



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) for Contract Fieldworker

South Arts seeks proposals from qualified contractors to serve as a folklife and traditional arts fieldworker for the [South Arts' In These Mountains, Central Appalachian Folk Arts & Culture](#) initiative. Fieldwork may be virtual and/or in-person. This contract position will be tasked with identifying and documenting African American and Native American traditional artists and community leaders in Appalachian Regional Commission counties, primarily in Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Secondary geographic fieldwork areas may extend to Appalachian Regional Commission counties in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina. The genre focus will include music, craft, and foodways traditions. This is a remote contract position.

Background

[In These Mountains, Central Appalachian Folk Arts & Culture](#) is an initiative of [South Arts](#) designed to provide intergenerational opportunities to share, teach, learn, preserve, document, and carry forward the folk arts and cultures of Central Appalachia. **In These Mountains** ensures the passing of traditions (process, skill, materials, context, history, evolution, etc.) from one generation to the next, while encouraging and supporting life-long learning for participants. Documentation opportunities result in permanent, digital records of the folk arts and cultures of Central Appalachia to be shared with public archival collections. It is anticipated that fieldwork materials will be permanently housed as part of the In These Mountains Collection, Berea College Special Collections and Archives in Berea, Kentucky.

Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, [South Arts](#) is a nonprofit regional arts organization empowering artists, organizations, and communities and increasing access to arts and culture. Our mission: advancing Southern vitality through the arts. In partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the State Arts Agencies of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee—with additional funding from other public and private donors such as the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—South Arts supports artists and organizations through a rich and responsive portfolio of grants, fellowships, and programs. South Arts believes that the arts elevate the region, increasing connectedness and inspiring meaningful change in the process.

Scope of Work

The fieldworker will conduct virtual and in-person documentation to support the In These Mountains initiative. This position will be specifically charged with identifying and documenting the traditional arts and culture of Native American and African American communities in Appalachia.

Deliverables

The contract fieldworker will:

- Develop a workplan.
- Conduct a minimum of 30 audio and/or video digital interviews including photography for in-person interviews only.
- Secure informant release forms and data forms.
- Complete and submit interview, photo, and video logs; fieldnotes; and interview transcriptions.
- Provide their own fieldwork equipment including but not limited to audio and video recording equipment, microphones, camera.
- Meet bi-weekly and as requested with South Arts staff.
- Secure travel approval from South Arts staff.
- Submit final summative report that includes recommendations for future documentation, if applicable.

South Arts will provide:

- Contract with payment schedule.
- Initial recommendations for traditional artists and community leaders to contact and/or interview.
- Access to transcription software.
- Hard drives for fieldwork storage.
- Meeting schedule for South Arts staff and fieldworker.
- Travel request approvals and associated reimbursements.

Fieldworker Attributes

The ideal candidate will be a cultural anthropologist, oral historian, folklorist, experienced Community Scholar, or someone with a similar background in folklife and documentation. Priority will be given to African American and Native American fieldworkers, or those otherwise representative of the communities in which we seek documentation; South Arts recognizes the importance of representation and welcomes the opportunity to hire from within cultural communities with whom we seek to collaborate. Candidates with residency in the South Arts region (AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN) are preferred, though this is not required.

The candidate must be professional, proactive, highly organized, an outstanding problem solver, and self-directed. Exemplary communication skills are a must. The candidate should demonstrate knowledge of the traditional arts and fieldwork techniques and familiarity with African American and/or Native American heritage and traditional culture.

Projected Timeline

- January 13, 2023 **(5:00 PM ET)** – Proposal Deadline.
- February 1, 2023 – Award Contract.
- February 15, 2023 – Contract period begins.
- January 31, 2024 – Fieldwork completed, all materials, and final report are submitted to South Arts.

Travel Guidelines

- Fieldwork travel must be pre-approved by South Arts staff. Fieldworker will be required to submit travel plans and anticipated expenses for pre-approval by South Arts prior to travel.
- South Arts will provide reimbursement for pre-approved fieldwork travel expenses (mileage, per diem, lodging).

- Fieldworker will be required to submit South Arts Travel reimbursement form, receipts, and mileage verification (via MapQuest or Google maps) upon completion of fieldwork trip.
- Reimbursement rates are as follows:
 - Mileage at 0.545 cents per mile with mileage log and mileage verification documentation.
 - Meals - maximum \$50 per day with receipts.
 - Lodging - maximum of \$150 per night with receipts.

Proposals

Respondents are asked to submit a proposal that provides:

- Relevant education and/or experience in conducting in-person and virtual fieldwork documentation.
- Ability to develop fieldwork workplans.
- Experience conducting folklife, cultural anthropology, and/or oral history fieldwork.
- Experience collecting, completing, and organizing informant release forms; informant data sheets; interview, photo, and video logs; fieldnotes; and interview transcriptions.
- Unique strengths and perspectives you bring to the work.
- Fee proposal.

Required support materials:

- Biography/Resume.
- Two examples of audio or video from previous fieldwork/interviews.
- Five examples of fieldwork photography.
- References – Submit three references (at least two must be from organizations) who can speak to your experience.

South Arts encourages applicants to contact us with questions more than 48 hours before the RFP deadline; due to the volume of requests, South Arts team members may not be able to respond to inquiries submitted after that time.

Selection Criteria

- Relevant folklife, cultural anthropology, and/or oral history fieldwork/documentation experience.
- Reference responses.
- Ability to conduct virtual fieldwork.
- Ability to travel to conduct in-person fieldwork.
- Technology proficiency including the use of transcription software.
- Fee.

Equity Statement

South Arts envisions a future in which everyone has equitable access to the arts regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, ability, geography, religion, and thinking/communication styles. South Arts commits to centering those who have been systemically excluded from participating equally in the arts as well as acting deliberately to challenge oppressive and exploitative systems in the South and the arts field. Only by creating a more equitable arts landscape can we meet South Arts' mission of advancing Southern vitality through the arts.

Questions?

Please contact Teresa Hollingsworth, Director, Traditional Arts at thollingsworth@southarts.org or 404-874-7244 x814.

Proposal along with fee, bio/resume, support materials, and references must be RECEIVED by 5:00 PM (ET) on Friday, January 13, 2023, at thollingsworth@southarts.org.

South Arts is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Alternate formats of this document may be obtained by contacting South Arts at 404-874-7244.