

FOLK ARTS

Missouri Folk Arts Program

Request for Proposals, **CONTRACT FIELDWORK** Northeast Kansas City Neighborhood/Jackson County

Proposal deadline: August 28, 2018

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The Missouri Folk Arts Program (MFAP) at the University of Missouri seeks to contract with a professional folklorist to conduct a folklife/arts *Show Me Folk* field survey with documentation in Jackson County, Missouri, including within the ethnically diverse Historic Northeast Kansas City Neighborhood.

The field survey is a major component in MFAP's *Show Me Folk* efforts to engage new-to-us traditional artists; engender deeper understanding of



established and emerging cultural communities; and spark a working relationship between MFAP, its partners, and those artists for projects and public programs. The target region—Jackson County and the Historic NKC Neighborhood—has long been multi-ethnic. Previously Irish, Italian, and Jewish immigrants populated the area. More recently,

immigrants from Mexico, South Sudan, Somalia, Vietnam, and Central America, for instance, call the neighborhood home. “Historic Old Northeast” residents speak over thirty-five languages. Nearby Sugar Creek is home to the annual Slavic Festival, with tamburitza music and traditional dance, celebrating those Eastern European immigrants who

*A program of the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency,
and the Museum of Art & Archaeology at the University of Missouri*

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came to work for Standard Oil in the early 20th century, as well as their descendants.

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A successful project will result in the identification and documentation of approximately 8-15 folk/traditional artists; their cultural communities; and, where feasible, a cultural event. At least one-fourth of the artists should be appropriate for introduction into MFAP and Missouri Arts Council projects (i.e. Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program; MAC's Touring Program; or public demonstrations/performances). The work will include:

- completion of fieldwork forms (data sheets, interview logs, multimedia logs, release forms);
- submission to MFAP of all multimedia documentation (audio, photography, and video) of folk artists, as well as their contact information and brief biographies (200-250 words);
- interim reports;
- a final descriptive report;
- and, in consultation with MFAP staff, advisers, and student volunteers, an outline for a one-day public program featuring artists identified in the survey.

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Work for this project may begin after September 28, 2018 and must be completed by May 28, 2019, including all deliverables, as outlined above. Fieldwork days need not be consecutive. The successful applicant should have a minimum of two years' professional experience (outside one's degree program). An advanced degree in folklore or a related discipline, such as cultural anthropology or ethnomusicology, is preferred, while demonstrable, exceptional non-academic experience may serve as substitute. Some verbal proficiency in Spanish is preferred but not required. Qualified applicants must have access to, experience with, and technical competence with professional digital equipment (camera, audio-video recorder, computer/laptop).

Proposals must include the following, preferably digitally or online:

- a 500-750 word cover letter highlighting qualifications and outlining a project proposal (timeline and deliverables);
- a *preliminary* budget proposal (total contract of approximately \$12,000-14,000) to include: the number of field research and office days, as well as *in-state* travel expenses (lodging; mileage at .37 per mile or rental car fees; and per diem at \$42);

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- a *vitae* or resume;
- contact information for 2-3 references relevant to the proposed project;
- *recent (2012 or later)*, representative work samples
 - 1-2 excerpts from recorded interviews (max. 3-4 minutes);
 - 10-12 ethnographic photographs (include subject; date; location; and context);
 - sample field notes (up to 5 pages);
 - 1 writing sample (i.e., public program flier; ethnographic blog post; event program essay or artist profile) OR link to 1 digital story (up to 5 minutes).

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MFAP will deem proposals submitted without these items to be incomplete and will not include those proposals in the pool for reviewers.

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Upon execution of a contract, MFAP staff will provide or arrange:

- Preliminary leads via staff and regional advisers;
- fieldwork form templates (audio log, photo log, general release, artist data sheet, release for internet materials);
- supplies (i.e. portable 1T external drive, batteries, SD cards);
- temporary office space in the region;
- reimbursements for travel expenses (in-state), as determined between MFAP and contractor, [at University of Missouri rates](#);
- and fees for contracted field and office hours upon receipt of deliverables.

The *Show Me Folk* project is made possible with grant funds from a National Endowment for the Arts' Folk & Traditional Arts Partnership Grant and the Missouri Arts Council. The Northeast Kansas City Neighborhood/Jackson County field survey represents Year Two of a multi-year plan: to discover regional traditions with the assistance of consultants, community scholars, and student workers; to coordinate public activities featuring local artists with regional partners; and to bolster the strength and infrastructure of Missouri's folk and traditional

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arts, artists, and cultural communities. As with all MFAP projects, fieldwork documentation will become part of the Missouri Folk Arts Program Collection at The State Historical Society of Missouri.

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Send complete proposals as a PDF email attachment to HigginsLL@missouri.edu (please put FOLKLIFE SURVEY in the subject line), via Box.com, or contact Dr. Higgins first to arrange appropriate alternative digital file storage options.

Completed proposals must be submitted to the MFAP before **August 28, 2018** at 11:59 p.m.—a receipt deadline. For further information, please contact Lisa L. Higgins at HigginsLL@missouri.edu no later than one week prior to deadline.

Note: Nothing in this RFP should be understood as an obligation by the Missouri Folk Arts Program, the University of Missouri, or the Missouri Arts Council to fill this contract position.