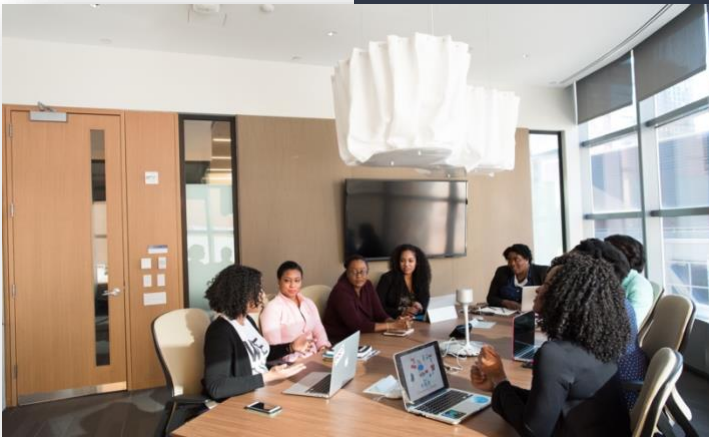




Harvard & the Legacy
of Slavery Initiative

Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery: **Reparative Partnership Grant Program**



2023 Request for Proposals

The Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery (H&LS) initiative is excited to announce its inaugural Request for Proposals (RFP). We are seeking innovative and achievable proposals that address systemic inequities affecting descendant communities.

<https://www.harvard.edu/vice-provost-for-special-projects/rfp-page/>

I. Background

In April 2022, Harvard University released the [report of the Presidential Committee on Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery](#). The report is organized around three themes that expose the interconnections among Harvard, slavery, and its legacies. Specifically:

- **Direct ties:** Harvard leaders, faculty, and staff enslaved more than 70 people during the 17th and 18th centuries.
- **Financial ties:** Five men who made their fortunes from slavery and slave-produced goods accounted for over one-third of all private donations and financial pledges to the University in the first half of the 19th century.
- **Intellectual ties:** In the 19th and 20th centuries, some Harvard faculty and leaders promoted controversial and now discredited theories of race science and eugenics. These ideas contributed to Jim Crow legislation, anti-immigration policies, and legislation supporting involuntary sterilization of US women.

Harvard acknowledges its complicity in slavery and the damage caused by it. The University is committed to taking meaningful, visible, and effective actions to address its legacies of slavery. To this end, Harvard University established the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery (H&LS) initiative as a steadfast commitment to the active pursuit of long-lasting repair. The [team](#) responsible for shepherding the University's reparative work is composed of dedicated, passionate, and talented professionals.

Rooted in the [recommendations from the report](#) and leveraging ongoing efforts at the University, several efforts have been launched to begin the University's journey toward repair, including:

- Designing a program to support K-12 teachers and schools in educating students about slavery and its lasting impact, using approved curricula.
- Building a physical memorial on Harvard's campus to acknowledge and honor the enslaved individuals who contributed to Harvard's founding, growth, and evolution. This process is being spearheaded by the [Legacy of Slavery Memorial Project Committee](#).
- Partnering with the HBCU Library Alliance to establish the [HBCU Digital Library Trust](#), which aims to digitize and preserve collections of African-American history and make them free and publicly available.
- Establishing the [Harvard Slavery Remembrance Program](#), which works closely with the New England Historic Genealogical Society to identify the descendants of those who were enslaved by Harvard's leaders, faculty, and staff.
- Providing funding for the ["Responsibility & Repair" conference](#), an event that sought to foster a national dialogue, advance knowledge, and establish partnerships with Indigenous communities by bringing together Native and University leaders.

For more information about the H&LS initiative and the work ahead, [please visit our website](#).

II. Reparative Partnership Grant Program Description

H&LS is excited to announce its inaugural Request for Proposals (RFP). The purpose of this funding opportunity is to support innovative and achievable ideas that address systemic inequities affecting descendant communities (i.e., people harmed by slavery). We recognize that the corrosive effects of slavery still impact almost every aspect of American life and contribute directly to persistent inequities. Therefore, we welcome ideas that promote reparative work in various sectors, such as education, economic mobility, health, urban planning, and criminal justice.

This RFP is designed to foster mutually beneficial partnerships with community partners and Harvard partners, including staff, faculty, students, postdocs, fellows, and alumni. We encourage proposals that are collaborative, community-driven, interdisciplinary, and focused on advancing equity and justice. We will prioritize applications that address the needs of local descendant communities in Cambridge and Boston. Our goal is to empower local communities to implement reparative actions for communities most impacted by the legacies of slavery.

The application process is two phases. In the first phase, all applicants must submit a concept proposal, which includes information about their preliminary team and proposal idea. In the second phase, selected applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal. Please see more details below, and we look forward to your good ideas!

This grant program is modeled after other similar initiatives, such as those at [Northwestern University](#), [The Boston Foundation](#), [Lumina Foundation](#), and [the New Commonwealth Fund](#).

If you have questions, please have a look at the [FAQs](#) or reach out to us at legacyofslavery@harvard.edu.

A. Who Can Apply

To be eligible, proposals must be co-led by a community partner *and* a Harvard partner.

Community Partners:

Non-profit organizations that have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and seek to improve a community's social and overall health are encouraged to apply. To be eligible for this funding opportunity, the organization must have leadership (staff and/or board) that demonstrates a deep understanding and represents the lived experiences of the communities they serve or intend to serve.

Harvard Partners:

Faculty and Staff: All Harvard University benefits-eligible staff (including administrative/professional, support, service, and trades staff) and faculty (including primary, secondary, and adjunct faculty) are eligible to apply. Questions about faculty and staff salary support will be addressed when budgets are reviewed.

Students: All Harvard undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to apply, as long as they are enrolled during the funding period. If awarded, students will be fully compensated for the time they devote to the project.

Postdoctoral Researchers, Research Associates, Research Scientists, and Fellows: All Harvard research professionals are eligible to apply. An appointment at Harvard University is required, and the appointment must last the duration of the funding period if awarded.

Alumni and Harvard-affiliated hospital staff: Alumni and Harvard-affiliated staff are not eligible to apply as primary applicants but are welcome to team up with a primary applicant at a Harvard unit or with a community partner.

B. What We Will Fund

We encourage collaborative proposals that:

- ✓ Support the advancement of descendant communities, preferably in Cambridge or Boston;
- ✓ Incorporate and center the lived experiences and voices of descendant communities;
- ✓ Demonstrate how community partners and Harvard partners can work together to create and manage successful reparative initiatives;
- ✓ Propose innovative solutions to persistent, systemic inequities, or extend and amplify existing successful approaches;
- ✓ Clearly advance one or more of the recommendations in the [Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery report](#); and
- ✓ Are aligned with the mission of H&LS.

C. What We Will Not Fund

The H&LS grant program does not fund the following:

- × Projects led by a single individual;
- × Capital campaigns/building construction; or
- × Harvard employee and faculty salaries (exceptions may be allowed on a case-by-case basis and could include non-exempt overtime as applicable, temporary help by staff, backfilling staff who are working on the project, or faculty summer salary).

D. Funding Opportunities

This RFP offers funding for two project types:

- **Impact Projects:** Strategic, multi-year projects with budgets up to \$350,000 spread over two years.
- **Seed Projects:** Proof of concept projects with budgets up to \$25,000 for a year.

E. Selection Criteria

H&LS is committed to an equitable, thorough, and fair review process to identify the most promising ideas for funding. A two-stage review process will include input from dedicated community leaders, students, faculty, and staff. Please see the [FAQs](#) for more details about the review process.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Strategic Alignment:** Aligns with the [mission and values](#) of H&LS and the mission of the community partner co-leading the project.
- **Equity:** Centers the needs and voices of communities historically and systematically harmed by slavery.
- **Impact:** Has clear metrics that allow for measurable impact once implemented.
- **Feasibility:** Shows the extent to which the project can be executed efficiently and successfully within the timeframe and budget.
- **Sustainability & Scalability:** Lays a long-lasting foundation that will continue after the funding period ends (i.e., sustainable) and can be expanded to reach even more people (i.e., scalable).
- **Innovation:** Shows creativity in addressing a real-world challenge affecting descendant communities.
- **Project Team:** Demonstrates a diverse team composed of representatives from descendant communities impacted by the problem the proposal is designed to address, individuals from a community partner organization, and individuals from Harvard.

III. How to Apply

Applications for this RFP must be submitted online through the [grant application portal](#). To apply, visit the [grant application portal](#) and click the “Apply” button.

There are two phases in the application process:

Phase I: Concept Proposal

All applicants must use the online grant portal to submit their concept proposal which will describe the team leaders, organization, and proposal idea. For this phase, the identification of the community partner and Harvard partner who will co-lead the project is recommended but not required.

Phase II: Full Proposal

Selected teams will be invited to submit a full proposal. Details about those requirements will be provided when finalists are contacted.

Late Submissions

One of our guiding principles is to treat everyone with fairness and respect. Therefore, we will not accept any proposal after the deadline. Applicants are expected to notify H&LS immediately if they are experiencing difficulty with the online proposal system that may interfere with a timely submission. We encourage proposals to be submitted early so that any unforeseen difficulties (e.g., technical problems) may be addressed well before the deadline.

Contact Us

Please reach out to us with your questions at legacyofslavery@harvard.edu.

IV. Key Dates and Deadlines

November 13, 2023

Online application system available to applicants for concept proposals.

November 27, 2023

Join us for the [H&LS RFP Information Session Webinar \(Live and Recorded\) at 6 p.m. EST.](#)

November 30, 2023

Join us for the [H&LS Reparative Partnership Ideathon in Cambridge.](#)

December 7, 2023

Join us for the [H&LS Reparative Partnership Ideathon in Boston.](#)

January 12, 2024

Deadline for receipt of concept proposals. Those submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed.

January 26, 2024

Applicants notified whether they are invited to submit a full proposal.

March 8, 2024

Deadline for receipt of invited full proposals. Those submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed.

April 2024

Awardees announced.

July 2024

Funding period begins.