

# MINNESOTA HUMANITIES CENTER

Presentation to:  
House Legacy Committee  
Kevin Lindsey, CEO & Tristy A. Auger, Director of Grants  
Wednesday, March 18, 2026



# OVERVIEW

The Minnesota Humanities Center appreciates the opportunity to provide the Legacy Committee with an update on recent grant administration and program activity during the 2025–2027 biennium. Today, we will discuss the status of 2025–2027 grants, our grants administration process, and recent program activity.

# FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- Truly embrace all Minnesota communities,
- Be quick, but not in a hurry, and
- Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.

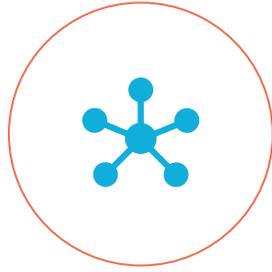
# 2025–2027 GRANTS

Nearly 75% of the grant funding (\$21,417,000) provided by the Legislature for MHC to award to individuals, organizations, and governmental units will be awarded and encumbered within the next 60 days. MHC anticipates that the remaining grant funding will be encumbered by January of 2027.

# APPLICATION PROCESS



**STREAMLINED  
APPLICATION  
PROCESS**



**LEVERAGED  
NETWORKS TO  
EXPAND  
OUTREACH**



**CREATED FAQ'S**



**PROVIDED  
SUPPORT &  
ASSISTANCE**

# SUPPORT & ASSISTANCE



Responded to **hundreds of inquiries** (emails/phone calls/drop ins)



Hosted **eleven informational sessions** for 346 participants



Hosted **30-minute meetings with 69** interested applicants to discuss pending applications



Reviewed **137 draft applications** & provided feedback prior to application submission

# REVIEW PROCESS

## Step 1 – Initial

### Ensure each application:

- Is complete
- All attachments have been provided
- Within statutory requirements



## Step 2 – Panel

### Each application is:

- Assessed against criteria & alignment with legislative intent
- Scored against rubric
- Recommend grant award amount



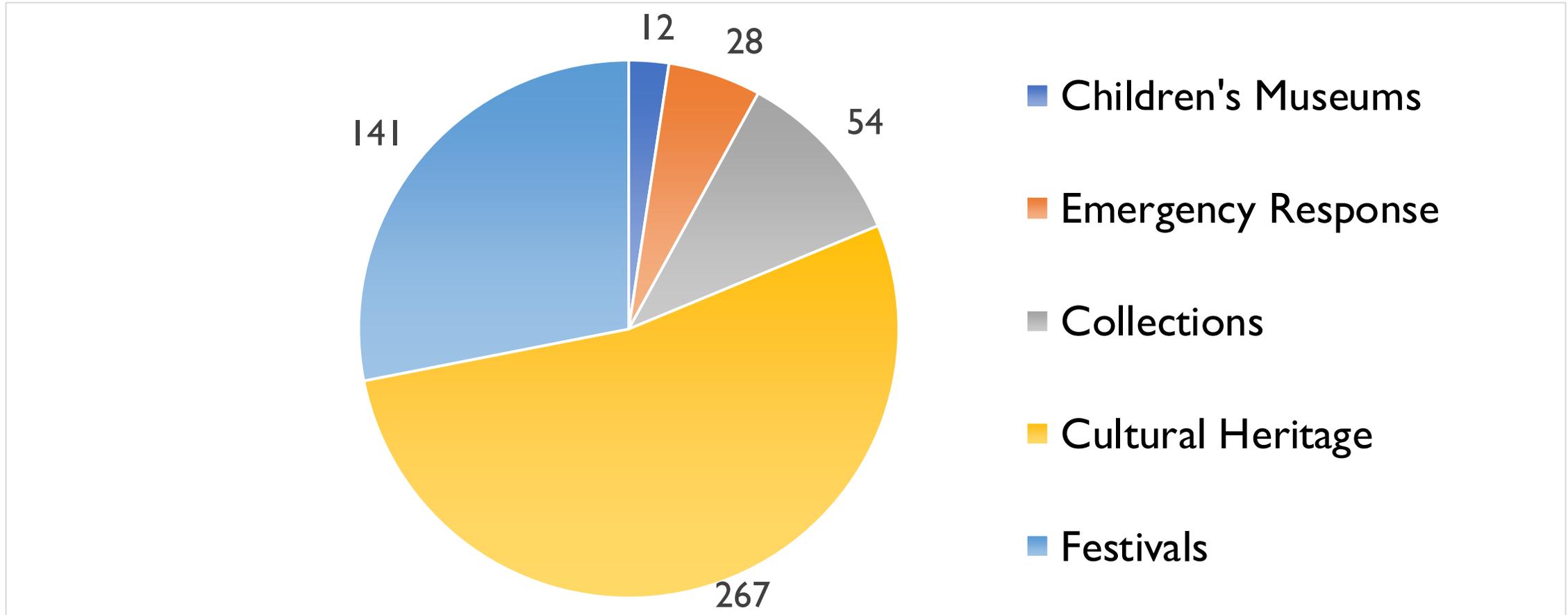
## Step 3 – Financial

### Ensure:

- Financial documents are within guidelines
- IRS check is complete
- Proposed expenses are in alignment with Legacy requirements

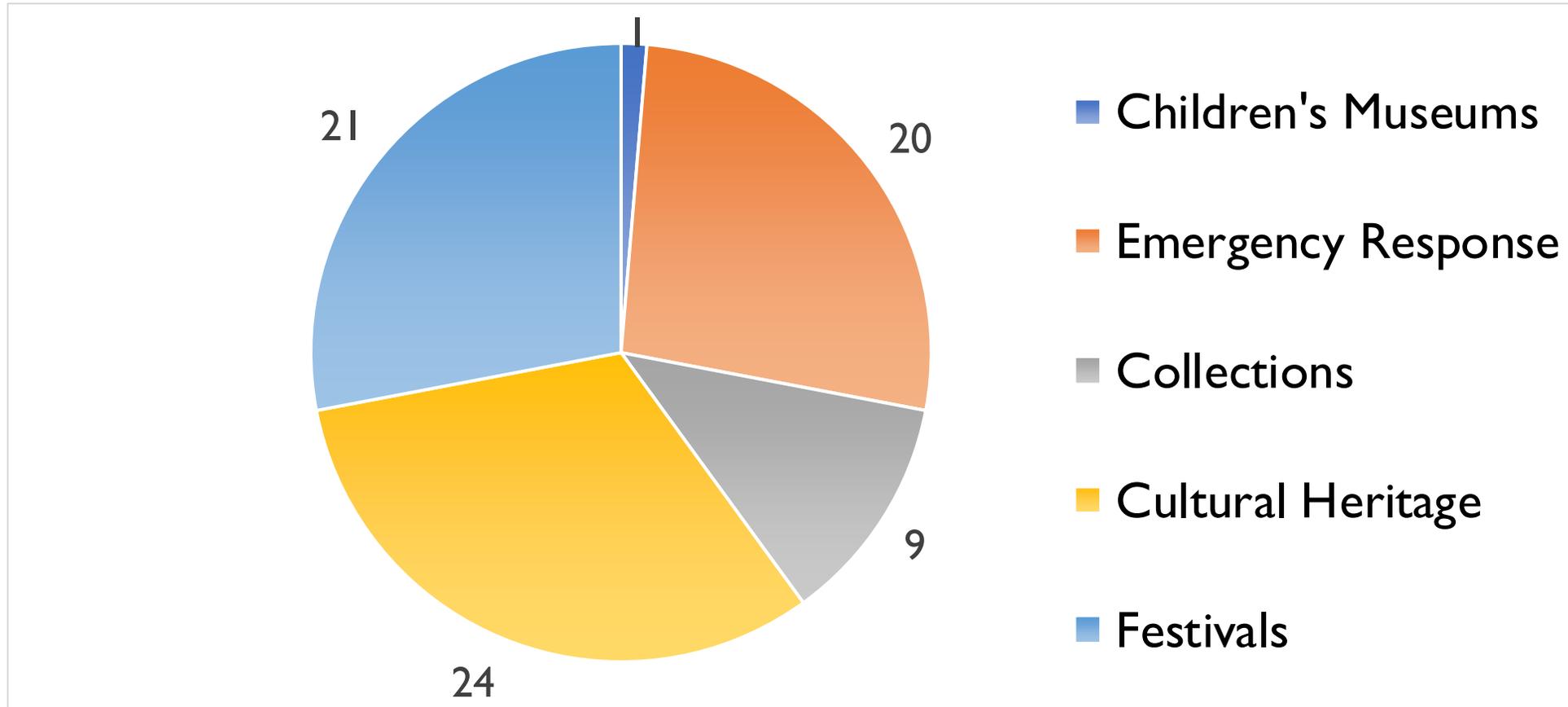
# APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED

**TOTAL = 490**



# DID NOT PASS INITIAL REVIEW

TOTAL = 74



# REVIEW PANEL

After selecting panelists with experience, expertise, and no conflicts of interest, MHC creates review panels such that each review panel typically has at least 15 applications but less than 35 to review.

Applications are typically scored on a 100–point system.

# FINANCIAL

All the applicants that have been identified to receive funding by the review panelists have their financial information reviewed by MHC before any grant award is finalized. In this stage, we confirm (1) eligibility, (2) compliance, and (3) capacity of the applicant.

# 2025–2027 BIENNIUM GRANT STATUS

Children’s Museums  
(Completed)  
\$1,500,000

Cultural Heritage FY26  
(Review Panel  
Recommendations)  
\$6,299,000

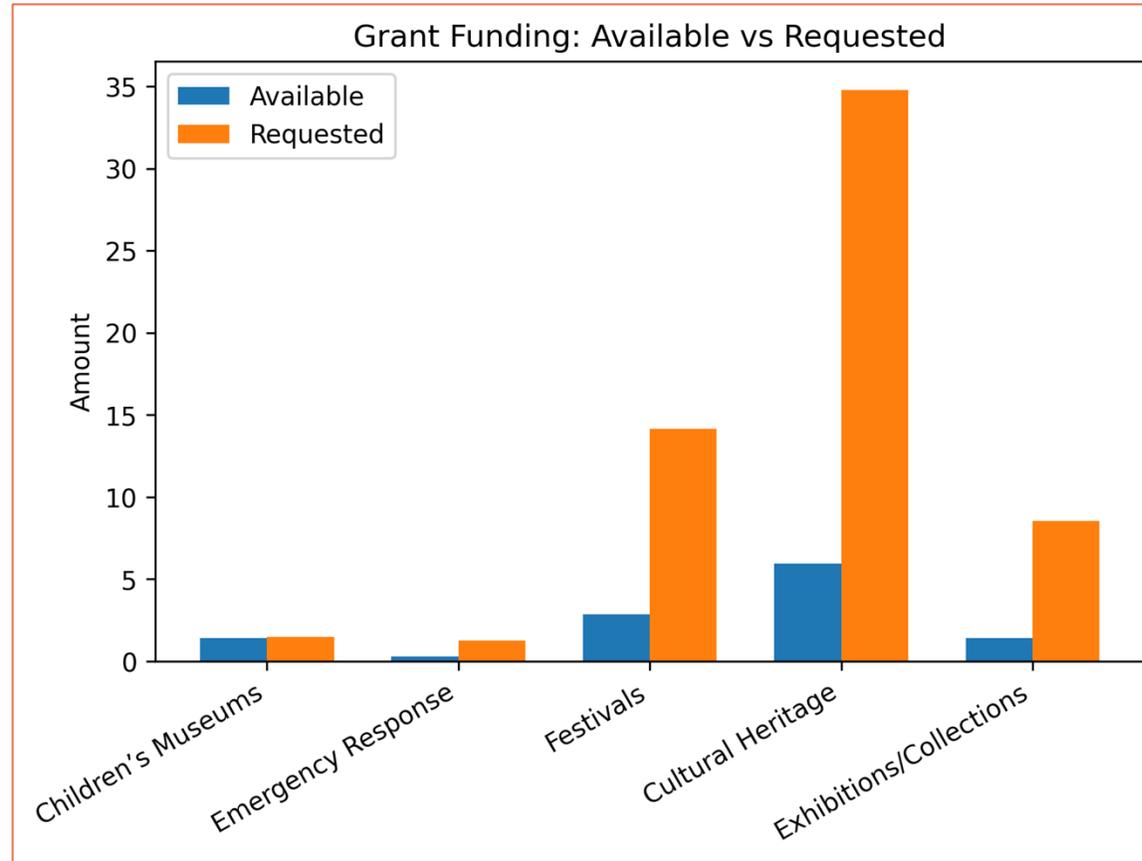
Festivals  
(Finalizing Agreements)  
\$3,000,000

Museums, Exhibits,  
and Collections  
(Completed)  
\$1,500,000

Ethnic Media  
(Grant Closed Monday)  
\$500,000

Emergency Response  
(FY26)  
(Completed)  
\$300,000

# 2025-2027 BIENNIUM MHC APPROPRIATIONS



# GRANT FUNDING: AVAILABLE VS REQUESTED

Program	Available	Requested	Funding Gap	% of Demand Funded
Children's Museums	1,417	1,482	0.065	96%
Emergency Response	0.284	1,253	0.969	23%
Festivals	2,835	14,150	11.315	20%
Cultural Heritage	5,953	34,783	28.830	17%
Exhibitions / Collections	1,417	8,540	7.123	17%

# 2025-2027 BIENNIUM

## REMAINING GRANTS TO LAUNCH

Minnesota Musicians  
(Scheduled Launch – May)  
**\$400,000**

Youth Literary  
(Scheduled Launch – May)  
**\$500,000**

Cultural Studies  
Materials  
(Scheduled Launch – Fall)  
**\$400,000**

Emergency Response  
FY27  
(Launched – Rolling)  
**\$300,000**

Cultural Heritage  
(FY27)  
(Scheduled Launch – Fall)  
**\$4,868,000**

# 2025–2027 BIENNIUM GRANT LESSONS

- Grant level for Children’s Museum seems appropriate (museums did receive funding in Education budget),
- There remains significant demand for cultural legacy grants, and
- Designation of “priority” may cause some organizations to “mail it in”.

# NATIVE AMERICAN LIVES SERIES

In collaboration with Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, published through Lerner Publishing, MHC has published seven (7) of twelve (12) books in the series. The first seven biographies have told the stories of Ella Cara Deloria, Charles Albert Bender, Peggy Flanagan, George Morrison, Marie Louise Bottineau Baldwin, and Sharon Day. We are expecting three additional titles to be released in August 2026. We are in discussions with our partner to publish two additional books in the Series.

# OBJECTS OF WAR

Participants are asked to bring an item connected to an experience of war and conflict which could be dog tags, a service member's good luck charm, or a family heirloom. Participants are then asked to share the story of this item during the evening. Moderated by trained facilitators, the conversation helps participants understand why we hold on to certain objects and how those objects help us better understand the impact of war.

# FEEDING OUR SOULS: ESSENCE OF FOOD AND MUSICAL JOY

Examining the relationship of food and music, the partners to this unique integration of the arts featured Chef James Johnson, Founder of Cooks of Hope, and members of the Vocal Essence Witness Choral Ensemble, G. Phillip Schoultz Director. The event explored the richness of Gullah-Geechie, Low Country cuisine, traditional spirituals, Gullah music, and used story circle dialogues to uplift and share important cultural legacy stories and histories.

# LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council in partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center hosted the 5th Annual Dakota and Ojibwe Language Symposium. The symposium brought people and educators working in Dakota and Ojibwe language revitalization together to celebrate successes, highlight the current state of the field, shape future language revitalization efforts, and elevate the visibility of Indigenous languages throughout the state of Minnesota.

# SKETCHES OF MINNESOTA COMEDY TOUR – END OF YEAR SHOW

Sketches of Minnesota is a traveling program designed to increase understanding and encourage conversations among people who might not know each other or have differing viewpoints, by bringing neighbors together over a shared meal and improvisational comedy.

MHC and the comedy team at Danger Boat Productions spent late summer and most of fall traveling to communities across Minnesota. The End of Year shows gave audiences in Minneapolis and Rochester the opportunity to enjoy the stories of each town . . . without any backseat driving.

# UPCOMING – DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE @250

We are partnering with the Minnesota Historical Society and Braver Angels to create a conversational series to explore themes raised within the Declaration of Independence and the future of our democratic republic for the next 250 years. The conversational events will be held in each congressional district within Minnesota.

**THANK YOU!**