



# **Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program**

**Sample Application MN-00-16-0036-16**

## **White Mountain Apache Tribe**

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$44,377
Amount of cost share:	\$13,309

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Abstract
- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing narratives for FY2017 applications differ from those that guided the preparation of previous applications. Be sure to use the narrative instructions in the FY2017 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

## **Abstract**

The White Mountain Apache Tribe's Nohwike' Bágowa Museum proposes the creation of an educational exhibit on traditional Western Apache foodways entitled Nest'án (That Which Has Ripened). Traditional Apache people enjoyed a diet that included an extraordinarily diverse array of wild plants, cultivated plants, wild game, and domestic animals secured through raiding and trading. This diet was healthful with high fiber, low fat, and little added sugar or salt. To obtain their food, Apache people traveled extensively and maintained an intimate knowledge of and relationship to all elements of the natural world around them. The traditional economy was shattered with the loss of lands and restriction of movement that came about with the advent of U.S. military control of Apache lands, the creation of reservations, and periodic isolation of Apache people in concentration camps beginning in the last third of the nineteenth century. Part of the legacy of cultural and economic disruption that began 150 years ago, the typical Western Apache diet today is made up largely of nutrient poor, fat and calorie-rich foods that contribute to devastating rates of obesity, Diabetes, high blood pressure, and other health problems. Western Apache knowledge holders and their research partners have over the last several decades extensively documented traditional Apache foodways through elder interviews and the study of ethnographic and other records of historic Apache ways of life. The Nest'án exhibit project will include a 600 square foot installation at Nohwike' Bágowa Museum and smaller panel or banner exhibits installed at the cultural centers or governmental offices of each of the other three Western Apache Tribes (San Carlos Apache Tribe, Tonto Apache Tribe, and Camp Verde Yavapai-Apache Nation). Intended primarily for an audience made up of Western Apache Tribal citizens and community members with emphasis on school groups, but also of significant value to non-tribal visitors, the exhibits will provide an introduction to traditional Apache foodways and will encourage Western Apache community members to better understand their heritage, to explore the natural world around them, and hopefully make positive changes to their own diets. Success of the project will be quantitatively measured through numbers of visitors to the exhibitions, and qualitatively evaluated through the collection of visitor surveys.

# NARRATIVE

## 1. Statement of Need

The four Western Apache Tribes (White Mountain Apache Tribe, San Carlos Apache Tribe, Tonto Apache Tribe and Camp Verde Yavapai-Apache Nation), collaborating under the leadership of the White Mountain Apache Tribe's Nohwike' Bágowa Museum, propose the creation of an exhibition and associated educational materials to provide an introduction to and engagement with Western Apache pre-reservation diet. Titled Nest'án ("That Which Has Ripened"), this project builds upon extensive research completed by and among Western Apache Tribal citizens and research associates (most recently led by San Carlos Tribal citizen Twila Cassadore and Tribal botanist Seth Pilsk) on traditional foodways and the extraordinarily complex relationships among Apache people, their lands and all beings that share those lands, social organization, and ways of knowing that are all interconnected with traditional foods. The products of this project will include an approximately 600 square foot exhibition that will be installed at Nohwike' Bágowa Museum and smaller panel or banner displays that will be produced and installed at the appropriate cultural or governmental centers of the other three Western Apache Tribes. All text included in the exhibit/installations will be presented bilingually in Ndee Biyati'i (the Western Apache language) and English. Each exhibit/installation will include large-format photography and graphics, audio components that will offer all text content in spoken Ndee Biyati'i, video content related to the subject matter, and materials and programs to support and encourage outdoor education and activities.

Like many Tribal Nations, contemporary Western Apaches suffer from a host of cultural, social, and health issues that are the legacy of subjugation, disempowerment, and denial of access to economic and other resources. Limited access to highly nutritive foods, but an overabundance of low-quality, high fat and carbohydrate foods results in diets that provide too many calories with too little nutrition. This contemporary diet along with a profoundly more sedentary lifestyle than that of Apache ancestors has led to high rates of diet-related disease among the Apache people. Over half of the Western Apache population, including an alarming 49 percent of children, are overweight or obese. 18 percent of the population has been diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, and the actual rate of undiagnosed Diabetes and pre-Diabetes is certainly much higher. High blood pressure and heart disease also impact a disproportionate percentage of the population. Beyond these specifically diet-related ailments, the Western Apache communities suffer from many other ailments of poverty and dispossession, including extremely high rates of depression, domestic violence, substance abuse, and suicide.

Apache elders teach that if Apache people would eat their traditional foods and exercise the way that their grandparents and great-grandparents did, and as importantly if they would engage with their lands, the resources those lands offer, and the knowledge held by the lands, these problems would disappear. The Apache diet research completed by Tribal knowledge holders and heritage perpetuation advocates offers strong confirmation of the elders' wisdom. The team has analyzed the nutritional content of more than 150 plant foods, and created 96 representative seasonal daily diets (8 for each month). Examination of these daily diets demonstrates that traditional Apache people ate foods that included complete nutrition with high fiber (two times USDA daily recommendations), low

saturated fat (half the contemporary US diet), and very little added sodium or sugar. Evidence suggests that Diabetes, obesity, heart disease, and related ailments were rare among Apache ancestors, and many of the social ills common now were unthinkable to previous generations.

The purpose of this project is to provide members of all of the Western Apache communities engaging opportunities to access information about pre-reservation diet, the plants and animals that made up that diet, and the cultural knowledge surrounding those foods. A primary goal of this work will be to encourage and empower Apache community members to get out and to explore their natural world: to go outside and see the wild plants growing around them, to learn about their clans and the foods associated with their clans, to appreciate the central importance to being Apache of knowing the Apache land.

The target audience for the Nest'án project is the more than 30,000 Tribal citizens of the four Western Apache Tribes, with special emphasis on engagement with school groups and youth organizations. Non-Apache visitors to the museums and other installation locations will be welcomed to also share in the cultural education provided by the exhibition. Nohwike' Bágowa Museum averages more than 12,000 visitors a year, approximately 40 percent of whom are local community members. The other Tribe's cultural centers and governmental complexes host fewer, but still significant numbers of annual visitors including Tribal citizens and non-local visitors.

This project will strengthen museum services for all four of the Western Apache Tribes and will address IMLS Performance Goal B, Community (“Strengthen museums and libraries as essential partners in addressing the needs of their communities”). The central product of this project will be the creation of an important, valuable, professionally-designed and constructed exhibition that will engage Tribal citizens and others with Western Apache heritage. Participants who experience the installations will obtain a better understanding of their culture and will gain greater appreciation for the value of museum programs in their communities.

## **2. Impact**

This project will meet IMLS Performance Goal B. “Community: Strengthen museums and libraries as essential partners in addressing the needs of their communities.” The underlying need that this project addresses is the loss of engagement with traditional foodways within the Western Apache communities and the dietary shortfalls and deleterious health effects that have resulted from that loss. We recognize that no one project can fully mitigate such a vast and institutionalized social challenge, but we also believe that this project will play an important role in contributing to ongoing education efforts and will provide community members with resources for cultural learning that can guide them toward greater knowledge and improved health. Specifically, this project will introduce Western Apache community members and museum visitors to traditional Western Apache foodways through photographs, graphical information, and text, audio,

video content, and outdoor activities in Ndee Biyati'i and English. Supplemental educational materials will be distributed with the exhibitions/installations, allowing participants to continue learning and exploring after their experience with this project. Visitors who have experienced the exhibition/installations will know more about traditional Apache foods, about the traditional Apache seasonal subsistence round, about cultural and social interrelationships associated with traditional foods, and about how changes in diet and behavior have negatively impacted the Apache people. We sincerely hope that after experiencing this project, visitors will be inclined to learn more about traditional foods and the natural environment around them and to adapt their diets in positive ways. The tangible products of this project, namely the exhibit installations, will be constructed of durable materials that will have an expected use-life of four or more years. The displays will continue in their original installation locations, or will be reinstalled at alternative sites for at least four years in each Tribal community. Associated educational materials are expected to be of value to the communities for many years.

Surveys including the required IMLS performance measures will be collected from participants at the conclusion of the project's initial consultation meeting and design workshop, and again from project contributors at the completion of the project period. Community-member visitors to the exhibit/installations at each local will be periodically surveyed by way of directly administered paper surveys following the exhibit opening. In addition to administering surveys to institutional staff and visitors per the IMLS performance measure requirements, we will include additional questions to measure the degree to which respondents understand the project's subject matter and "takeaway" messages regarding diet and health, and questions seeking to measure respondents' intent to modify their behaviors based on the information they have gained from their experience.

### **3. Project Design**

This project is based upon several decades of previous and ongoing research, documentation, and educational outreach regarding Western Apache relationships to the natural world and particularly to traditional foodways. It builds upon current projects by the four Western Apache Tribes to document traditional ecological and environmental knowledge and educational materials in production including plant and animal identification and language guides. Essentially all of the subject-matter content necessary for this project has been compiled and is available for adaption to appropriate formats for the exhibitions/installations. Project personnel have significant experience in the successful completion of similar projects: Project Director and Nohwike' Bágowa Museum Director Karl Hoerig has managed many educational and exhibition projects, including four previous IMLS NANH grant-supported projects. Exhibition design consultant Bianca Message has more than thirty years' experience working with museums, and particularly with Tribal museums, in the design and creation of award-winning exhibitions. Seth Pilsk brings two decades and Twila Cassadore brings a lifetime of experience learning and teaching about Apache environmental and ecological knowledge. Nohwike' Bágowa Museum staff Ann Skidmore, Beverly Malone, Ramon

Riley and Nicole Cosen all have deep knowledge of Apache heritage and extensive experience in the development and administration of exhibits and educational programs. We will also engage community members with design skills and training, and those eager to learn more about design and the use of design software. These qualifications pale in relation to the wealth of knowledge and care that community elders and knowledge-holders bring to informing and directing the content of the exhibitions/installations.

Work supported under this grant will begin with a meeting of knowledge holders, museum and heritage staff members, the contracted exhibition consultant, and community-member learners. Over the course of this two day meeting, the project team will create a master timeframe for project completion, finalize exhibition themes, determine content, establish design parameters, and define the general size and scope of all installations. Following this meeting, exhibit design consultant Bianca Message will conduct a two day design workshop with Tribal citizen design students who are currently being recruited as part of the ongoing Traditional Apache Diet Project and Apache Natural World Project, concurrent initiatives that are separately funded. The students will create and produce representative mock-up panels of portions of the installations as products of this workshop. These panels will be presented to knowledge holders, community leaders, and—at Nohwike' Bágowa Museum—to museum visitors. Through focus group-type discussions and/or individual surveys, responses to the preliminary panels will be recorded and used as formative evaluation data that will be used to guide final design and content development for the exhibitions.

Museum staff, consultants, and community-member learners with assistance from a digital content consultant will complete the recording of audio content necessary for the presentation of the exhibit's text content in spoken Ndee Biyati'i. The team will also finalize edits of video content from existing archives and newly recorded footage for inclusion by way of tablet computers in the exhibition and installations and with the digital content consultant will format all digital media for presentation.

The exhibit design consultant will collaborate with Tribal citizen design students to integrate feedback from the formative evaluations of the preliminary exhibit mock-ups and will finalize the design and layout of the exhibition for Nohwike' Bágowa and of the installation panels/banners for the other sites. Upon completion of the design work, the project director will submit all graphics and text label files to a production contractor for printing and mounting. Educational hand-outs will be finalized and printed at this time as well.

The exhibition will be constructed at Nohwike' Bágowa Museum and the installations for San Carlos, Tonto Apache Tribe, and the Camp Verde Yavapai-Apache Nation will be assembled and installed at their respective sites. An official opening of the exhibition will be held at Nohwike' Bágowa Museum in conjunction with the annual Fort Apache Heritage Celebration in May 2017, including representatives from all communities.

Summative evaluation will be undertaken at Nohwike' Bágowa by way of semi-structured interviews with educators to determine the effectiveness of the exhibition and

to identify additional ways that project personnel can increase the value of the project for student-visitors. Quantitative data regarding the number of visitors to each installation during the first year following opening will be collected where possible.

