

The project narrative below provides just one example of a successful proposal. If you have any questions about your proposal we recommend discussing your idea with NHH program staff.

## **Dawnland StoryFest at Strawberry Banke Museum**

### **Project Narrative**

Project Title: Dawnland StoryFest: New Hampshire's Annual Indigenous Storytelling Festival

Applicant Organization: Strawberry Banke Museum

Project Director: {NAME}

Subject Matter Expert: NAME}

Amount Requested from NHH: {AMOUNT REQUESTED}

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **Project Description**

##### **Briefly summarize your proposed project.**

The annual Dawnland StoryFest is a day-long storytelling event originally created in 2015 by Papa Joe Gaudet to showcase traditional Native American\* storytellers. On November 13, 2021 (Native American Heritage Month), the StoryFest will move to Strawberry Banke Museum in Portsmouth, where the audience will hear traditional stories and learn what they reveal about Indigenous cultures and values. A moderated discussion will explore when, where, and why traditional stories were—and still are—told. Audience members will also have an opportunity to share a traditional Native American story of their own.

\*Note: Various terms are used by Indigenous peoples and others to refer to the first inhabitants of this continent, including Indigenous, First Nations, Native Americans, Tribal Nations, and American Indians. In this proposal, we use Indigenous, Native American, and Tribal interchangeably, prioritizing specific tribal names where appropriate, and recognizing First Nations as specific to Indigenous people who live in present-day Canada but who are distinct from the Inuit or Alaska Indigenous peoples who live within the borders of the United States.

#### **Engagement with the Humanities**

##### **Indicate which humanities field(s) your project engages (check all that apply).**

History (specifically Northeast Native American history and culture)

Literature (Indigenous Oral Tradition)

Anthropology

##### **Explain how your project will draw on these field(s) or will otherwise deploy a humanistic or interpretive framework to explore a topic.**

Native American storytellers are the bearers of Indigenous history, language, genealogy, spiritual beliefs, culture ways, survival skills, and oral literary traditions. All Native American stories are considered sacred because they encompass and explain the entirety of Creation and of Mother Earth, and describe a world view that considers every aspect of Creation to be interactive. Each Native American Tribe has its own lesson stories, but common themes appear across Tribes and culture areas due to common First Nation beliefs about the interconnectedness of all living beings.

The Dawnland StoryFest will focus on sharing traditional “lesson stories” of Native Americans. Designed to be both entertaining and educational, each story has a compelling narrative, but also some subtle — and overt — life lessons. These are the “pourquoi” or “who and why” stories that explain the unexplainable, while also sharing important cultural values with the listeners. These stories are the means by which vital information was — and still is — passed from generation to generation.

Dawnland StoryFest is structured to give audience members different models for Native American storytelling. The audience will also be given opportunities to practice traditional storytelling, through the “Swapping Grounds” portion of the event. Through a guided Q&A session led by the featured storyteller / keynote speaker, participants will also be asked to consider several critical questions:

1. What kinds of knowledge and preparation might make it acceptable for non-Native people to tell Native American lesson stories?
2. How does storytelling affect the lives of Native Americans?
3. Can stories be told by anyone in Native communities — or only by special medicine men / medicine women?
4. What are the cultural norms regarding Native American storytelling?

Additionally, StoryFest will give participants the opportunity to discuss storytelling techniques with featured storytellers.

### **Subject Format**

**In as much detail as possible, explain your project, program, or series. What are its main events/components and how will these be structured/organized? Please indicate whether any dates, speakers, or locations are anticipated/confirmed.**

The Dawnland StoryFest will be a daylong event accessible on November 13, 2021, via Zoom, to ensure the safety of all participants and audience members. The event will open with welcoming words, acknowledgments, and smudging, a traditional practice using small amount of smoke from burning a sacred plant like sage, sweetgrass, or Indigenous tobacco and a blessing to cleanse and make a sacred space, and to carry (or “waft”) prayers to the Creator.

Then there will be five 45-minute storytelling sessions, plus break-out groups for informal conversations between audience members and featured storytellers, and two sessions of the “Swapping Grounds” activity, in which audience members will be invited to share traditional stories. These storytellers and “Swapping Grounds” facilitator, who is also a storyteller, have confirmed their participation. These are the featured experts and activities of the day:

- {NAME} (Narragansett storyteller, with some master of ceremony duties). She will give a storytelling performance.
- {NAME} . She will give a storytelling performance.
- Lunch Break, with Zoom break-out rooms for participants to informally chat with one another and with featured storytellers. Storytellers may also act as mentors for audience members looking to improve their own Native American storytelling skills.
- {NAME} (Abenaki storyteller, with some master of ceremony duties). She will give a storytelling performance.
- {NAME} (Wampanoag storyteller). She will give a storytelling performance.
- Afternoon Break, with Zoom break-out rooms for participants to informally chat with one another and with featured storytellers. Storytellers may also act as mentors for audience members looking to improve their own Native American storytelling skills.
- {NAME} (Na-Cho Nyak Dun storyteller and keynote speaker). She will give a keynote address on a topic related to traditional storytelling..

- “Swapping Grounds” story swap (two sessions), facilitated by NH Storytelling Alliance storyteller {NAME} .
- {NAME} will return to give a storytelling performance.
- Concluding acknowledgments, thanks, and closing comments.

### **Project Significance**

**How will your project contribute to NH residents’ understanding or knowledge of a particular issue, topic of debate, or subject?**

The Native American worldview is significantly different from Western ideas of human beings’ relationship to one another and to the natural world. The Dawnland StoryFest will allow NH residents to explore these differences while also discussing the cultural role of the oral literary traditions of Native Americans. NH residents will also have the opportunity to discuss appropriate ways and times to share traditional stories, and the kind of preparation non-Native people may need to be able to share these stories respectfully. Audience members will also experience different examples of the tradition, from members of five different tribes. Finally, audience members will leave the event with a deeper understanding that storytelling is a living, ongoing tradition: Indigenous people still live in North America, and their storytelling traditions are still evolving.

### **Audience Engagement**

**Identify your target audience and indicate how many people you expect to attend. Then explain why your project will interest them and how they will participate in the program or event.**

The Dawnland StoryFest is geared toward adults, including young adults, who are interested in Native American storytelling traditions. Visitors’ interest in the museum’s People of the Dawnland exhibit and previous attendance at Native American Heritage Month program hosted by SBM since 2013 have shown that programs related to Indigenous heritage are of interest to current and potential museum visitors. The Dawnland StoryFest is designed to interest those who would like to learn more about Native American storytelling: both those already familiar with the tradition and those who have never heard Native American stories before. Time permitting, participants may have the opportunity to tell a story during the StoryFest and to ask questions of the featured storytellers. The estimated number of attendees is 100, with the Zoom format potentially attracting an even larger number because travel will not be an obstacle to participating.

### **Evaluation**

**How will you assess the impact of your program? Identify one method you will use and briefly explain what information you hope to gain through this method.**

In addition to tracking the number of Dawnland StoryFest audience members, SBM will send a survey and evaluation form to audience members after the event. This survey will collect demographic information on attendees, including whether the audience members are Indigenous, new to the museum, or museum members. As part of preparing to make this an annual event, SBM will also solicit feedback on the StoryFest regarding what was successful and what might be improved upon, including feedback about accessibility, how welcoming the event was, and how well this event fits in with the museum’s other programming.

## **PLANNING AND TIMELINE**

### **Role of the Subject Matter Expert**

**Summarize your Subject Matter Expert’s expertise -- their knowledge of a particular humanities field -- and explain what role they will play in the project’s development.**

{NAME} {SME BIO} She served as co-producer of the 2019 StoryFest and as its featured storyteller and keynote speaker. Her role in the 2021 Dawnland StoryFest at Strawberry Banke is to serve as expert consultant in designing and producing the event, as well as identifying/inviting Native American storytellers to participate. She will also serve to welcome and orient the invited speakers, fostering relationship building, and serve as both a storyteller and an MC at the event. In addition, she is an invaluable source of knowledge about active Native American storytellers and venues for promoting the event.

### **Planning and Timeline**

**Explain your plan and timeline for successfully executing your program.**

- 10/04/2021: begin publicity efforts
- 11/01/2021: hold a virtual meeting with storytellers to make introductions and foster relationship building
- 11/13/2021: host the StoryFest event via Zoom
- 11/22/2021: review audience data and surveys, thank participants, and recap; use what is learned about this event to help plan next year's StoryFest.

### **Budget Narrative**

**Explain how a New Hampshire Humanities Community Project Grant will help you realize your project. You will upload your Proposed Budget when you submit your application.**

#### **Expenses**

A \$1,550 New Hampshire Humanities Community Project Grant will enable the museum to cover its most important StoryFest expense: the payment of professional honoraria (totaling \$1,550) for the storytellers and keynote speaker. Specifically, SBM is requesting a grant to cover honoraria for 4 out of the 6 storytellers/facilitators participating in the event.

The museum will cover Anne Jennison's stipend as subject matter expert and honorarium as storyteller; Jonathan Cummings is waiving his honorarium and offering his time and skills as an in-kind gift. The museum will also cover marketing costs for promotional materials, and a one-time fee to enable Zoom to accommodate more than 100 participants.

#### **Grant Match**

##### *Cash Match:*

- Payment to {NAME} : \$100 stipend for her role as the subject matter expert for collaborating with SBM to co-produce the event and vet participants; and \$350 honorarium for her role as a storyteller and MC at the event: \$450 total

- SBM Archaeologist {NAME} staff hours as Project Manager, for planning and managing the event and promoting the event on Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective social media accounts: \$345
- {NAME} staff hours as SBM's Director of Marketing: designing posters and rack cards, and promoting the event, include social media (see "Publicity" below): \$594
- SBM Education Coordinator {NAME} staff hours, to provide technical support facilitating the chat, Q&A, and break-out rooms during the Zoom conference, as well as holding a introductory meet and greet with the speakers beforehand, and assessing lighting and sound: \$165
- A one-time fee to enable SBM to expand the audience capacity of Zoom: \$90

*In-Kind Match:*

- {NAME} waived honorarium as facilitator of "Swapping Ground": he is donating his time and skills as an in-kind gift: \$200

**Revenue**

The public is welcome to register for the event for free, but the museum will suggest a donation of \$10. If half the estimated audience (100) makes a donation, that figure would total \$500 of revenue.

**Publicity**

Explain your marketing and communication plans to publicize your program and reach your target audience.

The museum's Director of Marketing will coordinate all content to ensure that it is consistent and in line with the museum's brand and mission.

SBM's Director of Marketing will promote Dawnland StoryFest

- on the Strawberry Banke Museum website
  - a dedicated "Dawnland StoryFest" page under "Events"
  - on the museum's calendar of events
  - on the sidebar announcements section (visible on every web page).
- in 8-10 e-blasts to museum members and other constituents starting 6-8 weeks before the event
- in the October issue of *Banke Notes*, Strawberry Banke's printed member newsletter
- on Strawberry Banke's Social Media
- in at least 14-16 posts across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts
- by creating a Facebook event specifically for Dawnland StoryFest
- event Rack cards located in the Strawberry Banke Museum's Visitor Center, the Welcome Center at Portsmouth Historical Society, and the Welcome Center at the Greater Chamber of Portsmouth Discover Portsmouth Center
- in a digital ad on PortsmouthNH.com
- on seven arts & culture online calendar listings
- with 40 event posters located on community bulletin boards in the greater Portsmouth area
- in a news release to 10-12 local and regional outlets

{NAME} will promote the StoryFest

- on the Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective (INHCC) Facebook page (1388 followers), Instagram (1674 followers), Twitter (337 followers), and website

- through the UNH Anthropology Department and Native American and Indigenous Studies Minor program, as well as the Keene American Studies program

{NAME} will promote StoryFest on [their] website, Facebook page — multiple postings about each individual teller as well as about the event as a whole

- on arts and performance calendars: Hippo Press, Patch, Community Events Calendar – City of Portsmouth
- on the Seacoast Storytellers calendar of events
- on the NH State Storytelling Alliance calendar of events
- on the Northeast Storytellers calendar of events
- on the National Storytelling Network calendar of events
- on the Maine Storytellers Alliance calendar of events.