

RAR Cycle 11 Applicant Webinar Q&A

This document contains questions and answers from the February 15 Applicant Webinar organized by topic.

Quick Links to Presentation Resources:

[Land Acknowledgment](#)
[ARSC Guide to Audio Preservation](#)
[Recordings At Risk Home Page](#)
[Apply for an Award Page](#)
[Document Library](#)
[DLF Digitizing Special Formats Wiki](#)
[ARSC Preservation and Restoration Directory](#)
[AMIA Global Supplier Directory](#)
[Grant Registry](#)
[RAR Q&A Webinar](#)
[Applicant Survey](#)

Question Categories:

[General](#)
[Eligibility: Organization](#)
[Eligibility: Materials](#)
[Budget and Finance](#)
[Project Design and Finance](#)

[General](#)

Q: What was the name of that DLF effective consultants or providers webinar mentioned?

A: This is a list of external resources that can help applicants plan projects involving the digitization of rare and unique materials, hosted by the [Digital Library Federation](#) entitled, "Effective Outsourcing with Audiovisual Digitization Service Providers". It can be found on the DLF Digitizing Special Formats Wiki: https://wiki.diglib.org/Digitizing_Special_Formats

Q: Do you provide feedback on applications if we submit before the deadline so we can make our application stronger?

A: Unfortunately our grants team is small and we don't have enough staff to provide individual applicant feedback. However, we do answer all of our emails. Feel free to email us at recordingsatrisk@clir.org. Many applicants send us multiple emails and we give the best advice we can based upon our experience with past cycles. Our [Apply for an Award](#) page is a valuable resource for applicants that has an extensive library of tools for the application process.

Q: It's my first time applying for a CLIR RAR and in thinking through the planning element of the application, got me wondering when we can expect to hear from CLIR regarding application decisions. Thanks!

A: Notifications are scheduled to be made in August 2024, in time for funded projects to begin on September 1, 2024.

Q: How will we access the recording and slides if we want to share with our coworkers who missed today?

A: We will have the recording, transcript, slides and Q&A document posted to the [Apply for an Award](#) page on our website after February 22, 2024.

Q: Can I go back to prior submissions to make sure all comments will be addressed? If so, what is the protocol?

A: If you need a copy of your previous submission, just write recordingsatrisk@clir.org to request one, supplying as much information as you have (applicant organization, title of project, year of submission, etc.). You may still have access to your prior submission through the [SMApply login](#) if you are still using the same login credentials as before, but we can always dig up a copy if you're using new credentials.

Q: Will the Q&A be available after this session?

A: We will have the recording, transcript, slides and Q&A document posted to the [Apply for an Award](#) page on our website after February 22, 2024.

Q: The Google template for drafting a proposal in the Applicant Resources section still refers to Cycle 10. Will this be updated, or has nothing changed?

A: Thank you for noting this mistake. This should be updated. While a few minor changes have been made to the guidelines for cycle 11, there are no changes to the application language so the template should still be current in all other respects.

Q: Are there examples of successful grants available?

A: Yes. You can find copies of sample applications in our [Document Library](#) section on our [Apply for an Award](#) page.

Eligibility: Organization

Q: We are an organization in the UK with rare audio related to the USA and featuring at least 400 USA citizens recorded between 1974 to 1988. Includes world icons, Ivan Van Sertima, James Baldwin, Muhammad Ali, Angela Davis, Alex Haley Gil Scott Heron authors, biographers, scientists, filmmakers, early Beauty companies for Black people etc. No one else has this audio collection globally as they were conducted and produced by 1 person who holds copyright in them. How can we apply?

A: Unfortunately United Kingdom organizations are not eligible to apply for the *Recordings at Risk* program. If you have a formal partnership with an eligible US organization with which you would be in the position to share responsibility for preserving the digital copies, it might be possible, depending on how actively involved the partner was willing to be in caring for the deliverables over time, and whether the project is clearly legal given the nature and age of the recordings. The relevance to US history isn't really a factor. It's more the ability of our reviewers to assess whether the proposal would be legal, since they would not be familiar with the relevant British laws.

Q: If it's a part of your physical preservation strategy to turn over the collection to a partnering organization, is that ok? Wasn't sure if that violated the "owned and held" requirement.

A: This is a bit of a gray area for policy that we are re-evaluating. We will probably need additional information to answer it in greater detail. Generally speaking proposals are more competitive if the ownership of the materials lies with the applicant organization or a formal partner with which the applicant organization has an agreement. Any questions reviewers might have about the viability and legality of the project can be more definitively answered in this situation. In your case, naming your partner organization as a formal partner on the project will solve your problem. If this isn't practical because the partner isn't technically eligible or for some other reason, drafting and attaching some sort of formal agreement between you that explains the ownership and IP interests in the digital deliverables of the project should address reviewers' questions. Reviewers will care about whether the legal status of the content is clear and dealt with. I hope this helps, but please ask us again for more details if not, because this is complicated.

Q: Some confusion last year over how technical the descriptions need to be of the digitization and metadata process. That assumes we are working with a credible partner, which we are.

A: This is a common question. Reviewers will look both at the details in the proposal and in the supplementary proposal from the service provider. These details should complement one another (not contradict one another) and, together, address all the technical questions posed in the [Application Guidelines](#) and the issues covered in the [technical guidance document](#).

Q: Can organizations collaborate on an application? My organization shares a building with another organization (separate but related), and we would like to apply jointly.

A: The Recordings at Risk application does not allow for more than one official applicant that will accept responsibility for managing project funds and execution of the project. However, you can prepare the proposal together and describe the roles and responsibilities of each unofficial partner in the proposal. The application isn't really designed for official collaborators, so if you aren't sure what to do for certain parts, feel free to email us directly at recordingsatrisk@clir.org

Q: For returning applicants, what differences or expectations you are looking for or seeking from previous submissions. Growth? Additional supporters?

A: In general reviewers look to see that you've taken on and either responded to or integrated any specific feedback given to the previous submission, and that you're generally more prepared in your thinking to begin the project than you were at the time of the first submission. If reviewers really liked your previous submission but just didn't select it, the changes might be minimal. So it will really depend on what the reviewers said previously. You are likely to get new reviewers with a subsequent submission, but they will have access to the previous version of the proposal and previous reviewer comments. The reviewers will want to see that you took the recommendations from the previous submission and incorporated them in the new submission.

Q: To follow up on that question, if the previous submission was in the last cycle, is it necessary to get updated outside letters of support if there were no critical comments on the support letters in the last round?

A: It isn't required but is always a good idea. Keep in mind that new reviewers will have access to the previous proposal, so they will notice any updates and read that as a mark of your underlining the urgency and timeliness of the proposal.

Q: Also wondering that

A: Yes, new letters are not required but are appreciated and noted. Even letters that are largely the same but just slightly updated are noted as good signs that the project is a real priority for the applicant organization.

Eligibility: Materials

Q: Can funds be used for conservation materials so they can be done in-house? like split reels, winds, splicing guillotine for film? or should those be sent to a vendor?

A: Conservation work necessary prior to digitization is eligible. Just be sure to stay within the allowable and disallowed costs which can be found in [Appendix A](#) of the [Applicant Guidelines](#).

Q: The material we are seeking the grant for comes from two distinct collections but relate to the same topic and are all 16mm film just from different eras. Is it okay to include both collections in the request or focus on one?

A: If both can be digitized within the constraints of the budget, you can include both. But be careful that you have a coherent argument that digitizing both at the same time makes sense within the context of the same project.

Q: If we have in-house digitization possible, can we still apply for a grant to support this, and other needs?

A: Because *Recordings at Risk* was designed to support organizations just getting started with preservation reformatting, we do not fund in-house digitization. If you have special formats that cannot be safely handled in-house and are better or more efficiently entrusted to an outside professional, you might consider nominating those collections instead.

Q: Are compact discs for video collection an allowable format? I noticed CD's were only listed under the Audio format eligibility

A: The Recordings at Risk program is highly competitive. CD-only projects aren't really that competitive so we don't recommend it. You can include a small amount of video CDs in a larger project if you like, if the content is clearly related and the project is urgent.

Q: Would piano rolls be a potential candidate for digitization through this grant?

A: Yes. This is somewhat unusual, though, so it would be important to argue for the uniqueness of the performances captured on the rolls. Reviewers would want to be reasonably confident that the rolls represent aspects of performance or cultural history that aren't well covered elsewhere online.

Budget and Finance

Q: If we receive another grant after we apply to support digitization, say from the NFPB, that funds a portion of the collection, could we revise what we want to digitize if it's from the same collection and in similar condition?

A: Program officers would need to make a judgment call if this happened, based upon what action would be most fair to other applicants in the judgment of the reviewers.

Q: What flexibility is there in the amount awarded? More specifically, if it is discovered during the work process that items need more work than originally envisioned, is it possible to amend the grant by either excluding certain items or increasing the amount requested.

A: The award ceiling of \$50,000 is firm, and given the limited funding available, post-award increases are not possible. The situations you describe are common, however, and grant modification requests are the mechanism our recipients use to make changes in the amount of materials to be reformatted through the grant.

Q: This seems to focus on using vendors. If we have the equipment, can we do the reformatting in-house and use grant funds to pay staff to do the digitization?

A: Because Recordings at Risk was designed to support organizations just getting started with preservation reformatting, we do not fund in-house digitization. If you have special formats that cannot be safely handled in-house and are better or more efficiently entrusted to an outside professional, you might consider nominating those collections instead.

Q: Can the cost of preparing items for digitization from an outside vendor, such as fixing splices of 16MM film, be included?

A: Yes, if the work is necessary for the reformatting to happen. Just be sure to stay within the allowable and disallowed costs which can be found in [Appendix A](#) of the [Applicant Guidelines](#).

Project Design and Finance

Q: Can we include two separate vendors? We have some items that need special treatment and require a specialized vendor not needed for the others.

A: Yes. Choose the vendor most appropriate to the format. You can append multiple vendor proposals to the application.

Q: Can you speak to how detailed our digitization plan should be? Should it be project specific or holistic?

A: It helps to reference applicable organizational policies or procedures, but the digitization plan should be specific to the project—to both the nominated recordings and the digital deliverables. Consult the [RAR Technical Recommendations](#) document for guidance on what to cover.

Q: Is this grant matching?

A: No matching is required for this program. However, the program supports only a limited range of activities related to reformatting audio and audiovisual analog materials and making that content accessible online. So you should not request funds for more general operating costs or other not directly related activities. You can find more information on allowable and disallowed costs in [Appendix A](#) of the [Applicant Guidelines](#).

Q: Our institution provides free access for researcher purposes but charges for commercial use and publication. Will this still be allowable?

A: It's allowable, but can sometimes derail an application in review because reviewers may not prioritize it over other requests. Be sure to justify why these fees are necessary even though you would be receiving grant funds for the reformatting.