

Building a More Perfect Union: 38 Pandemic Recovery Grants Awarded to Humanities Organizations

List of awardees organized alphabetically by city and state
March 31, 2022

Alabama

Power of Pen and Story: Teaching for Equity to Empower Our Youth

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and the Red Mountain Writing Project
Birmingham, AL

Power of Pen and Story starts with a one-week Summer Institute with K–12 teachers from the Red Mountain Writing Project who are interested in improving their teaching of literacy, American history, the modern civil rights movement, and human rights. Teachers will learn together as a cohort and develop unit plans for use in their classrooms and then these materials in subsequent professional workshops for additional cohorts of teachers in the local community.

Arizona

"We the People:" Building Salas de Libros to Explore Migrant Waves in Our Nation's History

University of Arizona's Worlds of Words: Center of Global Literatures and Literacies and the Southern Arizona Writing Project
Tucson, AZ

Salas de Libros translates literally to "living rooms of books." Often called *Salas* for short, are intergenerational by design, attracting and engaging children, youth, and elders, and led by community members known as mediators. This project centers "*We the People*" as a guiding theme to unite and gather across diverse communities through the creation and implementation of 10 humanities-based *Salas de Libros*. Through participation in various *Salas*, participants will gain an understanding of the migrant waves of people who shaped the history of our nation—histories that are often left out from the metanarratives of U.S. history.

California

Telling Complicated Stories & Building Robust Civics Education Programs in Public School Classrooms

Redwood Writing Project at Humboldt State University
Arcata, CA

This year-long professional development will support a cohort of multiple subject teachers to study and discuss texts, interact with guest speakers, and examine model curriculum structures that help to teach the "complicated stories" from local and U.S. history and to promote a more robust civics education. In addition to developing materials for their own classrooms, participants will create online resources that can be adopted or adapted for various grade levels and across disciplines.

Bringing Local History to Life: Actualizing a More Perfect Union Through Oral Histories

Bay Area Writing Project at University of California Berkeley
Berkeley, CA

Guided by themes of educating, engaging, and uniting, this project will bring together youth, elders, and content experts to explore what it means to grapple with challenging times and reimagine the future. It will center the importance of intergenerational conversations rooted in lived experience, include two history-focused youth summer programs, and feature expanded participation with other humanities and youth media-producing partner organizations. Students will learn how to record oral histories while learning new forms of digital media production and ways to engage civically with organizations in their community. The project will then offer extended opportunities for engagement and presentation including online publishing and a public conference.

Rebuilding The Humanities at the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation

Northern California Writing Project at CSU, Chico and the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation
Chico, CA

The Quartz Valley Indian Reservation and the Northern California Writing Project are partnering to increase the visibility and accessibility of the reservation's history, culture, and language. This project will engage tribal members, community members, high school and community college students in the creation of a comprehensive history of the reservation, an online resource for teaching, a renewal of the reservation's Culture Camp, and an enhanced website for the public.

Buchanan Mall Community History Project

San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society
San Francisco, CA

The San Francisco African American Historical and Cultural Society and leading scholars of local history and activism will guide a phase of planning for the Buchanan Mall History Walk, a proposed "outdoor museum" of African American history on a central plaza in a majority-Black neighborhood. A series of facilitated community conversations will guide community-based planning for the History Walk. Based on feedback from these conversations, scholars will guide the creation of a Community History Plan to inform residents, community organizers and City planners as they contemplate next steps.

Japanese American Redress: Reckoning and Recovery

National Japanese American Historical Society
San Francisco, CA

The National Japanese American Historical Society will produce an inaugural exhibition titled *Japanese American Redress: Reckoning and Recovery* as an interactive multimedia kiosk display that informs and engages the public in a lesson of democracy. The interactive elements will draw upon first-person narratives, primary documents, visual records, and scholarly analysis. A related inquiry-based education program will offer students and visitors who attend the exhibit the opportunity to develop writing and historical literacy skills, including a deeper understanding of the historic narrative and the core principles of government.

An Educator's Guide to Orange County Diversity: Making Visible Underrepresented Communities and Their Histories in Orange County

Heritage Museum of Orange County
Santa Ana, CA

Connecting K–12 educators, university researchers, community-based institutions, activists, families, and students, we will develop an Educator's Guide to Orange County Diversity grounded in antiracist and culturally sustaining pedagogy. This project will engage with the complexity of shared history to help youth build foundational understandings of democracy and core principles of government, informational literacy, and the ongoing struggles for equity, power, and representation. A website providing related curricular resources will be made available.

Georgia

Combining Voices

Augusta University Writing Project and the Morris Museum of Art
Augusta, GA

Combining Voices is a literary competition and tour opportunity designed for students in grades 4 through 12 that encourages participants to respond visually and verbally to selected paintings from the Morris Museum's permanent collection. This project will expand the Museum's current curriculum programs and develop new units that specifically address the themes of *Building a More Perfect Union* while expanding the reach of the current program. Local teachers will be engaged through the Augusta University Writing Project with the opportunity to become Museum Ambassadors who will co-design and lead related humanities-based projects at area schools.

Idaho

Fostering Conversations: Document Based Inquiries into the Contact Zones of American (and Idaho) History

Boise State Writing Project
Boise, ID

The project promotes the civic engagement of students by positioning them as citizen historians seeking to understand American "contact zones", i.e., topics of historical/cultural contention, and propose positive ways forward through them. The project further promotes the humanities by making students museum designers who will publicly share the knowledge artifacts they design both online and under the auspices of our partners. Teachers will be supported in the development and implementation of humanities-based Document Based Inquiries promoting deep understanding of "contact zone" topics still in play today in the United States and Idaho. A focus will be on finding and interpreting various historical resources then justifying and representing new understandings based on respectful conversation with multiple points of view.

Illinois

Bronzeville - A Citizens' View of the History and Culture of an Illustrious African-American Neighborhood

Illinois Writing Project and the Jacob H. Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies at the
Northeastern Illinois University
Chicago, IL

Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood thrived as a center of African-American culture, music, publishing, and business during the 1930s to 1950s, home to such writers as Gwendolyn Brooks and Richard Wright, and visited frequently by musicians Louis Armstrong, Sam Cook, and Lou Rawls. The still-publishing *Chicago Defender*, focused on African-American community issues, started there. To educate the public about such an important but neglected part of U.S. history, The Illinois Writing Project and the Jacob H. Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies, both based at Northeastern Illinois University, will partner to guide Bronzeville residents to create a citizens' history of the neighborhood. This will form a permanent display and archive in the Carruthers Center library.

History Lessons: Everyday Objects from the History of Public Housing

National Public Housing Museum
Chicago, IL

The National Public Housing Museum's *History Lessons: Everyday Objects from Public Housing* collects everyday objects from public housing residents in three diverse communities and engages residents in storytelling and writing workshops to write their own artifact labels. The labels will be included in a virtual exhibition hosted on the Museum's website available to a broad national public. The objects and their stories help to convey the myriad experiences of those who both survived and thrived in public housing, asking us what we have not yet learned from public housing history in order for us to create a better, more collective future.

Teacher Writing for Civic Engagement: A Chicago Area Writing Project Initiative

Chicago Area Writing Project at the University of Illinois
Chicago, IL

At this moment in U.S. history, public education is at the center of struggles for the future of democracy, including debates over how to tell the story of our nation's past and present. At the same time, teachers' writing and voices are often absent from these conversations. This project supports our community of teachers, through networking and working opportunities, to lift up our voices through writing. A collection of the teachers' writing as well as a toolkit to support others in doing this kind of work will be shared.

Kentucky

Root Deep, Grow Tall: Celebrating heritage and changing lives one story at a time

Hindman Settlement School and the The Morehead Writing Project
Hindman, KY

The Morehead Writing Project and Hindman Settlement School will join forces to create a project-based learning humanities program for eastern Kentucky communities. Morehead WP teacher-leaders will be recruited to prepare and teach a project-based humanities unit for students, and possibly adult communities, where the focus will be on the development of passion projects in art, music, history, foodways, or culture to preserve and celebrate what connects us as humans and Americans. Resources and materials created through this pilot program will be used by the Hindman Settlement School to inform their programming while also being made available online.

Connecting our Heartlands: Towards an Inclusive American Creed

Center for Rural Strategies, Citizen University, and Citizen Film
Whitesburg, KY

Connecting our Heartlands aims to illuminate shared challenges, values, and reference points, and take stock of rural America's diversity. The Center for Rural Strategies, a coalition of community organizers, scholars, and journalists of rural America, will engage rural constituents across the country in a discussion of foundational democratic ideals through a large-scale civic gathering in partnership with Citizen University and Citizen Film. Humanities themed resources will also be amplified in media disseminated by Rural Strategies' Daily Yonder digital news and commentary platforms. The focus will be on considering the contrast between aspirations towards freedom, fairness, and opportunity on the one hand, and America's political, social, and economic conditions on the other, in history and today.

Louisiana

The Good Troublemakers Book Project

826 New Orleans
New Orleans, LA

This project is designed to amplify youth voice and champion change through writing culminating in an anthology and a youth-led panel discussion event. This year's *Good Troublemakers* theme gives young people a chance to discuss how the pandemic impacted their relationship with their neighborhood, themselves, and their mental health. The culminating panel, led by the Youth Writers Council, will bring together topics that emerged in the writing and anthology-curating process and will invite a suite of humanities scholars and community stakeholders to engage with the work and writers.

Massachusetts

Writing Boston's Future

Museum of African American History and the Boston Writing Project
Boston, MA

The purpose of this proposal is for the Boston Writing Project to partner with the Museum of African American History to engage the Boston community, especially the youth in the Black community, with the Museum as a site for public education through the investigation and use of various forms of media. The project aims to recapture the spirit of the past and create new stories of today's multiethnic Black families who are actively pursuing their civic duties in and around the Greater Boston area. Educators and youth will (re)learn Boston's Black history through a deep investigation of the Museum's artifacts and exhibits. Student fellowships for teens will allow them to use multiple modalities representing diverse Black voices to curate the future.

Sailing to Freedom: Building a More Perfect Union by Escaping and Ending Slavery

New Bedford Historical Society
New Bedford, MA

A newly released volume of essays, *Sailing to Freedom: Maritime Dimensions of the Underground Railroad* published in collaboration with the New Bedford Historical Society, focuses on seaborne escapes of enslaved African Americans, as well as the people who assisted those fugitives. Inspired by this research and the book's release, this project seeks to provide a more accurate, comprehensive understanding of the Underground Railroad and broad resistance to the institution of slavery, to the general public. The project therefore will present a conference, exhibition, and lecture series on the Underground Railroad along with livestreams and a digital online version of the exhibition.

Maryland

Restoring We The People: Connecting Maryland Classrooms to the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture

University of Maryland Writing Project and the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture
College Park, MD

The Maryland Writing Project will partner with the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture to offer facilitated curriculum writing workshops through a Summer Institute for Grade 4–12 public school teachers. Teachers will create public-facing

curricular materials to attract and engage educational audiences at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture based on pilot projects designed and then refined across classrooms.

Michigan

Welcome Back to CADL

Red Cedar Writing Project at Michigan State University and Capital Area District Libraries
East Lansing, MI

In this project, the Red Cedar Writing Project will partner with Capital Area District Libraries (CADL) to provide open-access and adaptable humanities-focused programming to enrich and engage public understandings of community, civic life, and the importance of storying our lives. This partnership will be focused in the Greater Lansing Area, and is designed to be both online as well as in-person to support engagement with/in the library, especially programming for youth and families/communities. Programs include humanities-oriented summer workshops for a range of age groups, such as letter writing and storying/preserving through PhotoVoice; Author celebrations with live streaming; and a needs assessment with the community aimed at reviving and revising the after-school tutoring program.

Towards a More Perfect Union: Understanding a More Complete Picture of Our Nation's Past, Present, and Future

Oakland Writing Project at the University of Michigan-Flint and the The Stockton House
Museum
Flint, MI

The Stockton House Museum partnered with Oakland Writing Project and the University of Michigan-Flint to design a pandemic recovery plan inviting teachers, students, and the community to be participants in the creation of a new exhibit focusing on Flint, Michigan. This illustrated, digitally voiced, and evolving timeline features foundational historical events and stories of people from 1861 to 2026. The incomplete timeline announces to visitors that they are invited in, their voices and stories need to be represented. Workshops and classroom lessons will create spaces for inclusion and become places to listen, reflect, develop empathy, and become informed and civically engaged.

Cultivating Engaged Citizens Through Family Literacy, Civic Reasoning, Critical Thinking, and Empathy

Top-of-the-Mitt Writing Project at North Central Michigan College
Petoskey, MI

This project is focused on serving families, students, and teachers in local, high-needs communities through the development of Family Literacy Projects and a year-long teacher Leadership Institute. The Family Literacy Projects will be designed to support parents and teachers to build stronger relationships while providing families with additional tools and texts needed to strengthen connections between home and school literacy. The institute will give teachers the tools, texts, and time to reflect on the role of schools in a democracy while envisioning how best to support young people to grapple with complex problems and generate critical thinking about power, equity, and justice. Resources will be published broadly and throughout several professional contexts.

Minnesota

Reconsidering Minnesota History through Dakota Narratives

East Side Freedom Library, Speaking Out Collective, and the Minnesota Writing Project
St. Paul, MN

This project is a collaboration of the East Side Freedom Library, Speaking Out Collective, and the Minnesota Writing Project to develop a collection of stories about Dakota history geared towards elementary-age children with accompanying curriculum for teachers. This project will ensure students and educators across the state have access to a more truthful representation of Dakota People in what is known in settler geography as Minnesota. *Reconsidering Minnesota History through Dakota Narratives* supports the United States' Semiquincentennial by developing and hosting community programming that is accessible to multiple audiences and engages local Dakota Elders in contributing to public humanities work.

Missouri

Curating Black History in KC

Greater Kansas City Writing Project at the University of Central Missouri, the Black Archives of Mid-America, and Clio
Kansas City, MO

The Greater Kansas City Writing Project, in partnership with the Black Archives of Mid-America and Clio, an educational website and mobile application, will embark on *Curating Black History* in Kansas City. Teachers will explore the Archives' repository of public materials that document Black life and work to uncover histories of the Kansas City region that have been mis- or underrepresented. The project aims to increase meaningful public engagement with the Black Archives' powerful resources by supporting the digitization of archival materials for online access, increasing visitor traffic with onsite programming, incorporating archival materials into classroom and Writing Project site program work, and creating culturally responsive interpretive guides to archival materials and local sites of historical significance.

Nebraska

There's No Such Thing as Free Land: Understanding the Homestead Acts through Multiple Perspectives

Friends of Homestead National Historical Park and the Nebraska Writing Project
Beatrice, NE

The Friends of Homestead National Park will collaborate with the Nebraska Writing Project to build curriculum and programming to attract new and diverse visitors to the park, to recapture educators who canceled during the pandemic, and to increase visitation. This programming will be created by Homestead National Park rangers curating homesteading stories that represent Black Homesteaders, women homesteaders and suffragettes, and displaced Native Peoples. Teachers will then be supported to build out curricula that will support this greater diversity of stories and more complex homesteading narrative with the goal to support greater civic and historical literacy.

New Jersey

Rethinking the Narrative: Historical and Artifactual Literacies and Museum Curation

Drew Writing Project at Drew University and the Museum of Early Trades & Crafts
Madison, NJ

This is a collaborative initiative designed to develop and present a fuller range of stories of the American experience through reimagining the museum's displays and programming by incorporating the perspectives of individuals from historically underrepresented groups. This will happen through workshops designed by and for educators from high-need school districts that focus on fostering historical and artifactual literacies in K–12 students along with a summer enrichment opportunity for students, at the Museum, in which students will learn to generate their own narratives. After these experiences, teachers will engage their students in generating narratives surrounding artifacts in the Museum and then these student narratives will be used to build newly re-conceptualized displays at the museum.

New York

You Are Here: Making Connections between Family History and US History

Long Island Writing Project at Nassau Community College and the Holocaust Museum and Tolerance Center
Garden City, NY

The Long Island Writing Project and the Holocaust Museum and Tolerance Center will collaborate on a series of workshops, public forums, and an intensive educator training institute, all devoted to the connection between telling our family stories and U.S. history. The central goal is to create a year-long professional development project with a multitude of public programming events with local communities that explore the immigrant experience and shared history.

A More Perfect Bronx History

New York City Writing Project at Lehman College and the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance
New York, NY

This partnership between Lehman College's New York City Writing Project and the Van Cortlandt Park Alliance will engage students from underserved Bronx high schools in a year-long experience focusing on learning and communicating the results of historical research to produce resources that will support the Alliance. Students will produce online media; interpret and explain history serving as site guides and docents; and contribute to creating opportunities for students, teachers, community members, and Park visitors to learn about the enslaved people who built, sustained, and lived on Van Cortlandt Plantation.

"A More Perfect Union": Exploring the Many Musics of America's People

American Musicological Society Inc.
New York, NY

This project will engage a broader population of constituents interested in the study and teaching of music through a series of public events exploring the music of the United States. This event series will be anchored by the Society's regional chapters and will spotlight the musical heritage of those regions and their place in the story of America since its founding with particular attention to diverse local and regional traditions that have not always been included in school curricula. Outreach will target a broad constituency, including music enthusiasts, K–12 teachers, music educators outside higher education, community librarians, and professionals working at cultural and heritage institutions.

The Eagle's Nesters: Beyond the Myths

Rosendale Theatre Collective Inc.
Rosendale, NY

Eagle's Nest Road, situated on a steep mountainside just outside the hamlet of Hurley, NY, is home to a small community with a big reputation. Local historians describe residents as a multiracial group who turned their backs on the society that shunned them because of their Indigenous, Black, and poor White heritage. This project's research will focus on the years 1840–1940 and will examine historical evidence—property deeds, census records, family

genealogies, newspaper articles and obituaries, paintings, and photographs, published and unpublished local histories—and also conduct interviews with Eagle's Nesters descendants. Gathered research will be shared on a public website, used to support the development of curricular resources, as well as used by the project's artistic director to create a dramatic presentation about the Eagle's Nesters for the Rosendale Theatre.

Ohio

Round Table Storytelling: Toward Hearing and Empowering All the Voices of the Past and Present

Dayton Society of Natural History and the Ohio Writing Project
Dayton, OH

The Dayton Society of Natural History in collaboration with the Ohio Writing Project will conduct two primary activities—an educator workshop and a field trip to SunWatch—with an overarching theme of giving space for and hearing all voices both past and present. Through the educator workshop, educators will explore cultural sensitivity, Indigenous history, current American Indian experiences and literature, and integrating an experiential field trip to SunWatch into their curricula. In partnership with participating educators, they will develop curricular materials and hands-on educational kits to supplement SunWatch field trips. Finally, they will establish a custom field trip experience that highlights the same themes from the workshop. Through this program, teachers and students will learn transferable skills that prepare them to be more inclusive, empathetic, and respectful.

Oklahoma

Engaging Humanities Through Art on The Chisholm Trail

Oklahoma Writing Project at the University of Oklahoma and the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center
Norman, OK

This project will support teachers and their students to learn about regional and national history through the exploration of and engagement with the art and historical narratives included in the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center's collection. Oklahoma educators will work collaboratively with Heritage Center docents to create lesson plans that engage students to write and tell their own stories while listening to stories from others who may or may not be like them through the Center's artifacts and resources. Students' writing then will be shared through an anthology which will be showcased in a printed and bound booklet shared with area schools and displayed at the Heritage Center. Lesson plans and related classroom resources will be published online as well used in regional professional development workshops.

A Century of Questions: Student-Driven Inquiry into the Tulsa Race Massacre

Oklahoma State University Writing Project
Stillwater, OK

With leadership from classroom teachers and the OSU Writing Project, Oklahoma youth will explore Tulsa's historic Greenwood district and engage with community historians and civic leaders to learn about the 1921 Race Massacre. Students will then spend time creating digital artifacts to document their experiences in learning about this historic event. Student leaders from participating schools will collaborate to create and host a symposium event in spring of 2023 at their respective schools to share the inquiry projects with their peers, parents, and other stakeholders. Students' inquiry projects will be added to a digital repository as a testament to their learning and for citizens of Oklahoma and beyond to learn more about the impact of the 1921 Race Massacre on the world.

Pennsylvania

"They Carried Us": Hidden Histories of African American Women in Philadelphia, Building a More Perfect Union from the 1700s to the present

Philadelphia Writing Project at the University of Pennsylvania and the African American Museum in Philadelphia
Philadelphia, PA

The Philadelphia Writing Project will partner with the African American Museum in Philadelphia to engage teachers, young people, and community members in exploring a recent book, titled *They Carried Us*, which highlights the role of African American women and their contributions to Philadelphia. Through these "hidden histories," the Museum will host four public community events and panel discussions throughout the year, an institute for Philadelphia teachers in the summer (with school-year follow up), and a special one-day summer event for Philadelphia youth. Open-source resources will be created from the project and shared online and at the Museum; all of the opportunities will be free to participants.

Rhode Island

Activism in the Archives: Exploring Rhode Island Stories of Solidarity

What Cheer Writers Club
Providence, RI

Activism in the Archives is a series of curated events, slated to include a panel of activist authors; an orientation to the Rhode Island Historical Society archives; tours and workshops with local presses; and conversations with B/I/POC creatives around activist strategies. These

opportunities for engagement are aimed at charging the present moment with stories of community resilience and unity from the past. The series will culminate in the creation of an archive from this collective moment in time: a zine anthology, compiled in collaboration with a local letter press, filled with the written and illustrated word of local creatives, followed by an exhibition and public reading.

Texas

Expanding the Resources of the Texas State Museum of Asian Cultures

Coastal Bend Writing Project at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi and the Texas State Museum of Asian Cultures
Corpus Christi, TX

This project aims to increase intercultural understanding and reduce Anti-Asian misunderstanding and bias by educating the people of the south Texas region about the cultures, nations, and histories of Asia. Through the partnership, more targeted, virtual, and open-access curricular resources will be created along with new programming while expanding educator knowledge in Asian cultures, nations, and histories. The project will support the museum's ability to bring some of the collection out of storage and to develop specialty rotating displays, such as those for Women's History Month and Lunar New Year.

Virginia

(Re)Telling Our Stories: Central Appalachia's Cultural Contributions in Oral History and Artifact

Appalachian Writing Project at the University of Virginia, the Southwest Virginia Museum, and the African American Appalachian Cultural Museum
Wise, VA

This partnership aims to develop sustainable programming within area school districts designed to (re)tell central Appalachia's diverse cultural and civic stories. Teachers and students will be guided in collecting and transcribing oral histories as well as collecting and interpreting artifacts donated and curated by students and community members. Curations will then be displayed in temporary exhibits within schools and the stories and interpretations of these artifacts by the students will be shared via a related publication contributing to the expansion and revision of a misunderstood and marginalized region.

Wisconsin

ALL Stories: American Storytelling to Build a More Perfect Union

Arts + Literature Laboratory, Inc and the Greater Madison Writing Project
Madison, WI

Through a collaboration between Arts + Literature Laboratory and the Greater Madison Writing Project, experienced writers from Madison and surrounding areas will be invited into schools and community settings to share their expertise in writing and storytelling while working to assist and encourage young people and underserved and underrepresented communities in crafting and publishing their own stories and histories. Student stories from across sites participating in *ALL Stories* will be published and shared widely through community events, the Watershed Reading series, and local and campus media in an effort to encourage greater participation and more diverse voices at the table to discuss the "wonder and complexities of this nation."