

Hatza SHINE Grant: Exemplary Sample Answers

This document compiles high-scoring narrative answers from multiple organizations that were awarded SHINE funding last year (2022-2023).

Centrality of the Humanities to your Organization

Please describe how the humanities is central to your organization's mission and programming.

Baltimore is north of south and south of north both geographically and in terms of the conflicting social and economic mores that led to the eventual civil war. It was a hotbed of sedition, so much so that President Lincoln had the Union forces occupy the City and train their Federal Hill-located cannons directly on its financial district. It was, at the same time, home not only to Frederick Douglass before his escape to freedom, but also to an indefatigable community of abolitionists who deliberately located their homes and businesses in close proximity to slave pens and the Inner Harbor so they could intercept kidnappings and aid escapes. The harbor area has been called an "underground entrepot" for the Underground Railroad. It was a nexus for the international and later, the domestic slave trade and at the same time home to the largest population of free blacks of any Eastern seaport.

[organization name] is primarily concerned with the research, study, application, discussion and interpretation of this contradictory history to the human environment with particular attention to researching and interpreting and sharing the unknown stories and locations of the events, homes and businesses of Baltimore's abolitionists; the Underground Railroad, the history of the railroad as instrumental in building the economy of the Port; Baltimore's unique history in the Antebellum, Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow and the civil rights movement.

Beyond that, there is railroad history and the architectural history of the building which was entered in the National Register of Historic Places in 1992 and designated a Baltimore City Landmark in 2009. It was the first large city train station in the US to incorporate a huge train shed into a traditional station design. The size relied on engineer William Howe's 1840 patented and influential trussed arch system, and this was the first train station to employ it. Part of an original arch is on display in the museum today. All that remains today of the curved arch roof can be seen on the Italianate headhouse which once offered the traveling public waiting rooms, ticket booth, telegraph office and offices. Under this trussed arch system, an entire social history evolved, as trains were central to escape and capture of slaves, immigration, migration and settlement, and segregation under Jim Crow, with its own stories of early civil resistance.

Exemplary (9-10 points)

The humanities are central to the organization's mission and ALL of the organization's programming.

Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion in Organizational Culture

Please describe how your organization prioritizes Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion (DEAI) principles within your organization's culture.

When the [organization name] was founded, it was rooted in the Equity Office of the Maryland State Department of Education. Founders knew that disparities existed in so many aspects of life. They knew that when we all understand the vast role that Maryland women have played, we could then build on

the awareness of the gaps in equity and inclusion of diverse women. The issues were highlighted in education, law, workforce, marriage, family, financial inequity (such as pay equity) were brought to light to legislators, employers and political leadership. Even at that time in the 1980s, principles of race, gender, disability, multiculturalism, and gay rights were part of their mission statement as well. Then the terms were anti-discrimination with the goal of broader Human Rights for all. Over the past 40 years, the terms have changed to DEAI, but the equity intent was ahead of its time. Several staff and volunteers are retired from that office and bring those experiences and insights to the [organization name] still today. Many of our Board of Directors have been engaged in equity work since the 1970s and bring that institutional memory and passion for DEAI expectation and strategies.

The [organization name] applies a diversity and equity lens in its hiring and recruitment processes for board membership. Over the years, we have had diverse men and women serve on our Board of Directors. Over the past several years, we have also expanded our Board diversity in age, sexual orientation, race, religion, and ethnicity. Since our inception, our programs, exhibits have been established with inclusive multicultural standards and practices. As most organizations, we do keep that lens as part of our processes for staff, Board members and volunteers. We will continue to expand our diversity intentions.

Our rented historic building is not totally accessible. The owners are very aware of this situation and are working to improve the access points for any visitor. A benefit of our virtual programming is that many people across the state have greater access to our website resources and virtual programming. To date, we have not held a specific DEAI training for staff and board members, but we have hosted programs with those themes: "Critical Race Theory and Its Impact on Women," "The Purple Menace, LGBTQ women in the early ERA movement," and "Women's Oral Histories." to find more voices of color, economic diversity and other related topics. It is challenging for a small non-profit to provide adequate compensation for staff and interns. The benefit we offer to interns is research in an area of their interest and access to their college credits with our support for their work-based learning. If we have project grant funding, we are sometimes able to offer a moderate stipend or hourly wage. Currently, our contracted staff is paid a monthly stipend for part-time work to coordinate all aspect of the [organization name]. It is not adequate compensation for a new person coming on board nor are we able to provide any benefits to staff. Succession planning, sustainability and compensations are part of the Sept. 17th planning session agenda. Currently, with the national focus also on DEAI, we are seeing employers, legislators and organizations that had paid less attention to equity principles, become more aware of the continuing issues and need to address all current disparities. The [organization name] plays a role in educating the public, youth and communities to support the expansion of DEAI principles operationally in all aspects of life.

Exemplary (9-10 points)

The organization has implemented clear, identifiable, and impactful strategies to promote DEAI principles within the organization and the larger community. They have also identified new approaches to advancing DEAI principles in the future.

History of Organization's Programming

Please describe up to five of your organization's most successful programs of the last few years. In addition, please describe the collaborative practices, like partnerships, involved in these programs.

1. The restoration of [Area] High School to create the [Area] African American Cultural Heritage Center and Museum. Collaborating and supporting partners: MD Heritage Areas Authority, MD State General Assembly's Bond Bill Program, African American (AA) Heritage Preservation Program, Queen Anne's County (QAC) Municipal Government, QAC Community, KHS Alumni.
2. [Organization]'s annual Black History Month Program - Highlights local and national African Americans' contributions to local and American history and culture. Recognition of the achievements of local youth and seniors. During COVID, we produced for online viewing, our "Local African American Heroes" video series that helped with [Organization]'s Scholarship Fund.
3. [Organization]'s AA History Museum Project which chronicles the history and culture of AA in QAC. Highlighting the areas of: Origin (Slavery), Community (How and where lived), Military (Civil War-Present), How we worked, and Education (Pre and post integration)
4. Annual "Juneteenth" Celebration - a community festival where local African American artists will perform, and artists, crafters, and vendors will display and offer their wares. Lecturers will educate, and guests will experience the spirit of the excitement experienced by slaves on news of their freedom, and sample African American cuisine. This Juneteenth celebration is not only an African American milestone in our nation but an opportunity to educate and dialogue with all citizens and reflect on our shared history in Queen Anne's County. The experience is made possible by collaborating and partnering with QAC Arts Council, local vendors, community resources like; QAC Health Dept, QAC Library, QAC Recreation Dept, environmental groups, the QAC NAACP, political and voter groups. In 2021 we partnered with the QAC Historical Society to host Museum on Main Street's "Voices and Votes" exhibition which kicked off in conjunction with our Juneteenth Celebration.
5. Youth and Senior Programs hosted at [Organization] through collaboration partnerships: Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) 50+ Learning Classes, CommUNITY Mentoring's after school program, QAC Dept of Recreation's "Summer Days" youth camp for kids with special needs, and MD State Dept of Education's Migrant Program office.

Exemplary (9-10 points)

The organization's programming is indispensable to the community it serves.

Representation of Diverse Narratives in Programming

Please describe how the narratives of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), Disabled, and/or LGBTQ+ communities are represented within your organization's programming.

The majority of our recent programming has focused on sharing the histories of BIPOC communities, especially African Americans and Native Americans. Examples include two virtual heritage trails which focus on African American History and the Civil Rights Era in Anne Arundel County. The goal of these trails was to create an online outlet to tell the histories of African Americans in Anne Arundel County and to make these stories accessible to a broad audience.

A recent audit of the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties in Anne Arundel County found that only 7% of properties were listed as having any association with African Americans, despite the historical percentage of African Americans in this county being much higher than that. This number reflects the historical bias about what history is considered important and worthy of preservation. To counter this

historical trend, [organization name] is currently working on a project that will create or substantially update 15 site forms for historic buildings or archaeological sites associated with African Americans in the County that have not been previously documented thoroughly.

Another current project focuses on telling the stories of the Native Americans who lived in and around Jug Bay for over 10,000 years. [organization name] approached the AACPS Social Studies Office to see what their needs were concerning local history resources, and learned that they were looking for more material about local Native American history and heritage. We subsequently pursued and acquired external funding for this project and are currently developing an online toolbox that will act as a local resource on Native American History for students and teachers.

Exemplary (9-10 points)

The organization's programming includes extensive, accurate and valuable representations of the experiences of BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+ communities.

Organization's Audience

Please describe your organization's typical audience over the last five years. If applicable, please describe how you engage with communities traditionally underserved by the humanities.

Our program deliberately centers itself in Eastern Montgomery County, the most diverse county in the state, according to the most recent U.S. Census, and among the most diverse regions in the nation.

Thus far, the bulk of our students have attended schools in Wheaton, whose population is 42.8 percent Hispanic/Latino, and 16.5 percent Black. The poverty rate is just over 10 percent. Three-quarters of the students at Arcola Elementary School were eligible pre-pandemic for free or reduced-priced lunches (now available to all), and just under half speak English as a second language. Arcola students are identified as 19.8 percent Black and 69.3 percent Hispanic.

At Weller Road Elementary School, another Title 1 school in Wheaton, the population is 94 percent of students of color—80 percent Hispanic/Latino, 7 percent Black, and 7 percent Pacific Islander. More than 80 percent of students qualified pre-pandemic for free or reduced-price lunches (again, now universally available.) These schools feed into Wheaton High School, which has a graduation rate in the county's bottom fifth, ranking 23rd out of 25 high schools.

Demographics are similar at JoAnn Leleck Elementary School, another Title 1 school in Eastern Montgomery County where [organization name] is offering programming this fall to students for the first time. We are also receiving inquiries from a long list of additional schools in the region, including William Tyler Page, Rock Creek Forest, and Rock View Elementary Schools.

In Montgomery County, improved civic learning and student agency would mitigate the inequitable school outcomes documented by the Black and Brown Coalition for Educational Equity and Excellence. Among other findings, a coalition report disclosed that county students in low-income communities are more likely to attend schools led by novice principals and inexperienced teachers.

Though most of our programs focus on elementary school-age students, we do occasional community civic events that reach older students outside Montgomery County. Our Youth Civic Saturdays were offered in collaboration with two Baltimore-based youth-serving groups, the No Boundaries Coalition and DewMore Baltimore. Baltimore City's population is roughly 70 percent people of color, most of

them Black or African American, according to the latest U.S. Census. The poverty level is roughly 20 percent. Our programs give under-served students access to high-quality arts programming that is often available only at cost to students whose families can afford to pay. We are committed to offering after-school workshops to students free of charge. A leading aspect of our mission is to close the well-documented racial equity gap in civic knowledge and engagement that has dampened voting and political agency among students in less-affluent communities.

Exemplary (9-10 points)

The organization serves a significant audience relative to the community's size and the organization's operational capacity. Organization articulates a clear, and practical plan to expand the reach of their organization, and diversify their audience.

Exemplary (9-10 points)

Communities underserved by the humanities are significantly represented in the organization's audience.

Intended Use of Funding

Describe how your organization intends to use the funding that would be provided through this grant. Please elaborate on the impact this funding would have on your organization, and the communities you serve.

The funds will be used to pay salaries. The role of the Executive Director to build relationship with the public schools and other organization will be vital in the growth of programs offered. The impact will be to create and deliver high-quality, relevant programs to engage, and sustain community participation. Support, enrich and engage teenagers and adult learners at every ability, interest, and level of expertise through participatory classes and workshops. Use the transformative power of art to engage children and families from our community through intergenerational learning. Develop a computer lab to be utilized by children and families that do not have access and to include workshops and classes on job readiness. Develop arts and cultural programming to build and improve youth and teen academic performance and school attendance.

- Coordinate afterschool programming to expand services.
- Encourage good habits and positive attitudes towards completing school and learning.
- Cultivate, challenge and engage audiences through extraordinary art exhibitions and related programming.
- Provide, engage children, families, and seniors to participate in art workshops as a way to reconnect families

Exemplary (9-10 points)

The organization articulates a considerably clear, and practical plan to utilize the funding.

Organizational Goals

Please describe your organization's long-term and short term goals, and how general operating support funding would help you accomplish these goals.

The [organization name]'s 3-year strategic plan includes the following goals:

- increase and diversify both programs and revenue streams to fund and fully support its programs, facilities, faculty and staff;
- continue to offer a wide array of public programs that foster community engagement across a broad range of the humanities, audiences, students and communities;
- embrace and leverage new and emerging technologies support to [organization name]'s mission, standardize operational processes, reduce administrative costs and better allocate staff resources away from administrative tasks to focus on direct services to our constituents, members and community;
- develop or reestablish strategic alliances and community collaborations with local and national institutions to leverage synergies in administration, programs, performances, exhibitions, fundraising, marketing, etc.; and
- the Board of Directors Board will examine its membership to determine board composition and ensure the principles of diversity, inclusion, accessibility and equity drive recruitment efforts and expand membership.

Cultural equity is critical to the arts and culture sector's long-term viability in Baltimore city and more specifically the viability of the [organization name]. At the core of challenges related to cultural equity is the historically inequitable distribution of resources, and the values systems, biases, and systemic barriers associated with that distribution.

For decades, the [organization name] has suffered from chronic underinvestment. Like the communities' history and culture it aspires to present and preserve, the [organization name] was/is uniquely vulnerable to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic or any other event that creates an economic downturn. And while emergency funding opportunities during the pandemic have helped the [organization name] remain afloat, little has been done to address the historical funding inequities negatively impacting one of Baltimore's premier cultural assets. As such, our goal, both short-term and long-term is ensure the Center fully funded now and in the future.

Exemplary (9-10 points)

This grant would have a transformative impact on this organization's ability to provide programming to Marylanders.