

FINDINGS FROM THE X-STORIES PRIORITY ACTION TEAM FOCUS GROUP STUDY

"Telling our history to these kids is like our focal point and there was a time when a lot of the elders didn't share cultural teachings with a lot of kids either..."

**Ojibwe Community Member,
Intergenerational Learning**

"...Because it isn't just about a cycle of White people helping us to document Black history, it's about a longer process that is teaching us how to preserve our own history and looking for places that can protect it—and if places don't exist that can protect it how can we create places that will protect it."

**African-American Community Member,
Truth-telling**

"We need resources with no strings attached, and we need safe spaces. Neither of those things have historically been provided to us."

**Dakota Community Member, Lack of
Funding Opportunities**



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank all the focus group participants for sharing their thoughts with us and for extending patience to our team as we set out to inquire about what historical and cultural preservations mean to them. Without their willingness to co-create and offer up space for us to have these dialogues, this project would not have been possible. This study is supported by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008, and is administered by the Minnesota Historical Society and Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums. If you have questions or will like to connect with our team, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mai Vang at X.StoriesRFP@gmail.com.

Over the course of two years (2017-2019), the X-Stories Priority Action Team completed a total of 24 focus group sessions and recruited a total of 72 participants from the following six community groups – African-American, Dakota, Hmong, Latinx, Ojibwe, and Somali.

THE FINDINGS SHARED IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE ORGANIZED IN THE FOLLOWING:

- (1) Central themes shared by all and some community groups; and (2) Experiences with grantmaking and grant-writing for cultural and historical preservation work.

Central Theme I • Goals for cultural and historical preservation

- Intergenerational learning (all communities)
- Truth-telling (all communities)
- Identity preservation (African-American, Hmong, Somali)
- Inclusive stories (Hmong, Somali)

Central Theme II • Experiences with grantmaking and grant-writing for cultural and historical preservation work

- Lack of awareness and knowledge around Legacy Grants
- Lack of funding opportunities
- Lack of support for grant-writing

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide grant support for racially diverse communities.

- Hire a community liaison to facilitate the announcement of funding opportunities between a foundation and community.
- Host community meetings to announce grant processes, deadlines, and trainings.
- Create and share accessible/information flyers in multiple languages about grants, with particular attention paid to the Legacy grants program.
- Develop virtual networks between foundations and communities in order to share funding opportunities.

2. Expand funding priorities to include nontraditional cultural and historical preservation work.

- **African-American community:** fund workshops and certification on how to be a history organizer and creating space for cultural and preservation work were of the utmost importance.
- **Dakota community:** fund historical documentaries, podcasts, and films; restoration of Minnesota's ecology; purchasing and buying back of tracts of land (including cultural, sacred, ceremonial, and burial sites) to give to Native people; and support for a cultural corridor for Native people.
- **Hmong community:** fund language and cultural revitalization workshops (e.g., teaching and playing of traditional musical instruments); emerging artists and merchants; and incorporate Hmong history into educational curricula.
- **Latinx community:** fund events and celebrations and community spaces
- **Ojibwe community:** fund language revitalization efforts and integration of indigenous history into K-12 and higher education curricula.
- **Somali community:** fund historical documentaries and recreation