



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the NEH Division of Preservation and Access application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/divisions/preservation> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Sonoma County Library Preservation and Disaster Supply Project

Institution: Sonoma County Library

Project Director: Joanna Kolosov

Grant Program: Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions

A. What activity (or activities) would the grant support?

Sonoma County Library (SCL) requests funds for the ongoing preservation and protection of its Special Collections (History & Genealogy Library and County Archives, Wine Library, and Petaluma History Room) through the purchase of environmental monitoring units (data loggers), shelving for oversized archival materials, and disaster recovery supplies that can be easily mobilized in an emergency. The Sonoma County History & Genealogy Library, having the largest collections and staff, will lead the project, which is designed to address specific recommendations from a 2018 preservation needs assessment and bolster SCL's disaster preparedness for its irreplaceably valuable collections.

B. What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?

The focus of this project is the Special Collections of Sonoma County Library which comprise the Sonoma County History & Genealogy Library in Santa Rosa, an off-site County Archives located about nine miles east of downtown Santa Rosa, the Wine Library in Healdsburg, and the Petaluma History Room in Petaluma.

The **Sonoma County History & Genealogy Library (SCH&G)** is located in a 5,387-square-foot single-story 1967 building adjacent to the Central Santa Rosa Library. SCH&G's collections originated from the "Sonoma-California Room," a small collection of local history and genealogical materials housed in the Central Library. In 1994, the contents of the California Room were moved to their current location to better accommodate substantial growth of the collection. In 2002, the Sonoma County Library Commission, the governing board of the county-wide library system, adopted a new mission statement for the entity, renaming it the Sonoma County History & Genealogy Library. Until January 2018, SCH&G shared the building with SCL's Adult Literacy Program.

SCH&G holds more than 16,650 print items: local, national and world-wide genealogical books, including yearbooks and indexes to cemetery, marriage, birth, death and militia records; nearly 130 genealogy-related periodicals; and primary and secondary materials on many aspects of Sonoma County history. As one of the largest genealogical collections on the West Coast conveniently located in a public building, SCH&G offers easy access to professional and hobby genealogists and historians alike, serving a wide community of researchers also via Interlibrary Loan. The library's Rare Books Room holds 1,100 volumes of rare materials, including several first editions by Jack London, and fragile manuscripts. These items, mostly acquired through private donations, encompass scrapbooks, diaries, correspondence and other documents associated with Sonoma County families and businesses (often including photographs, postcards, daguerreotypes, stereo-optic cards or tin-types) dating back to the 19th and 20th centuries.

SCH&G is home to a comprehensive collection of Sonoma County maps from the early 19th century to the present, Sanborn fire insurance maps in print and on microfilm, and the primary aerial photographs collection (1961-2000) for the county. The library has local newspapers on microfilm dating back to 1856 and vertical files containing newspaper and magazine articles covering topics of local interest and businesses. SCH&G also houses the California Indian Library Collection (CILC), comprising research texts, photographs, and sound recordings of the Native American tribes of Sonoma County. One of 20 such holdings in Northern California, CILC was a joint effort by the State Library and U.C. Berkeley to return unique cultural materials to California's Native Americans by making them available through their local libraries.

The library maintains more than 150 unique audiovisual items – DVDs, videocassettes and CD-ROM—and has recently built a web archive, North Bay Fires 2017, hosted by the Internet Archive's web archiving platform Archive-It. The library's most popular and widely used collection is the Sonoma Heritage Collections, an online database of more than 42,000 historic photographs that includes contributions from other organizations such as the Western Sonoma Historical Society and the Luther Burbank Home and Gardens. SCL offers a robust range of e-resources, several of these specialized

databases being highly used by SCH&G visitors: Ancestry Library Edition, Newspapers.com, HeritageQuest, Genealogy Bank, the San Francisco Chronicle, and the New York Times.

The **Sonoma County Archives** comprise 5,000 cubic feet of records (ledgers, drawings, maps, documents, and photographic materials) stored in a 2,900-square-foot off-site warehouse. Sonoma County is unique in that many of its primary historical documents are not housed in a government repository or museum but made available to the public by SCL. In 1965 a joint resolution was passed by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and the City of Santa Rosa that established the Library as the official archive for Sonoma County and the City of Santa Rosa. The archives hold many of Sonoma County's earliest court, naturalization and tax records, as well as Board of Supervisor minutes, road petitions, architectural drawings and vital records. These unique materials help tell the story of who we are and where Sonoma County fits within the context of state and national history.

The **Sonoma County Wine Library (SCWL)** is roughly 1,500 square feet with seating for researchers and a computer station for online research. SCWL's holdings comprise approximately 5,000 books and 50,000 articles, with 45 current subscriptions to periodicals in addition to archived issues. The collection also includes fiction related to wine, biographies, CDs, and DVDs. In addition, SCWL has posters, photographs, maps, oral histories, wine labels, wine bottles, and archival records. SCWL maintains several digitized collections accessible through the library's online portal Sonoma Heritage Collections as well as a comprehensive bibliography of wine literature called the International Wine Research Database.

The **Petaluma History Room (PHR)**, founded in 1993, was created from the collections of two amateur historians and is located in an "attic" annex above the Petaluma Library. Its collections comprise 3,084 print items relating to Petaluma history, community events, businesses and schools, as well as more than 4,000 photographs dating back to the mid-1800s. Its archival collections include scrapbooks, diaries, correspondence and other documents associated with local families and businesses. PHR also holds city directories, Sanborn maps, local newspapers on microfilm dating back to 1857, on-site access to digitized historical newspapers, and vertical files of news and magazine clippings and ephemera about the city.

C. How are these humanities collections used?

Researchers have used the **SCH&G** collections to study a wide range of subjects such as the county's railroad system, architectural and environmental histories, including the waterways of the North San Francisco Bay, the mining industry, and the history of wildfires. In 2017, researchers from "Reveal," a podcast by the Center for Investigative Reporting, used these collections and county government records from the Archives to trace land development in the neighborhood of Fountaingrove, an area where hundreds of homes burned in the October 2017 fires. A class of Santa Rosa High School students has used the library's city directories, cultural resource surveys, Thomas guides, atlases and Sanborn maps to study historic homes and neighborhoods. One young man searched the California Indian Library Collection to discover a sound recording of his grandfather that inspired him to continue his journey to speak the language of his Pomo ancestors.

Researchers from all walks of life, professional and curious, use SCH&G collections to learn about their ancestors who lived in the area and about the larger historical context that shaped their lives, from the devastation of Santa Rosa by the 1906 earthquake to the experience of World War II from the Italian and Japanese immigrant perspective. Other visitors have sought to retrace their family's move to Sonoma County, a history that for some is closely tied to the region's rich agricultural economy in apples, dairy, hops, winemaking, olives, poultry, and prunes. SCH&G collections also illuminate the local experience of women's suffrage, prohibition, and deadly epidemics. Members of the Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery Committee use the library's collections to prepare elaborate vignettes about the city's historical figures and happenings in a yearly event, the Lamplight Tours, that draws hundreds. Others use the collections to uncover lesser known, more recent histories. When a graduate researcher from Sonoma State University

embarked on a study of the history of AIDS in Sonoma County, SCH&G digitized a set of U-matic tapes containing interviews with local AIDS activists from the 1980s and 1990s so that she and future researchers could access records reflecting this important history. Researchers interested in more obscure histories have enjoyed using the library's archival and reference collections to learn about the utopian communities of the North Bay such as Fountaingrove (Thomas Lake Harris), the followers of Madame Emily Preston, Morning Star and Wheeler Ranch, not to mention the exclusive, secretive Bohemian Grove encampment.

Authors have chosen the people and places of Sonoma County as a backdrop to their novels as well as works of historical fiction and non-fiction. The following publications reflect the variety of topics that SCH&G collections have supported: *Crush: The Triumph of California Wine*, John Briscoe (2018); *Historical ecology and landscape change in the central Laguna de Santa Rosa, San Francisco Estuary* Institute (2017); *Resiliency of Native American Women Basket weavers from California, Great Basin, and the Southwest*, Meranda Diane Roberts, dissertation, UC Riverside (2018); *Redwood Credit Union: Our Rich History*, [video](#) (2019). Another project underway involves a group of volunteers who are mining the library's archival records and historical newspapers to create an online map marking the county's instrumental figures and places in the battle for women's suffrage in preparation for the 2020 centennial.

SCH&G staff have taken the initiative to partner on SCL system-wide events by exhibiting primary source materials, reference books, and digital photos to contextualize a local author book talk on Motel California, guest lectures on indigenous basketweaving and Mexican genealogy, and a museum panel on the Hidden Past of Santa Rosa. Photographs from the library's Sonoma Heritage Collections are regularly used to anchor the stories of Press Democrat columnists like local historian Gaye Lebaron or featured in photo galleries in the Sunday paper's Town Section. To engage a younger demographic, SCH&G is developing a primary source literacy program to introduce the library's history collections to local educators and students, engaging them in visits to the reading room and bringing the collections into their classrooms. Most recently, SCH&G staff taught a high-school Ethnic Studies class how to use Ancestry.com and Newspapers.com to access vital records and other primary sources for their family history projects.

SCWL collects both technical materials and historical artifacts to support the local wine industry, historians, property owners, researchers, students, and community members. SCWL seeks to preserve the local history of the winegrape industry, which is constantly changing and consolidating, by capturing stories of the people and companies who were instrumental in creating the thriving business that exists today. One main ongoing project to support that goal is an oral history program that has traditionally produced transcripts of interviews with well-known figures in winemaking but is now moving towards digital storytelling of the impact of the industry on the people of the region. SCWL regularly hosts exhibits from its collections, such as "The evolution of wine books by decade, 1920-1960," and events like "A Tasting of East Coast Wines" that paired a book exhibit with a presentation and wine tasting.

PHR staff, assigned as permanent part-time only in 2018, are focused primarily on assessing and organizing collections. Planned outreach includes monthly exhibits highlighting local, state or national events; curriculum support for local classrooms; participation in women's suffrage celebrations scheduled for 2020; and collaboration with Friends of the Petaluma River, Petaluma Museum, and others who share similar missions.

D. What is the nature and mission of your institution?

The mission of SCL is to bring information, ideas, and people together to build a stronger community. In support of this mission, SCL is committed to providing a variety of library resources to meet the general informational, educational, recreational and cultural interests of the residents of Sonoma County. To that end, the library develops, maintains, and provides free access to a materials collection that reflects the

changing needs of the people in its service area. This includes people of every age, ability, education, economic level, ethnic origin, occupation, religious belief, and human condition.

As a public library, SCL primarily provides current and popular materials. However, the library also maintains special collections which contain materials specific to local history, genealogy, the wine industry, and other matters of local interest. The library is also designated as the official repository for the archival records of Sonoma County. The SCL system consists of 14 branches and four special collections. It is governed by an 11-member commission and funded by a percentage of property and sales taxes. SCL's total operating budget is \$30,554,000; the library does not budget by location or department. However, for the purposes of this grant, we estimate that the operating budget for special collections does not exceed \$500,000.

As an SCL special collection, SCH&G's mission is to acquire, organize, and make available to the public two distinct collections, local history and genealogy, and to provide associated services. The primary collection pertains to Sonoma County history which includes but is not limited to the subjects of architecture, agriculture, ethnography, urban planning, immigration, politics, and art. Genealogy is the other area of concentration with an extensive print and digital collection intended for researchers of all levels of proficiency and geographic areas of interest.

SCH&G employs 4 full-time, 1 part-time (20 hours/week), and 4 volunteer (totaling 12 hours/week) staff. It is open to the public the same hours as that of regular SCL branches: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10am-9pm, and Tuesdays/Thursdays/Fridays/Saturdays, 10am-6pm, for a total of 54 hours per week. SCL annually observes 11 full-day holidays, two half-day holidays, and one all staff day; therefore, SCH&G is open 248 days per year. During working hours, the SCH&G staff answer an average of 160 reference questions a month. The Sonoma County Archives, managed by SCH&G staff, is not open to the public, but materials are retrieved upon request at an average of 10 requests per month. The Wine Library employs one full-time curator and one part-time library associate. It is open 248 days per year, 54 hours per week. It was only in 2018 that PHR was assigned a permanent part-time librarian. PHR is open to the public on Mondays 12-4pm, 6-8:30pm/Fridays 2-5:30pm/Saturdays 10am-5:30pm, and is also staffed eight hours a week by two volunteer docents.

E. Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment or consultation?

SCH&G underwent a preservation needs assessment on August 7, 2018, conducted by Barclay Ogden of the California Preservation Program, a project of the California State Library. Mr. Ogden's report outlined six recommendations, three of which SCL has made significant progress in achieving and two of which this project is specifically designed to address:

- *Acquire deep shelving to adequately support oversized and boxed archival materials.*
- *Monitor the conditions in which the collections are maintained to ensure they are kept as cool as possible and they neither become too damp (leading to mold growth and pest activity) nor too dry (leading to desiccation and embrittlement). Install "data loggers" in the collection storage areas to create a continuous record of temperature and relative humidity to assist facilities' staff manage the heating and cooling system. A brand of data logger that can be recommended from personal experience is the "PEM2". [Full report included in Appendices]*

Mr. Ogden also recommended that SCL consider moving the County Archives to the Central Library branch. As a result, SCL hired a space planner whose report is expected February 2019. We anticipate that this plan will work hand in hand with this project, particularly guiding the placement of the data loggers as well as the location and specifications for the shelving of oversized archival materials.

F. What is the importance of this project to your institution?

This project will allow SCL to address two specific recommendations outlined in the *Preservation Needs Assessment of the History & Genealogy Library and off-site Archives* of August 2018. Additionally, as a

follow up to two disaster preparedness workshops that the library's Special Collections and Facilities staff attended in 2017 and 2018, this project will facilitate our taking immediate measures to protect our collections with the purchase of disaster recovery supplies. These disaster response kits will be located at the four sites mentioned above, ready to be deployed when faced with the threat of fire, flooding, leaks, or other emergencies. Additional reserve supplies for protection of collections will be stocked at the four sites to react proactively when collections are threatened. With wildfires declared the "new normal" for California, SCL is committed not only to ensuring the safety of its public and staff but also the protection of its collections. Taking steps to prepare for disasters, thereby mitigating damage and loss, is an action fully in line with the library's Strategic Plan 2015-2020 priority of financial sustainability.

G. What are the names and qualifications of the consultant(s) and staff involved in the project?

Katherine J. Rinehart is the manager of the Sonoma County History & Genealogy Library and Archives. She received a MA in History from Sonoma State University in 1994. For the past 21 years, Ms. Rinehart has worked in various positions within the fields of Cultural Resource Management and Historic Preservation and is currently employed by the Sonoma County Library where she has worked in the History and Genealogy Department since 2002. Ms. Rinehart is the chair of the Sonoma County Historical Records Commission and also leads a group of local history organizations, the Heritage Network, whose members meet quarterly to share information and plan county-wide events. In 2015, she attended the Western Archives Institute, an intensive two-week training in archival practices administered by the California State Library.

Joanna Kolosov is a special collections librarian and archivist with SCH&G, where she has worked since July 2017. She holds an MLIS from UCLA with a specialization in Archival Studies and an MA in Information from the University of Michigan. She received hands-on archival training as a fellow in UCLA's Young Research Library's CFPRT (Center for Primary Research and Training) program. Since the October 2017 fires that affected the region, she has taken an active role in disaster preparedness and advocates for special collections on the SCL safety committee. She has also been working under an IMLS/ Internet Archive grant, Community Webs, to develop a web archive of online content related to the fires and the recovery process.

H. What is the work plan for the project?

September 2019: Ms. Kolosov will work with SCL's Budget & Finance and Facilities departments to purchase the PEM2 data loggers, shelving units, and disaster response supplies. Ms. Rinehart will sign and approve the purchase orders. California Preservation Program co-coordinator Julie Page will be available to advise on specific disaster supply purchases as needed. [See Appendices for letter of support]

October-November 2019: Ms. Kolosov, with the help of Ms. Rinehart and SCL's facilities team, will install the data loggers at the three sites (SCH&G, off-site Archives, and Central Library basement) and set up the eClimateNotebook software to collect the data. Ms. Kolosov, with the assistance of SCH&G staff as needed, will assemble the four "disaster recovery cans" and deliver them to the four Special Collections locations mentioned above. She will work with the branch managers at each location to make staff aware of these "disaster recovery cans" and how to use them in an emergency. Extra reserve supplies will be distributed among the four sites.

November-December 2019: Ms. Rinehart and Ms. Kolosov will determine the specific locations for the shelving units at SCH&G, and with the aid of the facilities team, assemble them and properly store all of the oversized materials.

I. Applicants in federally declared disaster areas should also provide the following information in their narratives (up to one additional page is permitted for this information):

In October of 2017, Sonoma County suffered devastating fires and was declared a disaster area by FEMA. The building housing the archives of Sonoma County government records, managed by the staff of the History & Genealogy Library, was located in a fire evacuation zone. The burn line reached a quarter mile from the structure holding these historically significant records. Several concrete steps have since been taken by SCL at different levels within the organization to address this risk and better position the library to respond to disasters.

In 2017 and 2018, a total of 14 library staff from Special Collections and Facilities participated in disaster preparedness workshops organized by the Western States & Territories Preservation Assistance Service (WESTPAS) (“Protecting Cultural Collections” and “Are You Ready?” led by California Preservation Program Co-coordinator Julie Page). These day-long courses provided a comprehensive set of tools for the library to develop a disaster plan for its Special Collections. Based on this training, staff are now using a “pocket plan,” a pocket-sized document listing important contact information for staff, local emergency officials, and potential salvage vendors as well as floor plans identifying collection priorities. After the fires, SCL staff also met with county emergency officials to exchange information and learn how the library can improve its communication with government agencies and participate in community disaster response initiatives. Special Collections and Facilities staff have arranged a meeting in February with Belfor, a commercial disaster response and collection salvage company, to discuss a pre-registration agreement. Five staff members who attended the disaster workshops now also participate in SCL’s recently revived Safety Committee, whose main objective is to create an overall disaster plan for library personnel, collections, and the public.

SCH&G sought and was awarded a grant by the California Preservation Program for a preservation needs assessment that was conducted in 2018 for the History & Genealogy Library and County Archives. The assessment highlighted the need to separate archival materials from the open stack reference collection and to repurpose office space to house archival collections. With unrelated plans already underway to remove asbestos in the History & Genealogy Library building in fall 2018, SCH&G staff seized the opportunity to implement these recommendations, rearranging rooms and collections to create an expanded rare books room and separate processing room, both with secure access and improved environmental control.

In accordance with Mr. Ogden’s recommendation that SCL consider moving the County Archives to the Central Library branch in downtown Santa Rosa, the Sonoma County Library Commission approved \$25,000 for the hiring of a space planner to explore the viability of the recommendation. SCL posted a Request for Information (RFI) for an Archives Space Plan in November 2018 and ultimately selected History Associates of Rockville, MD, to compile the plan, which will be completed by March 4, 2019. In an ongoing effort to heighten awareness of the County Archives, SCH&G staff have been hosting tours of the storage facility for library commissioners and other officials to build support for the critical task of finding a permanent, secure facility for this invaluable collection of records.