



2020-21 Community Heart & Soul® Guidelines and Application v. 10/16/2020

Introduction

The Pennsylvania Humanities Council (PHC) invites communities in the **Erie Arts & Culture** and **PA Route 6 Alliance** service areas to apply to become a PA Heart & Soul Community.

Selected communities will receive up to \$25,000 over a two year period from PHC. Selected communities may also be eligible for a \$25,000 matching grant from our funding partners at the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). (Note: requesting funding from DCED requires a separate application process which must be submitted by the local municipality.)

In addition, selected communities will be matched with a Heart & Soul Coach who will deliver training and provide technical assistance valued at over \$50,000 per year.

Eligibility Requirements

This opportunity is only open to counties in the Erie Arts & Culture and PA Route 6 Alliance network. Eligible counties include: Crawford, Erie, Warren, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Bradford, Wyoming, Lackawanna, Wayne, Pike, Venango, Mercer, and Lawrence. This opportunity is for small towns with populations of 50,000 or under.

We are inviting proposals from communities that want to enhance planning and development efforts using the humanities-based Community Heart & Soul® process. Attending an information webinar on October 6 or 8, 2020 is required to apply.

PHC will support projects at municipal scale, meaning that applicants must demonstrate commitment from a municipality (city, township or borough) and at least two local partners. PHC can only accept one application per municipality. Either a municipality or non-profit partner must be prepared to act as the fiscal sponsor of grant funds.

Local partners will vary widely depending on the community and could include (but are not limited to): local nonprofits, economic development or planning agencies, grassroots community groups, arts and culture organizations, and school districts. Partners must be committed to providing robust resources (human, financial) to the process over a two-year period and demonstrate the capacity to work collaboratively.

How To Apply

Communities must apply using PHC's online system. [Follow this link to view the guidelines, application and access the online system.](#)

Communities should first download the PDF of the guidelines and application questions and prepare their answers in advance of submitting through the online system. **Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. on November 18, 2020.**

Applicants must submit letters of support from the local municipality and any additional partners to demonstrate commitment to the process. **Letters of support cannot be submitted using the online system and must be emailed to PHC by the deadline at program@pahumanities.org with the subject line “Heart & Soul [Community Name].”**

Important Dates:

- Applications due: November 18, 2020
- Shortlisted communities selected for virtual community conversations with selection committee: December 4, 2020
- Virtual community conversations take place: early January 2021
- Selected communities notified: by January 22, 2021
- PA Community Heart & Soul® communities launch work: February 2021

For inquiries about the Community Heart & Soul® program and completing your application, please contact Jen Danifo at jdani@pahumanities.org.

For assistance with technical challenges regarding the online application submission process, contact Brandon Woods at bwoods@pahumanities.org.

Community Heart & Soul®

[Community Heart & Soul®](#) is a humanities-based, resident-driven community planning process that cultivates a shared sense of belonging among residents, engages them in thinking critically and creatively about community life and involves them in decision-making and development - all as a way to strengthen a town's social, cultural and economic vibrancy.

PHC believes people can shape the future of their communities through the power of stories and strong relationships. Key to the process is learning what matters most by gathering hopes and ideas from residents. Story gathering can take many forms, from notes on a chalkboard to in-depth interviews. It all comes together to paint a picture of what matters most to residents. This becomes the basis for building a community's shared desires, which informs a community's unique action plan. As a result, communities become more [connected, resourceful and resilient](#).

In 2015, PHC joined forces with Community Heart & Soul® because they share an approach of putting people first and investing in resident-driven actions that honor the unique character and culture of each community. To date PHC has funded 10 Heart & Soul Communities across Pennsylvania. Read more about our communities [here](#).

How Community Heart & Soul® Works

Community Heart & Soul® is a **four phase, two-year process** developed and field-tested in partnership with small cities and towns across the country. In the spirit of the humanities, Community Heart & Soul® focuses residents on the power of stories, reflection, and relationships.

The principles for success are:

- **Involve Everyone:** Hearing stories from all residents, especially those whose voices are often marginalized in community conversations, is a priority.
- **Focus on What Matters:** When residents share what they love about where they live and identify their hopes for the future, common themes emerge. These are the things that matter most to residents and become the foundation for sound planning and decision-making.
- **Play the Long Game:** Residents create a community Action Plan based on what matters most to residents and work together to implement projects and ideas. Through the process, they strengthen their collaboration muscle and build a future based on resident and community assets.

Grant Opportunity

PHC is offering \$25,000 over two years to support the Community Heart & Soul® process in selected communities. Selected communities will also be eligible to apply for a matching grant for an additional \$25,000 from our funding partners, the Department of Community & Economic Development.

PHC funding is to support expenses related to the use of the humanities-based Community Heart & Soul® method to engage residents in community planning and development. PHC funding can be used to support: staffing/project coordination, marketing/communications and community events/meetings. A one-to-one match isn't required, but selected communities are expected to contribute significant human or financial (in-kind or cash) resources to the project.

In addition to receiving funding, PA Heart & Soul Communities are matched with a Heart & Soul coach who will provide exclusive training and technical support at no charge to the community throughout the course of the Heart & Soul process. This coaching and technical support, valued at over \$50,000 per year, includes:

- In-person training for community members on all four phases of the Heart & Soul process on topics like completing the community network analysis, creating your work plan, resident engagement planning, story collecting and sharing methods, developing Community Heart & Soul® statements and action ideas, and stewarding Heart & Soul in your community.
- Regular support calls with your Heart & Soul coach as well as access to regular Community of Practice calls with the growing state-wide PA Community Heart & Soul® network and the national Community Heart & Soul® network.
- Inclusion in learning and evaluation activities designed to help Heart & Soul communities better understand, advocate and get recognition for how humanities-based resident engagement impacts community and economic development.
- Participation in statewide and national partner networks which connect Heart & Soul communities with opportunities for funding and recognition.

Note: Communities will work with their Heart & Soul coach to schedule training through the course of the project. PHC expects Community Heart & Soul® towns to launch work in early 2021.

Selection Process

Applications are reviewed by a committee of staff from PHC and Community Heart & Soul® as well as coaches and past Heart & Soul communities representatives.

Above all, the community should demonstrate their readiness and commitment to using Community Heart & Soul® as a new way to plan for their community's future. Committee assesses applications using the following criteria.

Review Criteria:

- **Commitment to resident-driven planning:** community demonstrates a commitment to involving all residents in the community planning and decision-making process.
- **Commitment from local partners, especially the local municipality:** Community shows that it has reached out to and engaged the municipality and additional community partners/groups/organizations to collaborate on the process.
- **Experience with resident engagement.** Community demonstrates a desire for and/or a track record in resident engagement in community decision-making.
- **Commitment to engaging hidden and missing voices:** Community demonstrates an understanding of who the hidden and missing voices are in the community and some of the current barriers to participation for these groups.
- **Interest in creatively gathering stories of residents.** Community demonstrates a desire and openness to using storytelling/gathering as a way to engage residents in the planning and decision-making process.
- **Commitment to contributing resources to the process.** Community demonstrates that they have financial and/or human assets to draw on to make the process a success.

As part of the selection process, the review committee will first review the written applications and letters of support and select a shortlist of communities to move forward in the process to participate in a virtual community interview.

Those selected for these interviews will be notified in early **December 2020**. PHC expects interviews to take place in **early January 2021**.

After these interviews take place, the committee will make its final decisions. Applicants will be notified by the end of **January 2021** if they've been selected to be PA Heart & Soul Community.

Application Form

Note: communities must submit their application through our online system and email letters of support to program@pahumanities.org with the subject line "Heart & Soul [Community Name]."

We strongly suggest community partners talk through these questions ahead of time and elect one person to submit the application. Also, because the online system will not let you save and return to your application, applicants should be prepared to submit the entire application in one sitting.

I. Community Information

City, township or borough: _____

Population : _____

Contact person: _____

Title: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Partnering Organization(s):

Organization: _____
Contact person: _____
Title: _____
Mailing address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____

Partnering Organization(s):

Organization: _____
Contact person: _____
Title: _____
Mailing address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____

Please indicate the name(s) of the individual(s) who attended the H&S workshops:

II. Community Narrative

To prepare your narrative, we strongly encourage you and the partners refer to the [Getting Started with Community Heart & Soul®: A Community Workbook](#). The workbook is designed to help you and your partners think through some of the questions below.

Note: We are not asking for a budget at this time. However, we encourage applicants to refer to the *Getting Started* guide to familiarize themselves with the sample budget and costs associated with a two-year Heart & Soul process. Question #7 is meant to help potential Heart & Soul communities think about existing resources/assets in the community and how they might use them to support a full-scale project. PHC and the Heart & Soul coach will work with selected communities to budget for their project as part of pre-work/Phase 1.

Please provide brief responses to the following questions:

1. Describe your town in terms of demographics and community assets. What is your town's unique history and culture? (e.g., demographics, community assets, local culture, etc.)
2. Why are you interested in bringing Community Heart & Soul® to your town and what do you hope the process will accomplish for your community? Why is now the right time for your community to take on Community Heart & Soul® ?
3. Who are the partners and what assets do they bring to this partnership? What, if any, experience do the partners have collaborating on similar community projects?
4. Who are the missing and hidden voices in your community and what barriers have they faced to participation in community planning and decision-making?
5. What is your community's history with resident participation in community decision-making?

6. Story-gathering is a very important component of Phase 2 of the Community Heart & Soul® process, which includes listening, sharing and analysing stories with the community to discover what matters most. Why is using this method of community engagement and planning of interest to you? What experience does your community have in trying creative methods to engage residents?
7. What financial and human resources are available in your community to support Community Heart & Soul®? Do you foresee any challenges identifying resources for the project?
8. Are there any other key factors or circumstances that you would like us to know?