

**Kansas Humanities Council** Call for Proposals  
New Speakers Bureau for 2014-2015

**Application Deadline**

5:00 PM Friday, October 18, 2013

**Overview**

In January 2014, KHC will launch its new *Humanities* catalog showcasing both traditional and innovative lectures, activities, and civic engagement opportunities for Kansans. We are seeking new Speakers Bureau-style presentations that engage the humanities in a meaningful way.

This past summer, the American Academy of Arts & Sciences released a report that underlined the importance of the humanities in civic and cultural life. Our world is one defined by change, and Kansans today need the cultural, historical, and ethical content necessary to both understand the past and move toward the future. As the report concludes, the humanities are “critical to our pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness, as described by our nation’s founders. They are the heart of the matter.”

To this end, KHC’s new *Humanities* catalog will be broad in spirit, with smaller, more diverse themes, ideas, and approaches that look toward the future while we also respect and learn about the past. This is an open call for all topics with a strong humanities theme, but KHC is also interested in presentations that connect to upcoming KHC initiatives. Among these are topics that

*Explore our shared world:* Today we connect with people all over the world on a daily basis, while our communities also grow increasingly diverse. Of special interest are topics that explore contemporary issues in Native American culture, Islam, immigration, and LGBT experiences.

*Explore sports in our communities:* In 2015 the Smithsonian Institution’s traveling exhibition, *Hometown Teams*, will tour Kansas. KHC is recruiting speakers who can look at how sports build and unite communities.

*Commemorate the Civil Rights Movement:* 2014 is the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act. KHC is interested in scholars who can explore this important time in our nation’s history, as well as interpret the meaning of civil rights in today’s experience.

*Commemorate World War I:* The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was the spark that ignited The Great War 100 years ago. Four years later, the unprecedented casualties, toppled dynasties, redrawn maps, and other effects dramatically changed the world. What did we learn from the Great War, and how does it affect us today?

*Innovations in format and approach:* As scholars consider new topics, KHC also encourages new approaches to the talk format. Culture Kitchen-style talks that explore culture through cooking demonstrations, quilting techniques in relation to a women’s history discussion, a debate format, and physical activities such as German heritage and Volksmarching are of special interest. *(Please be mindful that the humanities must remain at the forefront. KHC staff is happy to assist in the development of your proposal.)*

**Getting Involved**

KHC Speakers Bureau presentations are designed for an out-of-school adult audience and are commonly used by cultural organizations like museums, public libraries, historical societies, art centers, and other civic organizations. Public service and engagement underlies everything KHC does, and this spirit of altruism is reflected in our speakers who enjoy interacting with the general public across the state and are skilled in public speaking. KHC scholars are respected for their knowledge of their topic, humanities perspective, and ability to answer questions through scholarship and experience.

## Important Considerations

- Presentations are informal: 30-minute “lecture” with approximately 15 minutes for discussion or demonstration. Audience participation is key.
- Speakers should be available between January 2014 through December 2015.
- The ability to travel statewide is preferred, but not a requirement.
- Speaker information will be made available through an online *Humanities* catalog that will include the speaker’s name, contact information, brief biography, photograph, description of each presentation, and a sample press release specific to the presentation.
- Speakers are paid an honorarium plus travel expenses. Organizations interested in a topic will contact the speaker directly to arrange the time, date, location, and payment. Organizations will either pay the speaker directly or receive financial help from KHC to do so.

## Selection Process

Selections are determined by the theme, plus the topic and speaker criteria outlined below. The process is competitive and not every submission will be selected.

- The topic appeals to a general, out-of-school audience.
- The proposal is grounded in current, quality scholarship.
- The presentation uses a humanities approach. *What do we mean by this? For KHC, a humanities program moves beyond facts (what, where, when) to interpretation and analysis (Why is this important? How can we learn from this?).*

Preference will be shown to applicants that fit within at least 1 of the following categories:

- Professionals whose main activity is teaching, research, and/or writing in one or more of the humanities disciplines.
- Individuals with a Masters degree in a humanities discipline and public speaking experience beyond the classroom. In some cases, a bachelor’s degree in a humanities discipline is appropriate.
- Museum curators, librarians, or other skilled professionals with proven public speaking experience and knowledge of the specific humanities-centered topic.
- Traditional culture bearers. Scholarship and knowledge gathering are defined differently in different cultures, and KHC respects such diversity of training and preparation.

## How to Apply

### A. For individuals currently in KHC’s Speakers Bureau or TALK program, please:

1. Submit a cover sheet stating your name, mailing address, work and home phone, email, and travel restrictions (if any).
2. Include the title(s) and a 250-word description of each proposed talk.
3. Be sure to mention plans to use PowerPoint or other visuals. *Securing equipment is the responsibility of each speaker, not KHC. KHC does not have equipment to loan.*
4. Email application materials to Leslie Von Holten, [leslie@kansashumanities.org](mailto:leslie@kansashumanities.org).

### B. For individuals new to KHC, please:

1. Submit a cover sheet stating your name, mailing address, work and home phone, email, and travel restrictions (if any).
2. List names, phone numbers, and emails for 2 references, along with notes on their knowledge of your skills as a presenter.
3. Include the title(s) and a 250-word description of each proposed talk.
4. Mention plans to use PowerPoint or other visuals. *Securing equipment is the responsibility of each speaker, not KHC. KHC does not have equipment to loan.*
5. Provide a resume or abbreviated CV, along with a current photo of yourself.
6. Email application materials to Leslie Von Holten, [leslie@kansashumanities.org](mailto:leslie@kansashumanities.org).

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October 18, 2013

**Contact**

Leslie Von Holten, KHC Program Officer  
785-357-0359 or [leslie@kansashumanities.org](mailto:leslie@kansashumanities.org)

*This catalog will replace the current *The Way We Worked* Speakers Bureau catalog created as part of the Smithsonian Institution's traveling exhibit, *The Way We Worked*, and offered to the public from August 2012 through December 2013.*