



Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services

Sample Application MN-249169-OMS-21

Suquamish Indian Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$85,400
Amount of cost share:	\$12,609

The project description can be viewed in the IMLS Awarded Grants Search:
<https://www.ims.gov/grants/awarded/mn-249169-oms-21>

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline be sure to follow the instructions in the most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category (if applicable) to which you are applying.

5. Proposal Narrative

Project Justification

Suquamish Museum leadership, Suquamish Elders program management and Suquamish Cultural Committee members identified the priority critical need to engage in an Oral History Program with Suquamish Elders as soon as possible at a Retreat in December 2019 (see Supporting Documents “Cultural Committee Notes”). The Suquamish Tribal community lost a number of Elders over the past few years who had not been interviewed for the Suquamish Tribal archives. A growing sense of urgency for the project only increased in early 2020 at the start of the Pandemic. While the Suquamish Tribe, to date, has not suffered a loss due to the Pandemic the alarm and concern drove the point home to act.

The Suquamish Oral History project, 1981-1983 (see Supporting Documentation “1980s Oral History Project Topic Summary), conducted by the Suquamish Cultural Program (precursor to the Suquamish Museum) is a foundational knowledge archive for the Suquamish Tribe, housed and cared for at the Suquamish Museum. The plan to continue the effort with the “next generation” of elders had been assumed in the 1980s, but since then only random elders have been interviewed for topical knowledge goals; for instance, traditional hunting and gathering locations by staff of the Suquamish Tribe Department of Natural Resources. The subsequent recorded interviews (some transcribed) conducted between 1982 and today are archived in various Suquamish Tribe Administrative departments with current discussions on how to coordinate a single Oral History Archive centered at the Museum. While an identified goal to further ease of information access the funding, privacy and current usage of the oral histories owned by many different Suquamish Tribal government departments make coordination of a single archive challenging. The roadblocks we encounter in this effort further highlighted the need for the Suquamish Museum to conduct a universal elder oral history project.

The original 1980s project interviewed 48 Elders, the oldest born in 1892 and the youngest in 1920, with over 170 hours of recorded and transcribed interviews. The final transcriptions, approximately 30 hours of interviews, were completed in 2019 with funding from the Suquamish Tribe Legal Department. The current elder population, 70 years and older, comprise 78 individuals; the children and grand-children of the original 1981-82 group. These elders, born approximately 1930-1950 will contribute to the ancestral family oral knowledge archived at the Museum. And, add knowledge and experiences gained throughout their lifetimes. Including, the experiences of living through the socially transformative decades of the 1960s and 1970s when racial injustice activism exploded onto the national scene, including the local impact of the American Indian Movement (see Supporting Documents “Photograph” of

Suquamish Tribe member Nancy Chiquiti, standing wrapped in flag, participating in an AIM occupation of a Federal Government building in Washington DC).

Suquamish Tribal members, the Suquamish Museum, Suquamish cultural leadership, and researchers of contemporary Indigenous culture will benefit from the project. The generational aspect of the two, 1980s and 2020s, projects will also provide for comparative analysis. The elements of culture some describe as “lost” remain but adopt new forms of expression; both projects will have focused on this cultural element (see Supporting Documents “Interviewing Theory”). We anticipate the Oral History project will inform current and future programmatic development for the Suquamish Museum. A goal will be to provide the digital recordings through topical presentations utilizing internet applications. A slide-tape production combining Elders voice with photographs resulted from the 1980s project. “Come Forth Laughing” remains the primary method the Suquamish Museum shares with the public an overview of Suquamish culture (see **Suquamish Museum** YouTube Channel). Similar productions utilizing modern methods will be employed to post projects sharing contemporary images with Elders voices.

Project Work Plan

The goal of the Suquamish Museum Oral History Project is to gather the knowledge of Suquamish life and culture as expressed by the current generation of Suquamish Elders, 70 years of age and older (78 individuals), through audio recordings and associated archival materials. The project methodology will mirror an earlier Oral History project completed by the Suquamish Cultural Program (precursor to the Suquamish Museum) in the 1980s, effectively adding generational knowledge to the Suquamish Tribe Archive. Topical areas in the original project will be supplemented with subsequent events corresponding to the Adult years of the current Elder population. A few decades will overlap with the original cohort, 1960s-1970s, and then be contemporary with the current cohort.

The Oral History Project 70+ year old participants add an inherent risk factor to the success of the project. We anticipate that not all 78 elders will be available for the interviews due to health issues or other conditions beyond control. Our goal will be to document all 78 with biographical, genealogical and photograph information; an effort also mirroring the 1980s project. Further, we will prioritize a one hour Biographical interview even if the elder is not able to continue on with the follow up in-depth interviews. The possibility of less activity with some elders helps to mitigate a second risk factor being the goal of completing the process with sets of 10 elders every month for 7 months and then a final set 8 elders in the 8th month. Of course, the other largest unknown risk is the possible impact and future course of the

Pandemic. Requesting an extension of the timeline would likely result if the Pandemic is not under control by September 2021.

On-going evaluation of the Oral History interview sound quality will be a part of the training and archiving functions of the project. Frequent (weekly) project evaluation meetings to ensure appropriate training of the Project Coordinator and Transcriptionist will occur in August 2021. Followed by bi-weekly meetings in September and October 2021 to ensure Project goals are being met. Two more evaluation meetings will occur in January 2022 and April 2022 to ensure the Project progress and product is as anticipated. The Project Coordinator and Transcriptionist will work out of the Museum and daily interaction will occur for ample opportunity to discuss challenges or how to handle day-to-day issues.

The Project will start on July 1, 2021. The notification of a successful Grant Award will begin the administrative approvals and hiring processes to be ready for Project start. The grant funding will allow the Suquamish Museum to hire a full-time 40 hour/week (2080 hours total) Project Coordinator (preferably a Suquamish Tribal member) who will perform the majority of work associated with the project; including, training, scheduling, interviewing, quality control and primary contact partner with the Suquamish Tribe Elders Program management. The Elders Program staff are enthusiastic to help with scheduling and facilitating ease of access and provide a level of comfort between Interviewer/Interviewee. The Elders program staff are frequent if not primary personal contacts for elders, especially the older 70 plus group.

Project tasks and objectives:

- Planning retreat for key project staff in July 2021 after the Project Coordinator is hired to survey the project roles, goals, and deliverables
- Project training for the Coordinator and Transcriptionist in July 2021 to review project methodology and seek Oral History Association training through the internet and local opportunities (see Supporting Documents "Interview Technique & Lessons Learned).
- During July and August 2021, Project Manager, Lydia Sigo, and Administrator, Janet Smoak, will facilitate the review and update of the 1980s project topics/questions with the Suquamish Museum Board, Elders Program management and Cultural Committee members, many of whom participated in some way during the 1980s Oral History Project.
- Prioritize the list of Elders into sets of 10; taking into consideration the health, availability, and Elders wishes in consultation with the Elders Program management staff. Elders who live away from the Reservation will be identified and other pathways of funding secured to ensure inclusion. An Elders Program staff member indicated a desire to train as an interviewer who could then travel for the interviews.

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- Beginning in September 2021 through April 2022 engage the Oral History interview work and concurrently transcribe the Biographical interviews. The Project Coordinator (Suquamish Tribal member to be hired) will be the interviewer or supervise training for another Suquamish Tribal member volunteer to be able to interview elders. The Transcriptionist, Jennifer Pratt, will devote at least 234 hours as a grant match to transcribe the possible 78 up to an hour long interviews; anticipating 3 hours required per hour of interview.
- Each elder's information will be archived as the sets of 10 are completed by the Project Manager, Lydia Sigo, who will review the audio recordings, monitor the completion & certify the transcriptions, and ensure legal paperwork is complete, along with other miscellaneous pieces for the Archive file. At the start of the project she will work with the Suquamish Tribe IT department to designate Museum Server space for the audio files and will also create the archival storage Gold CD-R discs; one archive and one for future research use.

The Suquamish Museum will host a Community kick-off meeting in July 2021 to announce the project to Suquamish Tribal families. A wrap-up celebration in June 2022 will celebrate the project and debut a short audio/photo production using the 2020 Elders voices and photographs. The Project Administrator, Janet Smoak, will send out a Project press release in July 2021 and a project completion press release in June 2022. Over the course of the grant, as the Project Administrator, she will conduct Progress meetings in November 2021, February and May 2022 to ensure the project is meeting deliverables; complete reports in October 2021 and June 2022 as well as monitor the budget in the Suquamish Tribe Fiscal new year, January 2022. Ms. Smoak will also attend the mandatory IMLS meeting to be scheduled or assign another project staff member to attend.

Project Results

The intended result of the Suquamish Museum Oral History Project is to conduct biographical and topical follow-up interviews with the majority of 78 identified Suquamish elders aged 70 years or older. The process will also produce associated biographical and genealogical information, family and personal photographs, and audio interviews. The project will follow the methodology of an earlier Oral History project conducted with Suquamish Elders in 1981-1982 to provide comparative information between essentially Parents/Grandparents and Children/Grandchildren generations. The information will then document over 100 years of Suquamish history, experience, and culture. The topic areas will encompass natural resources, economy, Tribal government and leadership, the nature of the Suquamish community (a People in time and space), education and transitions in Suquamish Culture. The project prioritized by the Museum, Elder Program and Cultural leadership in late 2019 will address a desire and goal

emanating from the 1980s project to continue documenting Suquamish history and culture through Elder interviews.

We anticipate the information gained through the project will inform current and future programmatic development at the Museum and with our Suquamish cultural partners over the next foreseeable decades. Especially, as an indicator of where to focus collections acquisition efforts for the Suquamish Museum; produce virtual educational content and more; the information will direct long range planning. The Suquamish tribal value of the traditional ancestral methods of oral communication to share knowledge will once again influence the next generation, born in the 1960s and 1970s, and their children to prioritize the next Oral History project.

The essential work product of the project will be the 78 Elders files. As a group of ten is completed each month, the Project Manager will review for quality and completeness. Each elder's file will contain a legal release form, biography/genealogy data sheet, family photographs documenting the elder's life, transcribed biographical interview, and the associated audio files of follow-up interviews. At the end of the project, the Suquamish Museum will host a community celebration with select audio from the participants combined with Elder photographs in the spirit of the 1980s Oral History production "Come Forth Laughing." The new production will be archived with the 2020 project.

Suquamish Museum Oral History Project task timeline

