. So if you're not contributing materials to be digitized, then the secondary thing that we reviewers would look at is how you are contributing to the project overall, and one way that stands out is offering a long-term access model.

So it's not required. But it is typical that the lead applicant holds some form of the collections that they're attempting to digitize.

**Sharon Burney:** "Do we include salaries and benefits as well as contributions in-kind?" Yes, you can provide salaries, and fringe benefits into the project. Also, as far as in-kind. That's up to you. You don't have to put the in-kind. But you, if it helps to tell the story of your budget narrative and your project in a more compelling way and for clarification, yes, you can include it. It's not mandatory.

**Alyson Pope:** "How many initial applications are usually accepted to move forward to the final application phase?"

The last iteration, it was approximately 50 percent, so about half of the applicants were invited to move forward to the final phase. And I saw a question somewhere else...I can't see it right now. But we're typically able to grant 15 to 20 awards per cycle.

**Sharon Burney:** "Is in-house digitization allowed?" Yes, it is.

**Alyson Pope:** That was a good. You picked a good one there, Sharon.

"Can you quickly reiterate who counts as a marginalized group? We have a lot of works by female artists. Do women count?" Yes. I would say that I cannot necessarily quickly recount who counts as a marginalized group. We have more specific language in the application guidelines on the website. But you know, marginalized communities, colonized communities, incarcerated peoples, disabled people, women. So yes, women can count. I'm going to answer that question specifically. But no, we do not feel like we are exhaustively naming every possibility of like marginalized community that would be applicable for this program. So if you feel that you are dealing with a population that would be a good fit for the scope, but we have not specifically named them, we welcome you to make the argument in your application to the review panel for why they are applicable, because we are not claiming in any way to have made an exhaustive list.

**Sharon Burney:** "Maybe I missed it, but what is the funding period?" The projects will have to start by January 1st, 2025, and be completed by December 31st, 2027. And I'll do another one.

Oh, "Can you describe some funded projects that are good examples of authentic partnership, but are not formal collaborative projects. I think on our manage, maybe apply for an award page, we have a funded projects section of that which will give you some great examples of that. And I believe, off the top of our head, AUC is one of the good collaborative type of partnership projects, but all of them are great. The ones that were funded in the first cohort were amazing projects. And I invite you to look at our funded project page to find that information.

**Alyson Pope:** I'm going to drop the link to the Funded Projects page again really quick. Thank you. I'll take "If something was made into microfilm a long time ago, does that count as being digitized?" No, you can definitely digitize microfilm.

**Sharon Burney:** I think we've done this before, "Does CLIR only fund digitization projects in the US? Or does it fund projects outside of the US?" Us and Canada are eligible for this, once again, US and Canada, and that also includes any US Territory. So we fund in like Puerto Rico. Alaska, Hawaii, all of that, but only US nonprofits and Canada for this program.

I'll take another one behind it. "Is it possible to split funds among partners? Our institution will be in charge of the digitization, the partner will provide the content."

The funding, as I stated before, if you do a collaborative project, the funding will go to the lead applicant, and it will be up to that lead applicant to distribute the funds as they see fit. But we only pay one project lead for the project.

**Alyson Pope:** "Forgive me if you mentioned this already, but is the digitization company chosen by the grant recipient? Or is there a list of approved required vendors, or does CLIR perform the digitization itself?"

So CLIR does not perform the digitization. We are just the funder. We do not require you to use a vendor in this program unlike our Recordings at Risk program, which does require an outside vendor for your digitization, and we do not provide digitization. We do have some links on the website to outside sources that recommend vendors. We do not personally recommend vendors because we don't want to kind of have that overlap as a funding agency. So you pick your own vendor or vendors. You would be asked if you make it to the final application phase, if you are using a vendor, you will be asked to submit the quotes from that vendor so that the review panel can analyze what you're paying for the services, but we do not dictate that you use specific vendors.

**Sharon Burney:** "Are proposals sought from larger organizations, or is there an expectation that smaller community archives would be feasible as well?"

We, this new iteration of the program was focused on trying to empower unheard voices, and we also took a lot of care into creating this 2-step process and the support and video instructions. We'll have experts come in to help you with different phases of the projects in a continued webinar series prior to the final proposal being submitted.

The purpose of this is to try to level the playing field, to have more smaller and community-centered organizations to apply for this program. So our focus is not just large organizations, our focus and hope is that smaller organizations, communities, historical preservation organizations not only apply but are awarded to.

**Alyson Pope:** "Thank you for speaking about how many applications are invited to the second round. Of the roughly 50% moved on to the second round, what percentage do you expect to be funded, ie. as an invitation to the second round a pretty good indication that the application is likely to be funded? Or is the second round as competitive as the first, also is feedback provided on applications?"

I don't have direct statistics with me for these questions. My recollection of the numbers overall from our last cycle, which was a high application cycle, was that we had about 50% rate go to the final application. And I think our funding rate out of that was a little under a third. So both cycles, both of the application cycles are competitive. We do, however, provide some support to those invited to the final

application cycle. So we do have a series of specific webinars that you will be invited to participate in if you're invited to the final application cycle that will give you more direct assistance with building out your application, and in terms of is feedback provided on applications, yes, feedback is provided from both cycles, the initial application phase and the final application phase. The review panel provides notes on every application that they read, and those comment notes are passed on to every applicant whether they are moved forward or not, so that they can use them to enhance their grant-writing capabilities moving forward.

**Sharon Burney:** "Are collections about religious minority groups eligible?" Yes, they are.

**Alyson Pope:** "Are non-collaboration projects less likely to get funded?" No, we encourage authentic partnerships and collaborations. But there are plenty of non-collaborative projects funded every year. We don't specifically weigh that in how the program, how the proposals are assessed.

**Sharon Burney:** Indirect costs are not allowed in the budget that's down here. Towards the end. I'll look for another one.

Some of these, I think, are somewhat repetitive, so I'm kind of glancing over those.

The question on can funding be used to fund the digitization of physical spaces as long as those spaces are owned and held in the United States. Can we get some more clarification on that question, please.

**Alyson Pope:** I will quickly pick "Are collections about religious minority groups eligible?" I would say. So. You will have to make that argument according to the core values in the proposal for the review panel. But I think we've had similar funded projects.

**Sharon Burney:** For projects that pass the initial application, what is the deadline for the final application?" The final application is invited. Final applications will be due May 8th, 2024, and we haven't picked a date yet for notifying the grant recipients. But the projects will have to start on January 1st of 2025.

And "Can you provide some examples of how projects define different communities they want to engage for their projects?" Telling the story of your subject matter is very important. As far as engaging the different communities. For example, if you look on our funded project space, there was a really great project last year, Prison Pandemic: Digitizing Incarcerated People's Experiences During Covid from the University of California, Irvine. They did a really great 2-year project that partnered with libraries to digitize the collections. And they told the story of incarcerated people's stories during Covid, and the community members were lawyers, journalists, students, and scholars. Awareness of the inequities experienced by these. I think that's a really great example of projects that define Unheard Voices in our community on several levels. Once again, on our Funded Projects page.

**Alyson Pope:** "Can you speak a little bit about the necessary scale of the digitization efforts. How important is the size of the collection to be digitized in the application evaluation. I think this kind of ties in also to the question about small organizations. So this grant caps at \$300,000, but it also has a \$50,000 floor. So the question of the size of the collection to be digitized is, do you have enough materials to justify service costs and digitization costs of a minimum of \$50,000. That doesn't mean you have to have a big enough collection to compete for \$300,000. Not everyone needs that, to like, come in looking for the max.

So it's less about how important is the size of the collection to be digitized. But like does your budget make sense for the size of the collection you're trying to digitize within the limits of this program. So if you have a smaller collection, but doing the work to make it accessible, digitize it, get it online, perhaps create metadata for it, can justifiably cost \$50,000, then you would be within the scope of the program.

**Sharon Burney:** "Does this grant require contracting with external digitization services? Or does it allow for in-house digitization work? Likewise, does it allow for temporary part time workers?"

Yes, you can. If it makes more sense to your project for you to contract external digitization services, you can add that vendor to your budget. Also, you can do in-house digitization. Unlike our Recordings at Risk program. Does it allow for part-time workers? Yes, it does allow for that, you would put that in the salary line along with any fringe benefits.

Once again, when you're creating you're telling your story of your project and your financial story. Keep in mind that the reviewers are going to look and make sure that your project plan, your digitization plan, and your budget makes sense, and that you're also providing competitive salaries for where you live and substantiating why you need to either select a digitization vendor outside one, or if it makes more sense for you to do it internally. There are very clear explanations in our application guidelines about allowable and disallowed costs. If you have any questions. More specifically, you can always email us at [hidden\\_collections@clir.org](mailto:hidden_collections@clir.org)

**Alyson Pope:** "Are we able to apply for funding inter-institutionally, our organization partnered with U of Chicago, South Side Home Movies Project and UIC Special Collections to preserve the ephemera of the Filipino American Historical Society of Chicago. Some of these materials include analog films, photographs, documents, and newsletters from over the past century?" It is possible to apply these university affiliations under one umbrella from our perspective as long as they're both under the same fiscal entity, and they both meet the qualifications for eligibility. We wouldn't necessarily even be aware that there's an inter-institutional partnership happening unless you're going to describe it in the context of the proposal. But it would really be up to the institution to manage kind of the grant administration of that as like dual department budgets,

or something of that nature. That is something that would fall to the University of Chicago to manage.

**Sharon Burney:** "What do the funds cover? Do you cover staff time?" I think we've answered this a few times. If you look in the application handbook under Appendix A, you'll see the Budget information area and in that area it will also include allowed and disallowed costs. I do recommend you reviewing that very clearly, and you'll be able to see what funds cover. Vendors. Staff time. You can also cover office supplies up to \$10,000, etc.

**Alyson Pope:** "My entire collection is unprocessed, but rare, and as the only librarian can the collaborator be a representative from Ithaka? They would help write the grant and provide any support I need, since I am a staff of one. Would that be acceptable?"

The answer to that comes down to you as a sole librarian like, what is the organizational affiliation that you're working under? If you yourself are not some form of eligible nonprofit, or working for some form of an eligible nonprofit, you would not be able to apply as a collaborator with Ithaka. Ithaka, as an education nonprofit would be eligible to apply. They could look to, perhaps, using you as a contractor on the project. If that makes sense to the scope of the arrangement you're talking about. I can't really speak to that without more details, but unless you are an eligible entity, you cannot apply as the lead applicant or as a collaborator, all applying organizational entities have to meet the eligibility criteria.

Oh, I also, I will quickly answer "Please clarify what independent means?" Independent broadly means that we have these categorizations that we look at like academic or public, independent doesn't fit neatly within either of those, but it is a qualified nonprofit, like a lot of historical societies operate as independent in our definition, but they still need to be nonprofit entities.

**Sharon Burney:** "Can you have a Recordings at Risk and the Digitized Hidden Collections grant at the same time?"

Yes, you can, but you can only have one PI. Well, you cannot be a named PI on 2 projects simultaneously.

**Alyson Pope:** And you can apply if your project will end-

**Sharon Burney:** Yeah, yeah, if your project will end, your current project will end before the start date.

Let's look for another one. Okay, let's see, I think we lost Alyson.

"My organization has 3 existing digital collection staff. Could we use grant funds to cover all or part of their salaries relative to the percentage of time they spent on the CLIR funded project?" As long as you substantiate that the time that they're spending is specifically for the funded, proposed project, and not as a part of their everyday normal



duties in your organization. Then yes, you can. You can add those salaries in your budget.

Once again, whenever you're applying and filling out your application please understand that this is a highly competitive grant program, and you want yours to stand out. Make sure you tell the story and explain it to reviewers in a way that is fiscally sound and makes sense.

**Alyson Pope:** Sorry y'all I got booted. Sharon were you able to answer the question about the public portal?

**Sharon Burney:** I didn't.

**Alyson Pope:** I'll take that one. "Will the creation of a public portal to access digitized materials count as a digitization expense? These costs would include web hosting fees, so the digitized materials are freely available." If you look in the allowable and disallowed cost section of the application guidelines it can give you more specific answers, but the funding is not limited strictly to digitization. That's meant to be like the core element of the project and the bulk of what the funding goes towards. But you're allowed to do transcription, cataloging, metadata, outreach. What we don't pay for is ongoing storage costs. So if you had to buy ongoing storage infrastructure to build that portal that would not be something that could be done within the confines of the grant. So yes, but it would depend on how you're funding on the breakdown of what you're building for that portal. The same goes for "Could grant funds be used for pre-digitization conservation?" Like to mitigate documents to mitigate mold or stabilize documents before they can be handled for scanning.

Yes, it's not strictly limited to digitization. That should just be the bulk of the spending. But these other aspects of the work that need to happen to make the materials digital and accessible can be a component of the funding.

It looks like we also got some physical spaces additional info. What about the preservation of physical spaces like a cemetery and its records. Tombstones, burial records, funeral programs, etc. Yes, you could apply materials like that, their physical materials and that would be an applicable format. It's not necessarily something that we would be casually used to seeing a ton of proposals of that nature. But for instance, we currently have a grant right now to the Fashion Institute of Technology, and they are digitizing costumes. So there are definitely instances in which we do digitization of 3D objects.

**Sharon Burney:** "Do we have to provide an audited financial statement?" We don't usually ask for audited financial statements. You will have to submit in your reports a budget detail template that we will provide the template for you and a financial narrative in that we do ask you to provide in your reporting aspect of it, if funded. A list. The Budget detail explained. To show exactly what you spent your money on, how much is remaining. How you stuck to the template that you submitted in your original application. Those type of things.

Once again explaining a, providing a sound budget, narrative and template will make your application more competitive for reviewers, and I recommend that it makes sense in conjunction with your project and your digitization plan.

**Alyson Pope:** "We are trying to identify hidden diverse communities in our archives, which reflects a predominantly white organization. Is this funding opportunity appropriate for this need?" It could be, it could not be, it will really depend on how you manage to make the argument and how you package it in your proposal. The review panel is pretty good at evaluating the core values. They're going to have questions about the authenticity of the relationship and what kind of outreach to the community may be going on, and the coherency of the collections. Does it feel like they actually belong together? Or are they just grouped together specifically, to fit the scope of the program?

**Sharon Burney:** There's a question. Please remind me, I think they're asking, can you submit as individuals?

The program's open to non-profit organizations in the US and Canada. The materials must also be housed in the US and Canada. So I think if you're just doing a personal collection, I don't believe that that is eligible unless you are a nonprofit. And you're an organization focused on cultural heritage and preservation in some type of way. And then, maybe yes. You could give us more information specifically on what you're trying to do and email us at [hidden\\_collection@clir.org](mailto:hidden_collection@clir.org), we may be able to give you a more in-depth answer.

**Alyson Pope:** "Can a portion of this funding go to support accessibility and interpretation of the newly digitized collections?" Yes, as long as the digitization is the core of the project. Yeah, there can be funding for transcription, translation, captioning, etc. It just can't be sort of the bulk of the funding requested. The core of the project needs to be the digitization. But it is important that the materials are made accessible in an ethical fashion. So yes, we do have funds to support the other components that are related.

**Sharon Burney:** I see one that says, "Is it possible to digitize a collection that is still owned and cared for by the tradition bearers and descendants." That's a really good question.

Because of the way this program is set up, we also understand that sometimes it may be difficult to determine the rights before submitting to the program. But I want you to have a good understanding of what some of the issues might be, and be able to be clearly articulated in your approach to how they will be addressed and create access to the grant for the deliverables.

Reviewers usually want to see evidence that you have a plan to navigate any potential rights issues as they come up. Having a plan in place to share with reviewers is important. And you know, between the if you make it to the final, you have time to support and expand on that plan, and the final application.

You will also probably have opportunity to make some changes to the collections that you nominate. If they find out the rights are very, have a lot of challenges to them. I hope that answers that question. So that's it. So so that's a yes. As long as you have a plan in place and can substantiate that clearly in your application.

**Alyson Pope:** "This might have already been covered by the grants funds restricted at any capacity can it pay to cover internship support?" There can be salary lines in the grant funds but the grants are, the funds are restricted. If you look in the guidelines it lists the allowed and disallowed costs. The budget lines, you'll have to submit a budget that has detailed budget lines if you're invited to the final application. And some of those budget lines are limited. For instance, the supply line is limited to \$10,000. And if you want to make changes during the course of the project to funding lines you have to apply for a grant modification if they're a change of more than 5% within a given line. So yes, the funds are restricted.

I'm also going to quickly take, "Can a collection be related to under represented communities outside of the US And Canada? If the collection is held by an institution in the US or Canada, the answer there, I think, would be yes> We would want to see, probably the review panel would be interested in what kind of outreach or communication is happening between the holding entity and the community that's being described. But there is no prohibition that says the materials had to originate here if they are owned and held here.

**Sharon Burney:** "Is there a portal to view links to all of the funded and publicly available digitized materials from the funded projects in one place?" We're currently working on that right now but there is a funded projects page. You should be able to see all of the projects that have been funded, and then my suggestion would be to go to their institution's page. And you should be able to see information on those projects in the least to what they have digitized. Typically, most of them will have that there.

**Alyson Pope:** "Are there specific guidelines and requirements for the storage accessibility repository that eventually maintains the digital collections. For example, my collections are at a State University. Could a digitized collection from this grant funded project be stored through the Harvard HBCU Library Alliance project slash site?" Yes, what you're describing sounds like a reasonable way to make the materials accessible. We don't have set requirements because projects are different, depending on the organization doing them. But the review panel does have technical experts, and we do have basic standards that we want projects to meet, and we don't dictate what the form of the portal is. But we do largely want these materials to be publicly accessible once they are digitized. There are exceptions made for private information, culturally sensitive materials, etc. And we do look for long-term availability. And we have a program called IP Monitor, that goes back and looks to make sure that stuff is still online. But we don't specifically dictate to any project exactly how they need to put it online. We expect that to be elucidated in the proposal, and the review panel will comment on whether it's

appropriate and what you are describing in your instance sounds appropriate.

**Sharon Burney:** And I'm going to take this "Do programs originally aired on cable access TV count as unheard?"

The thematic focus things that program will fund projects that digitize materials that deepen public understanding of the histories of people of color in other communities or populations whose work, experience, and perspectives have been insufficiently recognized. So those collections do have to be reflective of those communities and contribute to an understanding of their histories.

If it, if the programming fits those categories, then I can say that this would count as on here. But it would be up to you to tell that to tell that story in your application in a way that reviewers would be able to understand and also make sure that you address the core values. The 5 core values of the new program, which means public knowledge, that it feels the creation of digitized special collections, archives as a public good. Broad representation, that the program that just supports projects that capture and share the untapped stories of people, communities and populations who help deepen public understanding of human history. And they're underrepresented that you also are creating authentic partnerships that you're creating sustainable infrastructures, and that it has community centered access on top of that, you know, we need to think about how are those materials right now? if they are born digital, then no. I hope that answers your question.

**Alyson Pope:** "Given that this is a Mellon funded program with all else being equal do US applicants tend to be preferred over Canadian?" So I will say that this is a Mellon funded program, but it's entirely independently administrated by us, and we do use an independent review panel on top of that. And there are Canadians on the review panel. But we have only opened this program, Digitizing Hidden Collections, this is the second cohort that's been open to Canadians. So I would say that there were less Canadians awarded because there were a lot less Canadians that applied the last time as a matter of proportion, I think because the United States audiences are used to this being a grant that they have access to, and the Canadians are just learning that they have access to it. But no, there is no, I don't think that there is kind of a bias, and if anything there could possibly be a, you know, a lean Canadian bias, because we have thus far had fewer Canadian applicants than United States applicants

**Sharon Burney:** think we went well over the one hour time limit. We're having fun with you guys today. We'll try to get all of the questions that were asked in the Q&A doc. And in the chat transferred over to the document will expand on some of these answers for you in a more cohesive way, and it will be posted on our website next week. And as always, if you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at [hidencollections@clir.org](mailto:hidencollections@clir.org).

And we will also be having on October 11th an additional Q&A-only webinar, where you can come with your questions specifically, just to

answer questions for an hour with you guys again, on October the 11th. You must pre-register for that webinar and Alyson just po posted that in the chat.

So thank you everyone. We hope to see a bunch of applications come in and see you at our next webinar.

**Alyson Pope:** Thank you all.