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National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD**

**This Funding Announcement is not a request for applications.** This announcement is to provide public notice of the National Park Service (NPS), intention to fund the following project activities ***without*** competition.

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|  **ABSTRACT** |
| **Funding Announcement** | P17AS00001 |
| **Project Title** | Enhancing Interpretation at Ford's Theatre |
| **Recipient** | Ford’s Theatre Society |
| **Total Anticipated Award Amount** | $602,826 |
| **Cost Share** | 50% |
| **Anticipated Length of Agreement** | 1 yr |
| **Anticipated Period of Performance** | 1yr |
| **Award Instrument** | Cooperative Agreement |
| **Statutory Authority** | 54 U.S.C. § 320102(f) and 54 U.S.C.101702(a) |
| **CFDA # and Title** | 15.945 - Cultural Resources Management |
| **Single Source Justification Criteria Cited** |  |
| **Point of Contact** | LaQuita Palmer 202-619-7082 |

**OVERVIEW**

Ford’s Theatre Society, in partnership with the National Park Service, has embarked upon a comprehensive three-year digital strategy that will allow us to serve a larger number visitors through engaging digital initiatives. While Ford’s Theatre serves over 650,000 visitors to the site annually, we are aware that many people who wish to visit the site are unable to do so, and that even those who do may be limited in what they can see due to the popularity of the site and limited physical capacity. With the help of the National Park Service and the funds awarded from the Centennial Challenge, Ford’s Theatre has made enormous strides expanding accessibility through multiple digital initiatives.

**STATEMENT OF JOINT OBJECTIVES/PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Ford’s Theatre Society’s (FTS) priority is to preserve the site of Abraham Lincoln’s assassination on the night of April 14, 1865, and the Petersen House (the House Where Lincoln Died). Together, these places make up the Ford’s Theatre National Historic Site, which gives visitors an opportunity to discover Abraham Lincoln’s life in Washington, D.C., the struggle for a united country and the motivation behind Lincoln’s assassination. As an institution with deep ties to Washington, D.C., Ford’s serves an array of ages, ethnicities and income levels each year through live historical interpretation and engaging education programs offered on-site, off-site and online. By growing our digital infrastructure, we can continue to positively impact our community and create engaging and meaningful dialogue about Lincoln’s life, assassination and legacy that extends well beyond our doors.

**RECIPIENT INVOLVEMENT**

1. Society agrees to:
2. Develop and present FTS Programming at Ford’s Theatre NHS and develop a digital strategy that will serve as an exemplar of how digitization can expand their reach and strengthen their interpretation, and can provide a template for other parks to reproduce
	1. Upgrade existing radio connections in preparation for an expanded wireless upgrade. Staff will monitor wireless usage on-site, measuring numbers reached and broadband strength to maintain proper performance of the system and to maximize usage among patrons
	2. Develop and Implement more useful education resources and programs by understanding the needs.
		1. Two Teachers-in-Residence will help FTS address two major questions: What do teachers want from Ford’s Education? How can FTS ensure their programs cater to those wants and needs?
	3. Continue using Google Cultural Institute (GCI) to make the cultural resources of Ford’s Theatre more accessible and to digitally preserve them.
		1. FTS uses the GCI platform (website similar to Facebook, Blogs, Twitter, etc.) as a digital archive and to bring Lincoln’s life, death, and legacy to the outside world. FTS will continue to create online exhibits and add to its existing ones which include: “The Conspirators”, “Abraham Lincoln’s Final Journey”, Artifacts of the Lincoln Assassination”, “History of Ford’s Theatre”, and “History of Peterson House”. These exhibits can be used to create lesson plans for teachers, conduct research, or spark curiosity in people.
	4. Design a mobile application with a game-like interface to better engage student groups. This will offer an on-site experience that will inspire them to make Lincoln’s legacy real in their own lives.
		1. Collect observational research on student visitors including: how they observe the site, what order do they look at the exhibits, how they act around other visitors, what questions do they have, what do they want to know, what are their particular interests in the Theatre and Museum
		2. Conduct in-person surveys with student visitors after they visit the Theatre and Museum
	5. Begin building a new website by launching new production pages and new ticket purchase path. The new website will include expanded interactive, multimedia content and enable access on any device at any time.
		1. Ford’s Theatre strives to make art and history accessible to people with disabilities by removing barriers and providing opportunities. The new website will adhere to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by: providing images with text equivalents, post necessary documents in an accessible format, allowing users to manipulate color and font settings in their web browsers and operating systems in order to make pages readable, making sure any video content has closed captions. There will be an increase in accessibility and multilingual support through digital media.
3. Hire staff to assist with the digital planning process
	1. New Associate Director of Digital Strategy will oversee the development and implementation of Ford’s digital portfolio and bring departments together to work on translating onsite experiences to an online environment

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INVOLVEMENT**

B. NPS agrees to:

1. Provide funds to FTS from monies made available through the Centennial Challenge. FTS was selected for the Centennial Challenge grant because its proposed projects will provide the opportunity to reach new audiences and strengthen peoples understanding and appreciation for Ford’s Theatre NHS that many people will never get the chance to experience in person.
2. Collaborate with FTS to identify and test the proposed initiatives on enhancing digital interpretation of Ford’s Theatre
3. Provide feedback and recommendations during the request for proposals for fiscal year 2017.
	1. The proposal includes continuation of the current initiatives including: Wireless Connectivity and Increased Broadband, Mobile Application, Digital Content for Students/Teachers creation, Digital Interpretation, New Website Design
4. Ensure that digital media provides historical context and accuracy. This will provide visitors with an understanding of the cultural significance of the Theatre and Museum
5. Participate in website design process by reviewing updates and providing feedback and making sure that the ADA regulations are in order. This will provide users with the accessibility needed to experience the site.
6. Assist with interpretation of data collected from visitor survey and provide recommendations on the audience research report

**SINGLE-SOURCE JUSTIFICATION**

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| **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****SINGLE SOURCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS** |
| Department of the Interior Policy (505 DM 2) requires a written justification which explains why competition is not practicable for each single-source award. The justification must address one or more of the following criteria as well as discussion of the program legislative history, unique capabilities of the proposed recipient, and cost-sharing contribution offered by the proposed recipient, as applicable. |
| In order for an assistance award to be made without competition, the award must satisfy one or more of the following criteria:1. Unsolicited Proposal – The proposed award is the result of an unsolicited assistance application which represents a unique or innovative idea, method, or approach which is not the subject of a current or planned contract or assistance award, but which is deemed advantageous to the program objectives;
2. Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of an activity presently being funded, and for which competition would have a significant adverse effect on the continuity or completion of the activity;
3. Legislative intent – The language in the applicable authorizing legislation or legislative history clearly indicates Congress’ intent to restrict the award to a particular recipient of purpose;
4. Unique Qualifications – The applicant is uniquely qualified to perform the activity based upon a variety of demonstrable factors such as location, property ownership, voluntary support capacity, cost-sharing ability if applicable, technical expertise, or other such unique qualifications;
5. Emergencies – Program/award where there is insufficient time available (due to a compelling and unusual urgency, or substantial danger to health or safety) for adequate competitive procedures to be followed.
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**NPS did not solicit full and open competition for this award based the following criteria:**