



## COMPETITIVE FEDERAL GRANT AWARDS (ACTIVE) FEBRUARY 2025

### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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#### *Save America's Treasures (Ringling Brother Circus 1901 Animal House)*

- **Award Amount:** \$500,000
- **Period of Performance:** 10/1/23 - 9/30/25
- **Purpose:** Grant funds will restore the 1901 Animal House at Circus World to the 1915 era. Historically, exotic animals were a central element in American circuses, and when circuses were not on the road, the animals were housed in purpose-built structures, designed to meet the needs of specific animal types. The 1901 Animal House was a critical piece of the Ringling brothers' circus empire, but the structure was sold out of Ringling ownership in 1918 and re-purposed over decades to fulfill different business interests. Some of the modifications made to the building over time adversely impacted its soundness, and today, the 1901 Animal House has critical stabilization and repair needs that must be addressed to ensure the long-term survival of the structure.

#### *Save America's Treasures (Ringling Brothers Circus Business Office)*

- **Award Amount:** \$500,000
- **Period of Performance:** 10/1/21 - 8/1/25
- **Purpose:** Grant funds will restore the Ringling Brothers Business Office, one of nine buildings in the Ringling Brothers Circus winter Quarters National Historic Landmark district in Baraboo, WI. This unassuming Queen Anne-style building is the location from which the Ringling brothers ran the greatest circus operation in the world until 1918, coordinating the activities of painters, gilders, wagon makers, blacksmiths, saddlers, harness makers, wardrobe designers, railroad car repairmen, carpenters, machinists, engineers, and metal workers. They planned the next year's touring route, contracted domestic and foreign acts, created advertising materials, and managed the mammoth enterprise of daily financials. A restored, interpreted and publicly accessible Business Office will allow visitors to explore the broader operations, diversity, and off-season preparations that made this massive circus so successful.

#### *Maritime Heritage Grant (in partnership with Wisconsin Maritime Museum)*

- **Award Amount:** \$200,000
- **Period of Performance:** 4/1/2023 - 3/31/2026
- **Purpose:** The project is a cooperative partnership between the SHPO, WHS, and the Wisconsin Maritime Museum to catalog and stabilize a collection of archaeological resources recovered from Lake Michigan shipwrecks. The archaeological resources are a collection of artifacts

known as the Klopp Collection which is 10,352 artifacts recovered prior to the 1987 Abandoned Shipwreck Act by Allan Klopp and kept in inadequate and damaging storage conditions for decades before the family transferred them to the state via the WMM in 2021. The threat to the resource is urgent due to the years of poor storage practices and the need for comprehensive assessment and care of these before their history is lost to object deterioration.

#### ***Underrepresented Communities Grant***

- **Award Amount:** \$50,000
- **Period of Performance:** 2/10/23 - 2/10/26
- **Purpose:** The purpose of the project is to research and complete a historic context study of Latino history in Wisconsin for the purpose of identifying and evaluating historic places that are significant to Wisconsin's Latino heritage and maybe be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The historic context study is a planning document that will recommend steps for the future preservation of these historic properties. The project will also nominate two properties to the National Register of Historic Places that represent the history and contributions of Wisconsin's Latino communities. The project will include community education and outreach to the Latino community as well as the participation of partners in academic institutions, private historic preservation consultants, local governments, and other preservation stakeholders. This project will benefit Wisconsin's Latino communities and all Wisconsinites who appreciate and seek to preserve Wisconsin's historic places.

#### ***Save America's Treasures - Preservation (Baggage Horse Barn)***

- **Award Amount:** \$729,153
- **Period of Performance:** 10/1/2024 - 9/30/2027
- **Purpose:** The winter headquarters of the Ringling Brothers Circus is a National Historical Landmark district. Nine buildings, seven of which are maintained by Circus World, represent the largest and most complete historic winter quarters in existence. The Baggage Horse Barn, built in 1904, once housed heavy draft horses, the backbone of the circus, during winter off-seasons. Today this structure experiences a critical threat from structural damage, including rotting of wood framing, corrosion of sidings, compromised joists, and foundation damage. This project will correct this damage by repairing masonry, windows, siding, and doors. These preservation efforts will ensure this building can be opened for interpretation to the public so that visitors may better explore the broader operations of the circus.

#### ***Repatriation Grant - Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)***

- **Award Amount:** \$74,527
- **Period of Performance:** 9/1/2024 - 12/31/2025
- **Purpose:** Grant funds will support a week-long consultation meeting with WHS staff and tribal representatives from the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, as well as supporting pre- and post-consultation work. The one-week consultation will be held at WHS' collections storage facilities in Madison, Wisconsin – WHS' Headquarters Building and the State Archive Preservation Facility. Activities will center on cultural items currently in WHS holdings directly attributed to the Bad River Band, items attributed to the Ojibwe with no specific band, and cultural items attributed generally to a Great Lakes tribe. The project will also include consultation on WHS holdings of human remains originating from lands of interest to the Bad River Band for repatriation purposes and their associated funerary objects.

### ***Save America's Treasures Grant (in partnership with National Park Service)***

- **Award Amount:** \$750,000
- **Period of Performance:** 10/1/2023 - 9/30/2026
- **Purpose:** The Wisconsin Historical Society will preserve and provide access to at-risk materials in 26 collections documenting the modern American Civil Rights movement. For the project, staff selected materials for conservation and digitization that are most frequently requested for research purposes, including approximately 490 cubic feet of archives which include 2,412 audio recordings, 445 moving images, 101 microfilm reels, and more than 22 cubic ft of graphic materials, such as photographs, posters, and ephemera. WHS will stabilize, rehouse, and perform conservation treatments on at-risk physical items. Staff will digitize collection items and make them accessible online for public use.

### ***Save America's Treasures Grant (in partnership with National Park Service)***

- **Award Amount:** \$177,480
- **Period of Performance:** 9/1/2024 - 8/31/2027
- **Purpose:** The Wisconsin Historical Society will create a professional development project to cultivate a staff culture centered around visitors and to strengthen the ability of staff to embed evaluation in program planning and execution. Project activities include hiring a museum evaluation expert to train and coach public programming staff on visitor-centered design and implementation, within a framework of culture change and skill development. This consultant will also work with the IT team to create a data repository and reporting system that supports evaluation data informing future decision-making and programming. As a result of this project, a permanent evaluation-related position will be created, as well as a resource library of evaluation training materials and tools, and an evaluation plan to be implemented across programs and services. In the long term, staff will have the skills to conduct effective evaluation and continuously improve visitor-centered programming

### ***Museums for America Grant***

- **Award Amount:** \$249,618
- **Period of Performance:** 9/1/2023 - 8/31/2026
- **Purpose:** *A Museum without Walls* is a three-year state-wide public history project that will prototype strategies for designing and delivering localized programming in collaboration with community partners. The project will bring community-based programming into all 72 Wisconsin counties to: 1) expand access to Society collections and resources – both within and beyond population centers, and 2) strength relationships with local partners across the state so that mutually-beneficial collaboration continues long-term. Public programming will happen in collaboration with approx. 120 community partners and will include artifact- and image-based installations, banner exhibits, speaker's bureau presentations, and signature events tailored to individual communities. As a result, project partners will have an increased knowledge and sense of ownership of Society resources and greater trust in the Society for future collaborations, contributing to the Society's long-term goals for community engagement.

## NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

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### *National Digital Newspapers Grant*

- **Award Amount:** \$324,494
- **Period of Performance:** 9/1/2024 - 8/31/2026
- **Purpose:** The Wisconsin Historical Society's fifth grant National Digital Newspapers grant cycle is dedicated to amplifying the voices of various ethnic and racial groups that make up Wisconsin by sharing their history in their own words. The project will digitize newspapers from a selection of Wisconsin's many immigrant groups that were published in their native languages and titles printed by Black editors and publishers. These language- and community-specific newspapers center information and news that was relevant to particular audiences, and they document lesser-known events and give voice to perspectives and insights that extend beyond the dominant narratives of local and national histories. By highlighting the histories represented in ethnic and racial community newspapers, WHS hopes to deepen the understanding of Wisconsin's—and America's—racial and ethnic diversity, and advance equity for all peoples.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

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### *American Rescue Plan Act Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grant*

- **Award Amount:** \$2,750,000
- **Period of Performance:** 8/17/2022 - 5/31/2027
- **Purpose:** Grant funds will allow the Wisconsin Historical Society to construct a new Guest Services Center at Old World Wisconsin, a 600-acre open-air history museum in Eagle, Wisconsin. The Guest Services Center will provide essential infrastructure to grow the site from 50,000 annual visitors to 100,000 annual visitors and help more people benefit from the educational, cultural, and historical programs at Old World Wisconsin. Investments in Old World Wisconsin will support the recovery of regional tourism in Eagle and the surrounding area by supporting it as a unique and popular cultural destination.

## NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS COMMISSION

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### *State Board Advisory Grant*

- **Award Amount:** \$37,846
- **Period of Performance:** 3/1/2024 - 2/28/2026
- **Purpose:** This grant program funds the work of the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board. The grant project will support the hiring of an LTE WHRAB Program Asst., the Governor's Archives Awards, Professional Development scholarships for archivists and students in WI, archive-related workshops at the LHHP Conference, and a "landscape mapping" activity that will identify and document collecting institutions and collection scopes across Wisconsin.