

2026 PRESERVATION GRANT GUIDELINES

Basics

- The GRAMMY Museum Grant Program awards grants to organizations and individuals to support the archiving and preservation of the recorded sound heritage of North America.
- Grant requests may span a time period of up to twenty-four months and cannot overlap with previously awarded projects. Preferred projects start dates are between 4/1/26 – 6/1/26, however, start dates outside of this time frame will be considered.
- **Letter of Inquiry Deadline: September 25, 2026.**
- Preservation grants have two funding categories:
- Organizations and/or departments located within an institution such as a library, museum or other organization in which archiving, preservation, cataloguing and other related experts are accessible to the project with an annual budget of more than \$1,000,000 must apply in the **Preservation Implementation** category.
- Organizations and individuals with an annual budget under \$1,000,000 may apply in either category. Please review the additional parameters for the Implementation vs. Assistance categories in this document.
- If after reviewing the guidelines and forms you have specific questions, please email grants@grammymuseum.org.

Preservation Implementation Overview

\$20,000 Maximum Award

- Preservation Implementation Grants are available to help individuals and large organizations enhance their ability to preserve their collections which embody the recorded sound heritage of North America.
 - Large organizations are defined as organizations with annual budgets of \$1,000,000 or more and/or are located within an institution that includes a library or museum or other division in which archiving, preservation, cataloguing and other related experts are accessible to the project.
 - The goal of the Preservation Implementation grant is to fund projects where the **project materials have been identified and are in possession of the applicant**, where **preliminary assessment and planning has occurred**, and where the applicant has addressed and/or is ready to implement the following:
 - Prioritization of materials (based on uniqueness, historical significance, and at-risk status)
 - Inventory and cataloging of the materials
 - Stabilized, climate-controlled storage of materials
 - Address ownership or rights issues
 - Identification of qualified staff and/or vendors
 - Planned preservation methodology
 - Identification of long-term storage
 - Broad dissemination plan
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Preservation Assistance Overview

\$5,000 Maximum Award

- Preservation Assistance Grants are available to help individuals and small to mid-sized organizations enhance their ability to preserve their collections which embody the recorded sound heritage of North America. Small to mid-sized organizations are defined as organizations with annual budgets of less than \$1,000,000 and limited or no organizational access to “in-house” experts.
- A department with a budget of less than \$1,000,000, located within an institution with a budget of more than \$1,000,000 such as a library, museum or other organization in which archiving, preservation, cataloguing and other related experts are accessible to the project, should apply under the Implementation category and incorporate planning into their request as needed.
- The goal of a Preservation Assistance grant is to fund the planning, assessment and preparation of recorded sound collections to be archived and preserved. Applicants must describe how they will draw on the knowledge and expertise of their staff and/or outside consultants whose preservation skills are related to the type of collection and nature of activities that are the focus of the project.

Which category do I apply in?

If you are technically eligible for a Preservation Assistance grant, but are unsure what category your project falls into, consider the following:

- Have the materials been identified?
- Have the materials been prioritized?
- Have the materials been inventoried?
- Has the collection been cataloged?
- Has the collection been stabilized?
- Are there ownership or rights issues and have they been addressed?
- Have you identified qualified staff and/or vendors?
- Have you planned your preservation methodology?
- Have you identified long-term storage?

If you answered "no" to a majority of the questions above, then you should consider applying for a "Preservation Assistance" grant rather than a "Preservation Implementation" grant.

The GRAMMY Museum Funds:

- Preservation of original, pre-existing media and source material
- Preservation projects which follow the recommended methodology.
- Projects of historical, artistic, cultural and/or national significance
- Archiving projects including the rescue, organization of and access to pre-existing media and materials
- Individual grantees & 501(c)3 organizations

The GRAMMY Museum Does Not Fund:

- Recording Academy Chapters, Trustees, Governors, Officers or Staff
- GRAMMY Museum Projects or Staff

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- 501(c)6 organizations
- Organizations which discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, disability or age
- Regular ongoing business activities of individual/corporate applicant
- Projects promoting advocacy issues
- A single organization or individual for more than three consecutive years
- Organizations or individuals NOT based in North America (U.S. or Canada)
- Projects of which fifty-one percent (51%) or more of the proposal pertains to Latin music
- Purchase of collections
- Recording projects, demo tapes or performance events
- Proposals for commercial purposes (such as CD reissue or textbook / A/V package)
- Purchase or repairs of musical instruments
- Maintenance or upgrading of computer systems
- Competitions or any expense associated with competitions
- Work toward academic degrees
- Professional development
- Music education or in-residence programs
- Documentaries
- Endowments and fundraising
- Buildings and facilities
- Marketing, publicity, design costs
- Projects where copyright status is unknown
- Purchase or repairs of equipment*

*An item is considered **equipment** by the GRAMMY Museum if it meets all of the following conditions:

- It has a normal useful life of at least four years
- It is more feasible to repair than replace if a part is lost or worn out
- It represents an investment which makes it feasible to maintain in inventory
- It does not lose its identity through incorporation into a different or more complex unit
- It retains its original shape and appearance with use
- It costs more than \$500

Examples of equipment we do NOT fund the purchase of: playback equipment for tape/disc, computers, printers, servers, recording equipment such as analog to digital converters, storage systems such as RAID arrays and shelving.

Examples of equipment that is considered “supplies” and eligible for funding: DVD-R/CD-R, tapes and cases, replacement tape heads/fuses and archival boxes.

Individual hard drives are allowable as a working medium but not as an archive medium.

Please note: Equipment guidelines are general and subject to some project-specific exceptions.

Equipment and supplies are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must be detailed in the budget sheet in the application phase.

LOI SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Submit one complete online Letter of Inquiry, which includes the following information:

- Contact and Project Overview
- Project budget amount
- Narrative (must not exceed 5,000 characters including spaces)
- Dissemination plan (must not exceed 1,000 characters including spaces)
- Brief biographies of key personnel involved in the project. Include title(s) and/or position(s). Please indicate whether each person is a full-time employee or a hired contractor (must not exceed 5,000 characters including spaces)

FORMATTING NOTES

- The character limit for project names is 100 characters. Please be aware of this in choosing a name for your project and be careful not to submit names that are cut-off.
- Formstack sometimes truncates sections of text when responses include “<”, “>”, “+”, and “=”. Please refrain from using these symbols, and spell out the words instead (ex. Equals, greater than, less than or plus.)

ACCESS AND DISSEMINATION

Collections that have broad public accessibility (i.e. available at no cost via internet and/or radio or television) will generally be given priority over projects that have limited public access (i.e. solely available on-site at no cost or by appointment). Funding requests for projects with no public access or leading only to commercial releases will rarely be considered, but will be evaluated for the collection’s historical significance and/or uniqueness.

The GRAMMY Museum is interested in forging deeper relationships with our grantees. If you think that the GRAMMY Museum, or our institutional resources, could be of service in disseminating your work, please feel free to reach out and discuss before submitting an LOI.

BUDGET NOTES

- Salary Compensation: Funding requests for salary compensation that covers full-time staff at the applicant organization should equal no more than fifty percent (50%) of the total funding requested from the GRAMMY Museum. Those funds must be used for project specific tasks related to the grant request and not to supplement staff salary. Any intent to provide salary compensation above the fifty percent (50%) must be disclosed and explained in the proposal budget. Consultants/archivists hired on for the project are not in the same category and may be considered for salary compensation.
- Questions to consider when determining which organization’s budget number to report on the Letter of Inquiry:
 - Which organization has the audited financial statement from which the organizational budget number would be pulled?
- Which organization is the fiscal agent (to whom would the grant check be written to?)
 - Since overhead and equipment costs should be included as hard costs or limited costs on your overall project budget, which organization covers the costs of your overhead, utilities, admin, etc.?
- If the organization is new and has not yet been audited, please write “0” in the Organizational Budget Expenses” box, mark “unaudited” in your narrative, and explain why.

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- If you are applying from Canada you are required to submit a W-8BEN tax form upon notification of a grant award. The grant cannot be awarded to an individual or organization without a W-8BEN.

ARCHIVAL NOTES

We require that you seek the advice of a sound engineer or technician knowledgeable in current archiving standards and technology (for a list of qualified archivists please click here: <http://www.arsc-audio.org/pdf/directory.pdf>). A sustainable plan for the long-term maintenance and playback of your collection should also be defined. If you have not yet consulted with or identified a qualified technician experienced in archiving standards, you may consider first applying for a grant in the Assistance category.

EVALUATION INFORMATION

LOIs are scored based on the following factors.

- National Impact
- Uniqueness
- Appropriateness of budget
- Ability to accomplish project
- Merit - this category represents one third of the total score and includes at-risk status, importance and/or uniqueness and dissemination plan.

Letters of Inquiry that are late, incomplete or are not within guidelines will not be reviewed.