# WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL COMMISION GRANTING CONSIDERATIONS

JUNE 3, 2019

# QUICK CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Grant program policy

    a. Statement of Need

    b. Goals and Objectives

    c. Methods and Strategies

    d. Plan of Evaluation

    e. Budget

    f. Report to Congress

2. Time span of the program

3. Application process

4. Area of consideration

5. Program limitations

6. Hiring a grant specialist v. contractor v. commission expertise

7. Provide a grant overview or panel of experts to answer general questions or provide best practices

8. Public input?

# OVERVIEW:

In research of a potential grant program, WSCC consulted with five contacts within the federal government: the National Archives, the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation, the 400 Years of African American History Commission, the World War I Centennial Commission and the Department of the Interior's Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. All consulted parties shared experience with (comparably) small-scale grant programs. Two of the five are recently created micro agencies like WSCC.

Each contact supplied different insight and there were a variety of recommendations based on the WSCC timeline and appropriation.

Each agreed that time for WSCC, which sunsets in April 2021 and will commemorate its final centennial on August 26, 2020, is short. However, the time to develop a grant program for each of the consulted agencies varied widely. For example, the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation shared that the entity was created by Congress in 1983 but did not give its first award until 1989 because the setup time and expenses took that long. In contrast, the World War I Centennial Commission's grant program took "3-4 weeks" to develop, "3 months" for proposal submissions, and grants were awarded immediately after their "Round One".

Similarly, there were contrasting experiences in dollar amounts granted, with some grants uniformly distributed among recipients; others varied. Goldwater recipients, for example, can receive varied amounts up to $7,500. Grantees of the World War I Commission could receive up to $2000 grants, and they were required to be matched. You will observe in the attached Blue Ridge National Heritage Area grant guidelines that minimum grants are $1,000 and the maximum grant amount is $16,000. (All require dollar-for-dollar matches.)

# FINDINGS:

The most recent WSCC budget projects expenditures of roughly $2.2m in its life span. With Congressional appropriations of $4m, this leaves WSCC with $1.8m in funding, accounting for no additional expenditures beyond human resources and basic operations, including printing and travel. The most similarly structured Congressional micro agency consulted is the 400 Years of African American History Commission, which projects a $6m appropriation. According to commission member Superintendent Terry Brown, the commission has not yet received its appropriation but has published a strategic plan, an excerpt of which includes their granting intentions:

**"400 Years of African American History Commission – Strategic Plan**

- Issue grants in amount not to exceed $20,000, based on approved RFP guidelines
- Secure grant-making funding.
- Develop grant-making criteria.
- Disseminate grant opportunities.
- Develop team to review grant proposals.
- Develop grant award timelines and procedures.

  TIMELINE: (Second quarter of 2019 and ongoing)

  PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners"

The $20,000 grant limit originates from the commission's federal legislation. Brown shared that the group has not yet developed these criteria or procedures and would welcome the findings of the WSCC, should it choose to grant.

It took 6 years to go from legislation to execution for the Barry Goldwater Foundation, most of which was spent in the setup and organizational process for their scholarship (grant) program, according to Lucy Decher. Because the Goldwater Foundation's startup experience was lengthy, she shared, "by the time you go through

the organizational process, you will eat up all you have." The Goldwater Foundation uses a private company to receive and process applications and pays for the lodging and travel, along with a stipend for a panel of 44 professors and faculty who are volunteer evaluators of the applications. The Foundation grants scholarships to students studying science, technology, engineering and math.

Likewise, Theo Mayer, Program Manager of the 100 Cities/100 Memorials grant effort at the World War I Centennial Commission uses volunteers to evaluate grant applicants and a private company, Submittable.com, to process proposals. The World War I Centennial Commission initially fundraised the $200,000 for its matching grant program to restore, conserve and maintain existing sites that had historical significance to WWI. Mayer estimates the operating expenses of the grant program to be $80,000 as it is run by 2 program managers, one of whom is a volunteer.

In the 100 Cities/100 Memorials grant program, each of 100 chosen sites received $2,000. Most sites applied for the grants, but a few of the grantees were designated by the commission. According to the Mayer, this did not create friction among applicants and hopefuls but instead elevated the status of the program participants because it allowed small, relatively unknown sites to be in the company of well-known WWI markers like Soldier Field in Chicago. Mayer and the rest of the WWI Centennial Commission staff developed the request for proposals independently without paid consultants, contractors or government detailees.

Christopher Eck, Executive Director of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission at the National Archives, suggested that, given the limited timeline of the WSCC and the complicated nature of federal grant programs (see pages 10 and 11 of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area grant guidelines) WSCC consider a different route. Rather than issue grants, Eck pointed to the option of coordinating one-time RFPs to be executed as cooperative agreements. This method would allow a U.S. Government entity like WSCC to transfer money to a state, as long as the entity has legal contracting authority, which WSCC is granted in Section 5 of its chartering legislation:

> "(e) Contract Authority.-
>
> "(1) In general.-Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Centennial Commission is authorized-
>
> "(A) to procure supplies, services, and property; and
> "(B) to make or enter into contracts, leases, or other legal agreements.
>
> "(2) Limitation.-The Centennial Commission may not enter into any contract, lease, or other legal agreement that extends beyond the date of the termination of the Centennial Commission under section 7(a).

Eck suggested the WSCC decide the purpose for which the grants are intended: to outlive the sunsetted agency and provide a lasting legacy? To promote art or research devoted to the subject matter? To restore or protect historic places? To honor specific suffragists or events?

According to Eck:

> "Grants and cooperative agreements are intended as financial assistance for a public purpose to a specific program activity eligible for such assistance under specific authorizing legislation.
>
> Use a grant when no substantial involvement is anticipated between us (WSCC) and the recipient during the performance of the proposed assistance activities.

Use a cooperative agreement when substantial involvement is anticipated between us and the recipient during program performance."

# GUIDELINES, PROTOCOLS AND VETTING PROCEDURES:

Guidelines:

According to Section 5: Powers of the Centennial Commission, "(g) Gifts, Bequests, and Devises.-
The Centennial Commission is authorized to solicit, accept, use, and dispose of gifts, bequests, or devises of money, services, or property, both real and personal, for the purpose of covering the costs incurred by the Centennial Commission to carry out its duties under this Act.

"(h) Grants.-The Centennial Commission is authorized to award grants to States and the District of Columbia to support programs and activities related to commemorating the centennial of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment.

The WSCC may accept gifts and may use them to carry out its duties as directed in the chartering legislation. The WSCC may award grants, but only to states and the District of Columbia to support mission-related programs and activities.

Potential protocols:

1.) Provide a blanket grant of $X to each state or District of Columbia that applies in order to support ratification celebrations and commemorations during 2020.

a. States must submit a Plan of Action for all grant funds, including how funds will be utilized

b. States will be required to provide an overview of how funds were used to commemorate the ratification of 19th amendment

2.) Artwork, Composed Music, Street Sign, Historic Marker or Mural dedicated to memorializing the women's suffrage movement and the centennial of the 19th amendment.

a. The parameters of artwork or mural to be determined by WSCC or by each state

3.) Provide grants to states for a specific celebration, such as lighting the state capitol, gold fireworks, a museum display or statewide commemorative event celebrating the centennial of the ratification.

a. These grants will also require a confirmed date/time for the event and a report or detailed outline of how the funds were utilized.

Vetting Procedures:

Assuming the WSCC commissioners would want to determine their own grant awardee criteria, the WSCC would still need to determine whether it wants to hire a contractor, a federal detailee or employee to determine the award recipients. A second option (used by two of the consulted agencies) is to appoint a board

of expert volunteers. The same two of the consulted federal small grant program contacts hired private companies to handle submissions. WSCC commissioners would need to decide whether staff or different personnel would handle submissions.

Please find basic suggested language for RFP below, and attached, the more robust grant guidelines for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

# Grant Request for Proposals

## Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission

### I. Proposal Summary

*The Proposal Summary should be about one paragraph of 1-3 sentences and should include the amount of funding requested and give the most general description of the use that will be made of the funds.*

### II. State Agency and History

*The State Agency and History section should be about 1-4 paragraphs in length and should include the purpose and functionality of the organization, its structure, information about office locations that will be involved in carrying out the activities that will be funded by the requested grant, major accomplishments of the organization, relevant experience and accomplishments of the organization, established partnerships and relationships that will be important to carrying out the activities funded by the grant, information about prior grants received from the federal government for a similar purpose, and an explanation of how the description you provide makes your organization an appropriate grantee.*

### III. Background

*The Background section, of 2-5 pages in length, should provide the commission with an explanation of the topic that has created the need for the expenditure that will be funded by the requested grant. It should provide evidence that the cause exists as well as that the proposed project will contribute to a solution to the cause or will contribute to the betterment of the state. The Background section should emphasize the impact of the topic. It should highlight media and government publications suggesting that the topic is a high priority and that the proposed solution is one that decisionmakers support and believe in. It is important that the commission reviewing this section know why your program should be funded over others.*

### IV. Project Description (Program Narrative)

*The Project Description may vary widely in length depending on the size and scope of the program that will be funded and the size of the award being sought. The project description should give the commission a detailed description of the program that will be funded by the requested grant. This description should explain the duration of time during which the funds will support the project, the goals of the project, how they will be achieved, how success or failure will be measured, what services you promise to deliver to what population and what results you expect to bring about. A useful structure is to break the project down into component goals. Use each goal as its own heading and under each goal heading, list and describe the activities that will be funded to achieve success.*

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