

THE SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

PROGRAM GUIDELINES & FAQ, 2020-2021

Application deadline: July 31, 2021

Notification date: September 1, 2021

Time period covered: September 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

Mentor/apprentice final report deadline: June 30, 2022

TO APPLICANTS:

Before filling out this application, it is important for both mentor and apprentice to meet together and talk about your ideas for this apprenticeship. Without shared understanding of what you plan to do, or why you are doing it, many problems can result.

NOTE: If you have questions or need help with the form, please contact your state's program director. They are:

Connecticut

Kate Schramm, PhD
Director, CT Cultural Heritage Arts Program
Connecticut Historical Society
1 Elizabeth St.
Hartford, CT 06105
860-236-5621 x 251
Kate_Schramm@chs.org

Rhode Island

Winifred Lambrecht, PhD
Rhode Island Folklorist
401-454-6266 (office) or 401-864-9006 (cell)
wlambrec@risd.edu

Massachusetts

Maggie Holtzberg, PhD
Folk and Traditional Arts Coordinator
Mass Cultural Council
10 St. James Ave.
Boston, MA 02116-3803
617-858-2713; 617-727-0044 fax
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is an apprenticeship in traditional arts?

Apprenticeship is a process of learning traditional practices by doing them. A mentor artist teaches a student apprentice in person, through regular, intensive, one-on-one instruction. Mentor artists teach skills, but also about the meaning and proper use of a heritage art form inside a community.

Do mentors and apprentices have to meet in person? (What about COVID-19?)

We believe that the best teaching occurs in person. However, we care about your health. We will allow apprenticeships that are willing to try remote learning options if they do not feel safe in person.

What kind of “arts” does this program support?

This program supports the learning of *living* cultural heritage forms that are important to communities. These art forms are expressions of shared community identity and/or values, and are usually taught informally. These art forms can include performing arts, crafts, occupational skills, and religious, seasonal, or ceremonial traditions.

Some examples of communities and art forms might include:

- Occupation: blacksmithing; mandolin making; hotrod car building
- Ethnicity: iconography; wampum-carving; hip-hop; traditional food-making
- Community: square dance calling; *santos*-carving; liturgical song

Why is this program for Southern New England and not just Connecticut?

Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts share many different communities. This program fosters cross-state connections by supporting mentors and apprentices to travel and teach across state lines.

Who is a mentor artist?

A mentor artist is someone that has practiced their art form for a long time, and who are recognized by their community as being good at what they do.

Why don't you use the term “master artist”?

We expect that our mentor artists have a certain mastery of their art form, but the heart of an apprenticeship rests on building relationships. Even while mentor artists teach new skills to an apprentice, they have the opportunity to deepen their own knowledge. We think that “mentor” represents this kind of relationship better than “master.”

Who can apply for this grant?

Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut residents may apply as mentor artists or apprentices with someone from one of the other states. Mentor and apprentice must apply together—we won't assign a mentor an apprentice, or vice versa. Mentor artists may also apply to share their skills or repertoires with an equally accomplished artist from the same community in another state.

Can a mentor have more than one apprentice?

Sometimes a small group is appropriate to the traditional art form. However, this is not a program that funds a mentor to teach a class. Each apprentice must fill out the “apprentice” portion of the application and submit support materials.

How are apprenticeship awardees decided?

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of folk arts specialists, artists, community leaders, and tradition bearers. Decisions are made based on these criteria:

- Traditionality and artistic excellence of the mentor artist
- Apprentice's familiarity with the art form and commitment to continuing it
- Involvement of both master and apprentice in their community

- Effectiveness of the teaching plan
- Feasibility of the required public presentation
- Difficulty in finding a mentor or apprentice for this art form
- Balance of distribution of apprenticeships among traditions, communities, and geographic areas
- Flexibility/ability of teams to utilize distance-learning if needed

I'm from a different community or heritage group from my mentor or apprentice—is this a problem?

The program favors applicants with a common heritage. However, cultural art forms are frequently shared between groups, so please explain in your application how your apprenticeship might strengthen cross-community ties.

But I don't know anybody in another state! Can I apply anyway?

Get in contact with your state's or another state's program director (list above). They may have helpful suggestions.

Do you ever fund same-state apprenticeships?

We consider same-state apprenticeships in Connecticut. For same-state apprenticeships in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, contact that state's program director (list above).

How much money and what does it pay for?

The apprenticeship grant tends to be around \$3000, no more than \$3500 and no less than \$2000. Each year around six to eight mentor/apprentice pairs are selected. Most of this fee should go towards paying the mentor artist for their time. Modest materials and/or travel costs may be allowable. CHS manages contracts and monitors carefully all contracted work.

Tell me about documentation.

All apprenticeship teams will be visited by the program directors during the course of the apprenticeship. Interviews, photographs, and video of the teams and their work will be taken, and made publicly accessible at the Connecticut Historical Society, and may be reused by the CHS, CCHAP, program participants, and others. All participants will sign a release form, but will have final say about what materials are archived. Please direct questions about this to kate_schramm@chs.org.

How long does the apprenticeship last?

The apprenticeship can last as short a time as 3 months or as long as 9 months. For shorter, more intense timelines, consult with your program director.

Is there a final report?

Yes. The mentor artist is responsible for developing and maintaining a schedule and work plan, in close consultation with CHS. Mentors and apprentices will be required to fill out a final report describing their meetings and accomplishments. Documentation of the teaching process with each mentor/apprentice pair and their public presentations, will be carried out by program directors.

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