



Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

Sample Application MH-253120-OMS-23

National Jazz Museum in Harlem

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$99,935
Amount of cost share:	\$0

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem will diversify and attract new audiences through an online video series highlighting jazz as a uniquely American art form by examining jazz in relationship to place, society, and history. Jazz musicians, educators, and historians will present each topic and provide historic context. Museum staff will collaborate with a video production consultant to develop the video series and a user experience consultant to create the platform and interactive elements. The video series will help visitors gain a deeper understanding of the musical and cultural impact of jazz and its musicians with a focus on the lives of the jazz greats who called and continue to call Harlem their home.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion
- Digital Product Plan

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the current Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

Project Narrative

Project Justification

Which program goal and associated objective of Museum Grants for African American History and Culture will your project address?

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem (NJMH) requests IMLS funding to develop a Jazz Is: Video Series to diversify and attract new audiences. This project will address the Museum Grants for African American History and Culture goal to build the capacity of African American museums and their ability to serve their communities. It will address two of the associated objectives: 1) develop, enhance or expand public programs, exhibitions and/or school programs, and 2) improve care of museum collections and expand access to collections and associated data.

What need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified?

NJMH's 2020 marketing survey of U.S. jazz museums revealed our organization is the nation's only museum focusing specifically on the "jazz in Harlem experience." NJMH is also the only museum that focuses on the Harlem jazz story from its origins – with beginnings in the Great Migration through the Harlem Renaissance – to how the music developed and is influenced by, immersed and presented in Harlem today. Aligned with the uniqueness of Harlem culture, this cultural and historic distinction affords NJMH the opportunity to share the story of jazz related to, yet discrete from and unlike, the experience of jazz in any other part of the world.

A November 2021 Culture Track study of 78,000 respondents by LaPlaca Cohen and Slover Linett Audience Research titled "Culture + Community in a Time of Transformation" indicated people are seeking more fun in their lives. Their other top priorities are to learn something new, relax, connect with others and broaden their perspective. The report explains that the pandemic "ushered in an influx of digital experimentation. This has opened the door for arts organizations to consider new 'hybrid' approaches, where digital and physical realms could coexist and enrich cultural experiences." According to the report, three elements can inform the design of compelling online cultural experiences: Free access, global access and social access. "Individual artists and performers continue to be the most popular content providers. A sense of personal connection with the artist or work may explain why respondents are choosing to access content directly from those creators."

With this information in mind, NJMH seeks to create a Jazz Is: Video Series that will lean heavily on the entertainment aspect of education, and share the jazz in Harlem experience with a global audience. Content from NJMH's exhibitions and collections will be incorporated into this series, highlighting jazz as a musical art form with roots that originated in Africa, traveled the slave trade route through the Caribbean, landed in New Orleans more than 100 years ago to grow new roots born of the Black-American experience, and headed north to Harlem, where the music was shaped by creative geniuses of the Harlem Renaissance. Audiences will learn how today's jazz in Harlem experience is an evolving confluence of many different cultures from around the world, many of which converge in Harlem.

Who is the target group for your project and how have they been involved in the planning?

NJMH's virtual audience has grown from fewer than 20,000 annual viewers prior to the pandemic to more than 200,000 viewers today. They, and others who have yet to discover NJMH's free, online programming, are our target audience. Online audiences average 50% female, 48% male and 2% non-binary, and represent 9 decades in age along with varied racial and ethnic backgrounds. The Museum has an international reach, but is rooted in Harlem, where our primary constituents reside. About 62% of our online viewers are from New York City.

Since the pandemic began, NJMH has presented more than 250 virtual events, all free of charge. This includes dozens of in-person events held in 2022 that were also made available online. These free lectures, discussions and performances on Facebook Live, Instagram and YouTube provide viewers with meaningful jazz connections and uplifting experiences. NJMH has demonstrated it has the "know-how" to deliver jazz programming in the digital world. The proposed project will help NJMH keep its ever-expanding community of global viewers engaged in our mission through a first-time series of multi-part videos.

NJMH recently surveyed its email subscribers and asked them to indicate topics of interest. Based on their responses, we identified four main subject areas for the online video series: Jazz in Harlem, Jazz and Social Justice, Women in Jazz, and the Jazz History Tree.

Who are the ultimate beneficiaries for this project?

The ultimate beneficiaries are the same broad audience as the target group, as NJMH strives to provide the jazz in Harlem experience to every person on the planet. Some of the online video content will be geared toward beginners, while other content will provide a more in-depth exploration of jazz. Primary audiences will include Harlem and New York City residents, along with jazz fans and music students worldwide. By offering topics like "Jazz in Harlem," NJMH will aim to engage viewers beyond a traditional jazz audience. Of special note, NJMH will leverage its growing global network of program partners around the world, in locations including Honduras, the Virgin Islands and Zimbabwe, to promote and share NJMH's online content with their respective communities.

Future Museum audiences also will benefit, as the videos may be repurposed for NJMH exhibitions. We will also integrate these assets into our teaching artist-led educational workshops that annually introduce thousands of pre-K to 12th grade students and adults to the history of Harlem. For instance, our *Born in Harlem* workshop for students in grades 5-12 explores Harlem's rich cultural and musical history. Students listen to classic recordings; watch historic videos; and discuss the social, political and musical developments that have shaped our society.

Project Work Plan

What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence?

NJMH will create a free, professionally produced video series that is specifically designed to engage online audiences. Many experts confirm that a good length for a web-based course is between 15 to 30 minutes. Each of the four topics will be presented in a series of 10- to 15-minute segments over three to four hours. Each segment will focus on a different talking point.

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem

The Jazz Is: Video Series aims to serve people who are curious to learn something new. The series will feature presentations and musical demonstrations by renowned artists, scholars and other presenters, and will highlight artifacts from the Museum's collections and recorded content from our past programming.

Once our four topics were determined, NJMH put out a call for content proposals to artists and content experts in our extensive database. We selected artists and content experts to be featured in the series based on their subject matter expertise and existing presence on social media, along with the originality of their content. In addition, NJMH selected individuals whose proposed content would be accessible to people who are interested in jazz but are not experts in the field. We looked for a logical sequence of activities that would enable viewers to go through each segment at their own pace without needing to search for information elsewhere.

Built into the user experience platform will be incentive-based gamification designed to encourage continued participation. Upon completion of each segment, users will be rewarded with points that not only track their progress toward completion of the series, but also help them earn access to special Museum programming, discounts on Museum merchandise and recognition on our social media platforms.

The four topics, and their presenters, are as follows:

Jazz in Harlem, led by NJMH Senior Scholar Loren Schoenberg, Harlem historian John Reddick, Jazzmobile Director Robin Bell-Stevens, Latin jazz lecturer Joe Conzo, and jazz archivist Matthew Rivera: Our aim with this track is to capitalize upon Harlem's romantic, quasi-mythical position in the history of jazz. This includes elements such as the Harlem stride piano style, historic dance locales like the Cotton Club and Savoy Ballroom, the involvement of artists including Duke Ellington, and the famed period known as the Harlem Renaissance.

Jazz and Social Justice, featuring pianist/vocalist Samora Pinderhughes, writer and scholar Naomi Extra, vocalist Paula West, and percussionist Zack O'Farrill: The Black Lives Matter movement has revived in the public discourse the concern for the rights of all people of the United States, with a special emphasis on those who are and have been systemically oppressed due to their racial, ethnic and class background. Jazz as an art form has been shaped by the opposing forces of racial segregation and inclusion, and, from the civil rights movement through the Black Lives Matter movement, many jazz artists have been vocal about the rights of Black people in America. The stage is set for NJMH to provide an in-depth account of the relationship between jazz and social justice, historically and as the music and culture continue to evolve today.

Women in Jazz, led by drummer and bandleader Terri Lyne Carrington, saxophonist Roxy Coss, singer/songwriter Toshi Reagon, and ethnomusicologist and educator Aja Burrell Wood: One of the biggest stars in jazz most people have never heard of is pianist Hazel Scott. At 22 years old, she was regarded as New York's Queen of Jazz and was the first Black-American woman to have her own TV show. There are many under-sung women who have played pivotal and hugely significant roles in shaping jazz history since its beginnings and without whom jazz and jazz history would be very different.

The significance of women's contributions to jazz has often been ignored in the traditional, male-dominated accounts of jazz history. Artists like vocalist Ella Fitzgerald, trumpeter Valaida Snow, and composers Lil Hardin Armstrong, Mary Lou Williams, Geri Allen and Maria Schneider have had a lasting, substantial and overall impact on jazz. This series will highlight female composers and artists who have shaped jazz and pursued their craft to the highest levels of achievement.

Jazz History Tree, presented by Jazz History Tree website creator Dakota Pippins, NJMH Artistic Directors Jon Batiste and Christian McBride, NJMH Senior Scholar Loren Schoenberg, and pianist Bertha Hope: This series will provide a fun, educational exploration of the history of more than 30 genres of Black American music from their origins through today. Segments will be based on the History of Jazz Tree created in the late 1970s by legendary jazz pianist, composer and longtime Harlem resident Mary Lou Williams and drawn to her specifications by artist David Stone Martin. Jazz historian and Harlemitte Dakota Pippins took this jazz tree idea and built it into a robust, online tool to explore the history of jazz. Videos will examine the roots, creators, styles and routes jazz has taken – from its birth more than 100 years ago through its varied incarnations from blues and ragtime to swing, rock 'n roll and hip-hop.

What are the risks to the project and how will you mitigate them?

Despite NJMH's extensive virtual programming since March 2020, the proposed Jazz Is: Video Series is a different format for the Museum that involves more pre- and post-production. We anticipate a learning curve, as this will be a new way for NJMH to offer public programming and share our collections with online viewers. To mitigate risk, we have identified and will work with experienced consultants, including Yardbird Entertainment, a video production company that will lead the video/audio production and editing, and Engaged Media Studios, a digital media production and entertainment company that will build out the user experience and gamification platform. In addition to Yardbird Entertainment and Engaged Media, NJMH will identify an experienced director/filmmaker to lead the project's creative production.

Who will plan, implement, and manage your project?

Tracy Hyter-Suffern, NJMH Executive Director, will provide oversight and management of IMLS grant expenditures. Ryan Maloney, NJMH Director of Education & Programming, will lead the project and manage the day-to-day aspects of this initiative. He will be the lead staff member working with the Museum's staff and consultants to plan and implement the project. Maloney also will coordinate the evaluation process and will represent NJMH at IMLS meetings. NJMH Senior Scholar Loren Schoenberg will serve as the content advisor and will be among the lead presenters in the Jazz in Harlem and Jazz History Tree videos. Yardbird Entertainment, Engaged Media Studios, and a director/filmmaker to be identified will serve as the primary consultants.

Tracy Hyter-Suffern has more than 20 years of experience in arts administration, racial justice, poverty, gender and other issues of equity and social justice. Prior to joining NJMH, she served as Chief Development Officer at Intersections, Interim Executive Director of the Afro Latin Jazz Alliance, Executive Director of both the ABFE and Urban Bush Women Dance Company, Director of International Relations with the YWCA of the USA National Headquarters, and Senior Programme Officer with the United Nations Nongovernmental Liaison Service.

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem

For seven years, she served as an executive consultant to New York City nonprofit and human services organizations, Newark Public Schools and the New Jersey Department of Education. Ms. Hyter-Suffern is an enrolled tribal member of the Ramapough Lunaape Nation and Co-chief of the Marten Band. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Tufts University and a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) from Cambridge University.

Ryan Maloney is a saxophonist, archivist, historian and music educator who develops and oversees NJMH's collections, exhibits, education programs, and public programs for visitors of all ages. Prior to joining NJMH in 2013, he worked for eight years as Director of Education & Programming at Jazz House Kids in New Jersey. There, he developed a range of in-school, out-of-school and summer programs for K-12 students of all backgrounds, income levels and musical abilities. A professional educator, Maloney has taught music at all grade levels, from pre-K to college in the U.S. and Ireland. He has worked as a research consultant on several books, articles and documentary films on jazz artists including Herbie Nichols, Benny Goodman, Dexter Gordon and Elmo Hope, and contributed to a documentary film on musician and producer Teo Macero. A noted resource himself, Maloney has served as Reference Librarian and Assistant Archivist at the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University-Newark. Maloney received his master's degree in jazz history and research from Rutgers University-Newark and his undergraduate degree in music education and saxophone performance from the University of Minnesota-Morris.

Loren Schoenberg, Senior Scholar, is a noted conductor, tenor saxophonist, pianist, radio host, historian, educator and author of *The NPR Curious Listener's Guide to Jazz*. Schoenberg served for 10 years as NJMH's Executive Director, creating its structure and programming and enlisting Ken Burns, Wynton Marsalis, Jon Batiste and Christian McBride to the Museum's mission. As Senior Scholar, he oversees the Museum's collections, exhibits and public humanities programming. Schoenberg won two GRAMMY Awards for his liner notes on Louis Armstrong and Woody Herman, and was a key consultant on Ken Burns' *Jazz*. He had the honor of performing twice at The White House, leading educational concerts. Schoenberg's own band was chosen to accompany Benny Goodman for Goodman's last televised performance in 1985, and Schoenberg oversaw the Benny Goodman Archives at Yale University from 1986 to 1995. Schoenberg has lectured at Stanford University, The Metropolitan Opera, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The GRAMMY Foundation, The Aspen Institute, and Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has been featured on NPR and BBC, and quoted in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, among others. He has taught at The Juilliard School, the Manhattan School of Music, The New School, and the Hartt School at the University of Hartford.

Yardbird Entertainment is a BIPOC-led small business headed by jazz musicians/educators Peter Lin and Abel Mireles. The company specializes in audio/video and livestream production along with virtual education production. Yardbird provides full-scale production with electronic documentation, diagrams, charts, slideshows and instructional videos. In addition to capturing musical content with outstanding visual and audio quality, Yardbird provides cloud sharing and storage along with multi-platform livestreaming options.

Engaged Media Studios, founded and led by Jacqueline Beauchamp, is a BIPOC digital media production and entertainment company that delivers diverse, engaging interactive and immersive experiences through expanded storytelling and a multi-platform approach. The company creates virtual simulated 3D solutions, augmented reality applications, mixed reality experiences, video games with 2D and 3D animation and motion graphics, virtual films and live broadcasts. Engaged Media Studios also provides full-scale mobile app development on all major platforms.

What time, financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?

NJMH will complete the first phase of the Jazz Is: Video Series within a one-year time period. Funding will enable NJMH to hire expert consultants to help us conceptualize and produce this series in an engaging way. For instance, a director/filmmaker will advise on filming locations and organization of content, graphics and video content to be incorporated into the series, with attention paid to copyright issues and day-of direction of the video shoots. Yardbird Entertainment will produce the video series, and Engaged Media Studios will create the user experience platform and develop interactive elements that motivate viewers to progress through the series. NJMH will conduct a robust marketing campaign to promote the video series.

How will you track your progress toward achieving your intended results?

Online viewers will be encouraged to complete surveys indicating how their knowledge and attitudes may have changed as a result of the project content. Survey results, along with comments posted on NJMH's social media sites, will be compiled using Google Analytics. The data will help our staff gauge impact and will provide suggestions for enhancements and future video series.

Google Analytics will provide key metrics, including the number of viewers and the states and countries they represent, engaged screen time, and which videos they viewed. NJMH also will track click rates for our e-newsletters, social media followers, earned media coverage and increases in digital experience-related earned income, memberships and donations. This data will influence future content and approaches.

Project Results

What are your project's intended results and how will they address the need, problem, or challenge you have identified?

This project will strengthen NJMH's ties to our local Harlem community and expand our reach as a truly national – and even international – museum for a growing number of virtual audience members worldwide. It will make high-quality public programming and selected items from the Museum's collections available free of charge to anyone with an internet connection. NJMH's existing digital collections document the history of jazz, beginning in the early 20th century through today. These collections feature personal papers, recordings, photographs and instruments from jazz greats and Harlem legends including Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Cab Calloway, Dr. Billy Taylor, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Ralph Ellison, Buddy Tate, Langston Hughes and many others.

Broadly diverse audiences will enhance their knowledge of jazz, America's original musical art form. Beneficiaries will include audiences of varied ages and backgrounds, from jazz novices to aficionados to researchers and academics. Many of these users will have only a basic familiarity with jazz, while others may be building on a deeper knowledge of this art form that is now revered all across the globe. A priority audience that will be served is thousands of Harlem students from Title I public schools who visit the Museum each year, as content from this project will be incorporated into these visits to enhance each school group's experience.

How will the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes of the target group change as a result of your project?

NJMH's Jazz Is: Video Series will engage people from all walks of life and help them gain a deeper understanding of the musical and cultural impact of jazz and its musicians, the lives of the many jazz greats who called and continue to call Harlem their home, and the ways jazz and Black culture continue to impact the world today. Harlem residents will gain an appreciation for and take pride in the wide-ranging contributions their own community has made and continues to make toward the development and perpetuation of jazz, and the musical forms that have grown out of jazz.

Tens of thousands of people across Harlem, New York City, the U.S. and internationally will learn about and experience NJMH's diverse exhibits and online content. Their participation and support for NJMH will strengthen our organization and allow us to more fully accomplish our mission to preserve, promote and present jazz by inspiring knowledge, appreciation and celebration of jazz locally, nationally and internationally.

If applicable, how will the care, condition, management, access to, or use of the museum collections and/or records that are the focus of your project improve?

Access to NJMH's collections will improve, as the Jazz Is: Video Series will include relevant content that otherwise would only be available in-person at our central Harlem facility. Tens of thousands of virtual visitors each year will have access to unique, digital content that highlights Harlem, the jazz in Harlem experience and the Black-American musical pioneers vital to jazz and American culture. NJMH's upgraded website has greatly improved functionality and has been designed to showcase an ever-expanding collection of digital content.

What products will result from your project?

Through this project, NJMH will produce four 3- to 4-hour video sessions broken into multiple 10- to 15-minute segments. These videos will be closed captioned using either YouTube captioning or Amazon Web Services' cloud captioning services. In total, 12 to 16 hours of high-quality, professionally produced content that leverages the Museum's collections will be made available to audiences around the world.

How will you sustain the benefits of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?

Beyond the grant period, the Jazz Is: Video Series will remain free and accessible to all, in two centralized locations: NJMH's website and our YouTube channel. NJMH plans to expand the series to provide additional content for tens of thousands of virtual audience members each year.

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem Digital Products Plan

Type

What digital products will you create?

The Museum's goal is to record 12 to 16 hours of professionally shot and edited video content that will be broken into 10- to 15-minute segments. Video footage will be shot on 4k professional digital video cameras with professional lighting. Raw and edited footage will be stored in the Museum's digital asset management system.

Availability

How will you make your digital products openly available (as appropriate)?

Digital content will be added to the Museum's robust digital asset management system, which houses all of our digital products. The content will be made available to the public via a customized platform built into the Museum's website. This platform will deliver content free of charge.

Access

What rights will you assert over your digital products, and what limitations, if any, will you place on their use? Will your products implicate privacy concerns or cultural sensitivities, and if so, how will you address them?

Digital products will be managed under Creative Commons licenses. Artist and other presenters who participate in the videos will sign agreements that for a one-time agreed upon fee, the content will be made available in perpetuity for free educational use by the Museum.

Sustainability

How will you address the sustainability of your digital products?

All digital products are stored in four different locations: 1) on the Museum's web server; 2) on the Museum's cloud storage; 3) on a shared hard drive at the Museum; and 4) on SSD external drives. All technical documentation is part of a cloud-based digital asset management system build by the Museum. This data is also exported and stored at the Museum on a hard drive. The Museum has maintained these various systems for more than 10 years. Many of these systems are part of a larger cloud storage and redundancy system that backs up all Museum files. The Museum must maintain these systems for the institution to function.