

MMDTC's Dakota Culture and Heritage revitalization project.

2022-2023 Cultural Heritage and Community Identity Grants - Winter 2021

Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community

Sharon Elizabeth Lennartson
1351 Sibley Memorial Hwy
Mendota, MN 55150

O: 6514524141

Sharon Elizabeth Lennartson

945 Redwood Drive
Apple Valley, MN 55124

mendotadakota@gmail.com
O: 9522399969

LOI Form

Project Overview

If applying in English is a barrier, please contact Laura Benson, assistant director of grants and administration, at laura@mnhum.org or 651-772-4244.

Project Name*

The Minnesota Humanities Center will use this title when referencing this grant, including reporting on the Legacy website.

MMDTC's Dakota Culture and Heritage revitalization project.

Applicant Type*

Are you applying as an organization or an individual?

Organization

Fiscal Sponsor*

Do you use a fiscal sponsor or fiscal agent?

No

Amount Requested*

\$19,700.00

Project Start Date*

This date is an estimate only. The actual project start date will be when a grant agreement is fully signed.

04/10/2022

Project End Date*

This date may be no later than September 30, 2023.

04/10/2023

Project Overview*

Please provide a one paragraph overview of this project. This paragraph will be used for reporting purposes on the Minnesota Humanities Center's website, the Legacy reporting website, and elsewhere when needed.

SparkMMDTC's "Spark of Creativity" Dakota Humanities Revitalization Project.

With this project, we aim to host 5 new distinct workshops focusing on traditional Dakota arts and culture.

Planned workshops:

3 in-person and online courses teaching the critically endangered "Dakota Language & Writing", "Regalia

making & Dakota Crafts", and "Dakota Culture & History" classes.

2 workshops where the participants will work together to make traditional Dakota Tepees and Birchbark canoes.

Project Narrative

Project Details/Activities*

Please explain the project and specific activities that will be completed with this funding. Include not just what you will do, but how you will do it.

Also consider including details about implementing these activities – What is the plan/process to do this work? Who will do what? Where will they take place? Why have you chosen these activities specifically?

The objective of this project is to hold 5 workshops dedicated to various Dakota arts and culture. The workshops will be open to the public free of charge. Our goal is to bridge the creativity between people of all artistic proficiencies in a way that will help all parties find new creative avenues as well as revitalize and preserve Dakota arts & culture.

The first workshop will be "Dakota Language & Writing" class. The Dakota language is a critically endangered language with less than 300 fluent speakers in the world today. In this class, students will learn beginner and intermediate Dakota language skills from a fluent Dakota speaker. This class will also feature elementary Dakota writing curriculum such as the Dakota alphabet and basic writing standards. Students will also incorporate the basic Dakota language lessons into entry level Dakota drum songs used during Wacipis (Pow-Wows), and Inipis (Sweat Lodge).

The second workshop will be "Regalia making & Dakota Crafts" class. Students will be building and decorating their own regalia over the course of the classes with instruction from a Dakota elder teacher. A regalia is a traditional Dakota clothing, made from various decorative pieces. The instructor will also be teaching the class about various Dakota crafts and decorative art pieces such as medicine bottles, beaded satchels, pipe bags, and bracelets.

The third workshop will be "Dakota Culture & History" class. During the class, Dakota culture will be taught informally with an emphasis on student proposed topics instead of a strict curriculum. The course will cover a broad range of Dakota culture such as our traditional ceremonies of Wacipis, Inipis, and burial ceremonies to detailing the everyday living traditions such as what it was like to live as a Dakota hundreds of years ago. The history aspect of this class will cover our ancient origins in the Minnesota area as far back as known history, before contact with western explorers.

These 3 workshops will be held in a hybrid fashion, both in person and online as current events will allow. All three classes will be on a tri-weekly rotation, with a class every Wednesday night in our office in Mendota. If needed, we are able to use the Dupuis House, a Minnesota Historical site, which is across the street. The classes will run for 1 year with ongoing instruction and some repeating elements. If someone cannot attend a class, the instructor will work with them to get them caught up. Classes will begin with beginner level lessons, with the curriculum slowly becoming intermediate. We want each class to be accessible and welcoming to people of all skill levels and accessibility. Our aim is to provide the basic materials such as leather material, sinew, ribbons, etc for the regalia class to the students. The students will provide their own decorative materials to customize their regalia. This program will be open to the public, and 100% free of charge.

Aside from these 3 classroom focused workshops, we also plan to hold 2 outdoor workshops focused on crafting Traditional Dakota works:

Our proposed Tepee class will involve a group of 30-40 participants and a traditional Dakota instructor. A "Tepee" is a traditional Dakota housing structure. Its foundation is 10-12, 20ft wood polls that are rooted in the ground, and tilted together to form a pyramid. The polls are fastened on top to provide structural support, and are then covered with a large canvas. The instructor will detail the practical mechanics of Tepee building as well provide a full demonstration of the fundamentals. The group will then decorate and dress the canvas both using their own creative process as well as using traditional Dakota methods to produce an integument that will cover the Tepee. This workshop will proceed slowly, with monthly classes running from spring to fall 2022. We expect the classes to produce 1-2 large Tepees that will be displayed at our future Wacipi and arts programming when possible.

Our second workshop will focus on traditional Birchbark canoe building and designing. The Birchbark canoe was the principal means of water transportation for Indigenous peoples along the Mississippi, Minnesota, and St. Croix rivers. Though most canoes are no longer constructed of Birchbark, its enduring historical legacy and its modern popularity as a pleasure craft have made it a Dakota cultural icon. The Birchbark canoes were the main method of long distance travel, but were also a creative outlet. The canoes would include various ornate carvings, designs, and symbols representing multiple Dakota motifs. The workshop will be very similar in scope to the Tepee workshop. Our instructor and participants will together select suitable materials, plan out the build, design, decorate, finish, and eventually use the canoe together. Once complete, we plan to auction the canoe, and donate 100% of the profits to local shelters the area focused on fighting Native America homelessness and hunger.

Alignment with State Funding Requirements*

Describe how this project is new work or new additions to existing work.

In the metro area, there are less than 5 institutions offering Dakota language classes. Between 1994-2005, we held Dakota and Language classes, but we had to cancel them due to lack of funding. While the internet is a valuable source of information, there is no substitute for an in-person classroom environment as well as the sense of accomplishment earned when you can work with fellow peers to build something with your hands. Our ancestors lived as a close community, built and maintained their environment together, and worked together. We feel that continuing these traditions help keep our arts and culture alive. By initializing this project, we plan to offer the most comprehensive and inclusive resource to learn and participate in the Dakota experience available.

Alignment with Community - question 1*

Describe which community or communities your project benefits.

The legislative language says that this grant is intended for the following communities:

Asian and Pacific Island communities, the Somali diaspora and other African immigrant communities, Indigenous communities with a focus on the 11 Tribes in Minnesota, the African American community, the Latinx community, and other underrepresented cultural groups, including communities of Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

GreatThe Dakota people are part of the "Great Sioux Nation" of indigenous Native Americans in the Minnesota, North, and South Dakota regions. Native American groups historically do not limit themselves strictly to "nations", and view each other as members of the same race as a whole. Therefore, there has always been a close sense of brotherhood between the Sioux Nations and other Native groups such as Ojibwe, Chippewa, Fox and others. It is estimated that there over 60,000 Native Americans living in Minnesota, all of which share a spirit of ancestry and cooperation. Many aspects of culture have been shared between the different tribes such as dances, arts, ceremonies, folk tales, and more.

MMDTC is based in Mendota, MN, situated near pike island at the intersection of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. As we are based in the metro are, most of our programs serve people in the surrounding areas. Our programs are focused on indigenous focused projects, yet we always encourage all races and genders to our activities as this is how we hope to raise awareness and participation. We have been blessed to

have participants to our programs travel from many countries around the world such as Japan, Germany, and Brazil.

Alignment with Community - question 2*

What is the community-identified need or opportunity that your project is responding to? How does your project meet that need or opportunity?

In the United States today, there are no ethnic groups more oppressed than it's own indigenous people. Throughout the country, Native American culture has been systemically and institutionally oppressed and in many cases eradicated. In the late 1800's Minnesota Governor Alexander Ramsey put a legal bounty on the Dakota people in what is now the metro area. He placed a \$200 bounty on the murder of our ancestors in their own indigenous land. This is only one example of the harshly brutal past that Native people endure. This trauma to our heritage has done catastrophic damage to all aspects of our culture and traditions. Our culture, language, traditions, and oral history are all critically endangered. We have no church, schools, or any institutional ways for our very existence to heal. It is because of this that our efforts to keep our culture alive are so vital. Through our various programs, we have been able to resuscitate our culture in many impactful ways.

Alignment with Community - question 3*

How involved was, is, or will the community or communities you identified above be in your project? Describe what their involvement looks like.

Over our 25 years of operation, we have made a great number of priceless connections with many people who have sought us out, seeking to learn more about Dakota humanities. We have developed a strong network of relationships that we can rely on in order to promote our projects. A large aspect of Dakota culture is based around respect and reverence for our elders and their oral history. As such, a key segment of our community is connecting our elders with youth, as it is the most vital and key way to directly pass down our heritage and traditions. Our arts programming regularly involves a large percentage of indigenous people, military veterans, people with disabilities, individuals, and families. It is important to note that while our programs based on Dakota humanities, we are not focused solely on Dakota participation. We welcome and encourage all races, genders, and ages to participate in our programs. We believe that increasing diversity in our engagement is a key factor in increasing our ability to accomplish our mission. We have had participants in our arts programs from people from over 25 different countries. Through our current planning phase, there has been a very strong interest for our proposed workshops.

Alignment with Community - question 4*

Please describe how you are part of the community or communities you identified above.

If you are applying as an individual, include your cultural heritage, racial, and/or ethnic identity.

If you are applying as an organization, include the cultural heritage, racial, and/or ethnic makeup of your leadership, staff, and board.

ToWe are the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community (MMDTC), and our mission is: "To preserve, protect, and promote the Dakota culture for future generations." We are a community of Dakota indigenous Native American people from the Mendota, Minnesota area and are direct Descendants of Chief Cetanwakanmani (Little Crow). In the late 1800's, our ancestors and culture were nearly exterminated due to the attempted genocide of our people. We are the descendants of the survivors, and formed an official community in 1994. Since then, we have dedicated ourselves to reviving and preserving our Dakota heritage and culture. Our main arts based event is our annual Wacipi (Pow-Wow) where we express and share our arts, culture, heritage, and history the public.

Our Tribal Council: (All Indigenous)

Sharon Lennartson, Chairwoman, Lineal Member (LM)
 Greg Strandmark, Historian (LM)
 Joseph Lennartson, Treasurer (LM)
 Tommy Tomahawk, Tribal Relations
 Jason Delmont, Vice Chairman (LM)

Alignment with Grant Goals*

Describe how your project will achieve at least one of the legislative goals for this grant:

- Preserve and honor the cultural heritage of Minnesota;
- Provide education and student outreach on cultural diversity;
- Support the development of culturally diverse humanities programming by individuals and organizations;
or
- Empower communities in building identity and culture.

This project will achieve all of the legislative goals.

As the indigenous peoples of the Minnesota region, The Dakota cultural heritage is clearly very intrinsically linked to the overall heritage of the state of Minnesota. By preserving and honoring our culture and heritage, we will be helping to preserve the very origins of our state. Almost all parts of our culture are critically endangered. There are precious few resources to propagate Dakota culture. Through participation in our workshops, we will be providing a comprehensive education platform of the highest standard for the Dakota humanities in Minnesota's history. We have existed as a Dakota 501-C3 organization community for over 25 years. Throughout our history, we have been able to expand and create new programs and ways of furthering our mission. With this new project proposal, we plan to further enhance and expand our ability in administering Dakota humanities.

Proposed Measurable Outcomes

Proposed Measurable Outcomes*

If you accomplish your planned activities as proposed, what outcomes are you hoping to see, that can be measured/tracked? (*Note: this section will be used on the Legacy reporting website*).

MMDTC will be recording both our proposed and actual outcomes quantitatively based on number of participants, as well as participant engagement satisfaction. Based on past programs, participant feedback, and preliminary surveys that we have conducted, we project at least 500 participants over the course of project, with well over 10,000 additional indirect participants via our annual Wacipi going forward. We will be asking all participants to complete a survey upon attending our workshops in order to ascertain if / how we can do better at spreading awareness and preserving the Dakota culture. MMDTC is always striving to improve and strengthen our ability to achieve our mission. During our annual Wacipi, which sees thousands of participants every year, we will also be displaying the workshop's Tepees, and we will have a booth on location to provide information for future prospective attendees for future workshops and gauge reception. By coalescing our programs in ways such as this, we are able to strengthen and enrich our projects and increase participation and exposure.

Additional Legacy Reporting Elements

The Minnesota Humanities Center is required to report certain information to the Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. These questions are for that purpose only, and will not affect the evaluation of your application.

Subject*

Please check the subject(s) below that best describes your project. This information will be reported on the Legacy reporting website.

Arts
Arts Access
Cultural Heritage Preservation
Education/Outreach
Historic Preservation

Activity Type*

Please select the activity type that best describes your project. If two or more describe your project, choose the one that most closely aligns. This information will be reported on the Legacy reporting website.

Education/Outreach/Engagement

Budget

As you create your budget, please remember that expenses applied to the grant cannot occur until a grant agreement is fully signed.

The Minnesota Humanities Center highly recommends that your budget line items align with your accounting system to facilitate reporting and financial monitoring during the grant term.

Budget*

Please upload a project budget that lists income and expenses. MHC does not require a specific format for the budget; however, it should clearly indicate the budget categories and amounts, as well as a brief description of what is included in those amounts and how the amounts were determined. You may view and/or use MHC's budget template and example if you would like.

If your budget needs any explanation, please include a narrative below.

For any questions on allowable/unallowable expenses, please consult the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards 2 CFR Chapter 1, and Chapter II, Parts 200, 215, 220, 225 and 230.

Questions about this document can be directed to Laura Benson, Assistant Director of Grants and Administration, at laura@mnhum.org

MMDTC's Spark of Creativity Dakota Humanities Revitalization Project Budget.xlsx

Grant Payments

Grant Payments*

The Minnesota Humanities Center issues grant payments in a way that supports the successful completion of activities outlined in the approved grant proposal.

Reimbursement is the preferred method of payment for MHC grants. Grant payments may be made as advance payment of costs associated with a grant before the grantee has incurred the expense if the financial review and past grant performance support this method.

Please indicate which payment method you prefer, if awarded.

Advanced

Demographic Information - Organizations

The Minnesota Humanities Center believes in the power of humanities to connect people and communities, bridge differences, and positively shape our collective future.

Providing the requested demographic information is voluntary and your responses will not affect the decision making process for awarding this grant. Information will not be shared publicly about any individual person. Sharing your demographic information allows MHC to better understand who we are engaging with and funding, and who we are not, as we work to design, implement, and assess inclusive, equitable, and accessible funding opportunities.

Definitions: Use these when answering the questions below.

"Led by": 50% or more of the combined senior leadership and board of directors of an organization. For example, if a small organization has one executive director and five board members, three of those individuals represent 50%. If a large organization has five senior staff members on its leadership team and 15 board members, 10 individuals in that combined group represent 50%. How your organization chooses to define its senior leadership is up to the organization's discretion in good faith. We recognize that precise demographic data may not be readily available for all senior leaders and board members. Please use the best information you have available.

"Primarily serve": 50% or more of the clients and community members served by your organization's programs. We recognize that precise demographic data may not be readily available for clients and community members served. Please use the best information you have available.

Is your organization led by Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color?

Yes

Does your organization primarily serve Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color?

Yes

Is your organization led by women?

No

Does your organization primarily serve women?

Yes

Is your organization led by LGBTQ+ people?

No

Does your organization primarily serve LGBTQ+ people?

No

Is your organization led by disabled people/people with disabilities and/or neurodiverse people?

Yes

Does your organization primarily serve disabled people/people with disabilities and/or neurodiverse people?

No

What is your organization's annual budget?

\$54,000.00

Authorized Representative

Please include contact information below for your organization's authorized representative. This individual must have the authority to sign the grant agreement and any subsequent amendments and/or extensions. If you do not list a project manager in the next section, this individual will be listed on the Legacy reporting website as the project manager.

Authorized Representative's Full Name*

Sharon Elizabeth Lennartson

Authorized Representative's Title*

Chairwoman

Authorized Representative's Phone Number*

9522399969

Authorized Representative's Email Address*

mendotadakota@gmail.com

Project Manager

If this grant project has a project manager beyond the organization's authorized representative, please include contact information below for this individual. MHC staff will communicate directly with this individual about the grant and she/he/they will be listed on the Legacy reporting website as the project manager.

Project Manager's Full Name

Project Manager's Title

Project Manager's Phone Number

Project Manager's Email Address

Certifications

Intended Purpose*

I certify that all money from this grant will be spent only for arts, arts education, and arts access and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage.

I agree

Supplement not Substitute*

I certify that these grant funds will be used to supplement and not substitute traditional sources of funding.

I agree

Unallowable Expenses*

I certify that funds will not be spent on: activities unless they are directly related to and necessary for the project; indirect costs or other institutional overhead charges that are not directly related and proportional to, and necessary for, the activities outlined in the project proposal; fundraising; lobbyists and/or political contributions; bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds; parking or traffic violations; promotional giveaway items; or out of state transportation.

I agree

Electronic Signature*

Enter your full name, business title, and the date of the submission (e.g. Emi Sakura, Executive Director, December 1, 2020).

Sharon Lennartson

By entering your signature information above and click "I agree" below, you certify that the statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief.*

I agree

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- MMDTC's Spark of Creativity Dakota Humanities Revitalization Project Budget.xlsx

MMDTC's "Spark of Creativity" Dakota Humanities Revitalization Project Budget

Dakota Language & Writing Class	
Instructor, 17 Classes X \$100 Each	\$ 1,700.00
Regalia making & Dakota Crafts Class	
Instructor, 17 Classes X \$100 Each	\$ 1,700.00
Basic bulk leather, tools	\$ 4,000.00
Dakota Culture and History Class	
Instructor, 17 Classes X \$100 Each	\$ 1,700.00
Tepee Workshop	
Instructor, 17 Classes X \$100 Each	\$ 1,700.00
Poles	\$ 1,800.00
30x30 Canvas x 2	\$ 1,400.00
Misc materials and tools	\$ 1,000.00
Birchbark Canoe Workshop	
Instructor, 17 Classes X \$100 Each	\$ 1,700.00
Prepared Tree	\$ 1,800.00
Tools	\$ 1,200.00
Total	\$ 19,700.00