



NATIONAL RECORDING PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

2026 Call for Proposals

Version: 1

The call will be posted at <https://www.recordingpreservation.org/programs/grants/2026-call-for-proposals/>

The National Recording Preservation Foundation (NRPF) is pleased to invite proposals for its 2026 preservation grants program. This cycle of NRPF preservation grants will support the preservation of unique and at-risk audio collections held by organizations. Grants awarded under this call are intended to support basic activities to preserve audio collections – including inventory, condition assessment, storage, description, and digitization – or to build capacity to care for and preserve audio materials amongst collection stewards.

NRPF grants are available to non-profit archives, libraries, museums, universities and other entities engaged in the preservation of audio materials of cultural or historical importance. Applicant organizations should be located within the United States, its territories, or sovereign states and nations associated with or within the United States.

Applications may be submitted via online form at any time before July 31, 2026. See below for the link to the form.

Opportunity Details

- **Amount:** \$5,000 to \$10,000 per grant
- **Eligible Applicants:** Registered nonprofit organizations with a collecting, preservation, and/or access mission, including libraries, archives, and museums; proposals for preservation activities with a collection should confirm that the applicant organization holds the rights to preserve the collection in question
- **Duration:** 6-12 months
- **Applications Due:** July 31, 2026

Proposals May Request Support for These Types of Activities:

- Contracting a qualified vendor to digitize an audio collection for preservation

- Hiring a qualified consultant to conduct a preservation assessment of an audio collection, which will result in a written preservation plan
- Implementing planned preservation actions, including re-housing, inventorying, environmental monitoring, or other basic preservation activities (note that due to the degradation and obsolescence of physical audio media, our priority is to support the digitization or other recovery and preservation of audio signal, over the storage of physical assets)
- Inventorying and assessing collections to identify media types, condition, content, and prioritize preservation actions
- Planning and conducting workshops that increase knowledge and capacity for collections stewards to preserve, manage, or digitize audio collections, whether physical or digital (may include professional development for regular staff)

Funds may not be used for:

- Projects that do not focus primarily on audio collections
- Acquisition of collections
- Conservation or restoration of individual items
- While a portion of funds may be used to offset staff salary, a grant may not be used solely to pay or supplement a single staff member's salary

Proposal Evaluation and Selection

Applications will be evaluated on their merits, according to:

- **Significance:** The cultural and historical importance of the collection, as well as the potential for the proposed work to enhance the preservation of the audio content in the collection.
- **Urgency:** Extent to which the collection is threatened, whether by organizational capacity, failure of media carriers, or by physical degradation of the media before it may become unplayable or the audio signal becomes unrecoverable
- **Capacity:** Degree to which an applicant demonstrates the ability to manage the outcomes of a project, including preserving and providing access to digitally reformatted materials, providing access to collections, or disseminating the contents and outcomes of training activities
- **Planning:** Relevance and feasibility of the proposed preservation activities, including appropriate personnel and a clear, actionable, and completable plan for the proposed work
- **Budget:** the extent to which the project's total cost as proposed, when compared to the significance and impact of the work, is reasonable and beneficial

Grantees will be selected based on a range of factors, including the significance of the collection to be preserved, the best practices and planning for the work proposed, the capacity of the

applicant to manage the outcomes of supported activities, and the responsiveness to this call for proposals.

Applications will be assessed by reviewers selected by NRPF. Reviewers will be knowledgeable in audio preservation, collections management, and the history of recorded sound. NRPF retains the final authority to select recipients and make awards based on the advice of application reviewers.

Application Deadline

July 31, 2026

Expected Awards

NRPF expects to make two to four awards in amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Awards will be announced on or around September 30, 2026.

How to Apply

Applications should be submitted online using NRPF's online application form, which can be accessed at: <https://form.typeform.com/to/uY27ejuh>.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Who can Apply?

Libraries, archives, museums, and non-profit organizations with the mission to collect and preserve cultural heritage materials are eligible to apply. To be eligible to apply, organizations must be established in the United States or its jurisdictions. Eligible organization types include:

- a non-profit organization that is recognized as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- an accredited institution of higher education (public or nonprofit);
- a state or local government or one of their agencies;
- a federally recognized Native American, Native Alaskan, or Native Hawaiian government or one of their agencies.

The NRPF does not offer grants to individuals.

In rare cases, NRPF may offer grants to commercial entities if a case can be made for the collection's cultural and historical value, the commercial holder cannot fund such preservation

itself and a partnership exists with a non-profit entity in the field. Projects leading only to a commercial release, but without an archival preservation emphasis, are not eligible.

If my organization applied last year, can we apply again?

If your organization applied last year (2025), you can apply again this year. NRPF was unable to provide reviewer comments and feedback to all applicants, but you are eligible to apply even if you did not hear from us.

If your organization received a grant from NRPF in 2025, we can accept your application but the Foundation will prioritize making grants to new recipients.

If my organization is applying to preserve a collection, what do you mean by “digitize for preservation”?

In its preservation grants, the Foundation’s mission is to support the basic preservation of audio content. Because all physical carriers degrade over time, we recommend extracting audio content from original carriers before that deterioration progresses. At present, the best approach is to create a high-quality digital copy of the audio signal, a process commonly known as digitization.

For such preservation, the Foundation recommends applicants to propose a **flat transfer**: a direct, unaltered capture of the highest quality audio signal possible. A flat transfer employs no additional processing at the time of digitization (i.e., no noise reduce, no pitch correction, no equalization, or other signal processing applied). The goal is to produce a lossless digital surrogate that is as faithful as possible to the original recording. Additional processing or restoration work may be undertaken separately at a later stage, but it falls outside the scope of a preservation grant and should not be part of the proposed digitization workflow.

May projects result in a commercial release?

Projects undertaking collection preservation actions funded under this call should have a plan to make preserved collections as publicly available as appropriate within community standards and cultural concerns. Typical project outputs may include preservation plans, collection documentation, searchable metadata, and digital audio assets. While these materials may provide material that can later be released licensed as part of a commercial release, such an outcome may not be the primary outcome or be funded by this grant.

Where can I find a digitization vendor?

NRPF does not maintain a list of audio preservation and reformatting professionals. However, NRPF does recommend checking with those listed as providing preservation transfer services on the [ARSC Audio Preservation Directory](#).

If I plan to work with a vendor or external contractor, what documentation is needed?

Identify in the proposal what vendor or contractor you plan to work with. If your application is selected to receive a grant, NRPF will request documentation and contract confirmation before awarding the grant.

Does NRPF support indirect costs or “overhead”?

No. These grants are intended to supply resources that go directly toward preservation activities and do not support the general operating costs of an organization. [Please refer to NRPF’s grant policies for more details.](#)

How can I get more information?

For more information, please email to info@recordingpreservation.org.

Find this information on NRPF’s website at

<https://www.recordingpreservation.org/programs/grants/2026-call-for-proposals/>.