

Sample Quick Grant Application

Project Title: Still Newtown

Organization: Sacred Heart University

Project Summary:

Please describe your project and its major components in 2-3 sentences. Please include key information about your project like exhibition and public program dates.

Note: This description will be used both internally to reference the project for which you are seeking funding support, and, if funded, externally by CTH to describe your grant to the public on our website and in press releases.

This 12-episode podcast produced by WSHU Public Radio will be released on 11/30/22. This limited series podcast will tell the stories of the Newtown community, reflecting on the impact of the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting 10 years later, focusing on the importance of resilience, connection, and healing as a community. The events of Sandy Hook happened in our backyard. WSHU Public Radio has remained connected with the community of Newtown and is privileged to tell this story in their words.

Project Description and Details:

Please tell us in more detail about the project for which you are requesting funding.

This is the heart of your grant application and your opportunity to tell us about your project's background, structure, components, and why it should be funded.

If your program has multiple sessions (i.e., a 4-part lecture series), please include a 2-3 sentence description for each program session.

If your project has multiple components (i.e., an exhibition and lecture series), please describe both the project as a whole as well as the individual components.

At the heart of The Humanities, is the study of individuals, cultures and societies from a critical perspective. The Humanities allow us to understand and interpret the human experience within our communities. The greatest power of local journalism is to bear witness to events in human history to observe the individual and our societies; to be there to examine and document history when it happens and to provide context to the events for future generations. This is the importance of why WSHU Public Radio is seeking support from CT Humanities for the podcast Still Newtown. This project – Still Newtown - is an oral and audio historical reflection rooted within The Humanities traditions.

Ten years later, in the community's own words, the town of Newtown reflects on the impact of the horrendous events at Sandy Hook Elementary School with WSHU reporter Davis Dunavin. WSHU Public Radio was there on Dec. 14, 2012 and has continued to report on the impact of that day's events over the years. This story is personal for WSHU with our staff, listeners, and members living in Newtown. And while this event did redefine how our country viewed mass shootings, changed security at schools, introduced active shooter drills in elementary schools, plus reframed gun rights, mental health, and activism for young people, this story is how Newtown will not be defined by the horror and sadness of one day.

WSHU Public Radio is seeking \$4,750 to pay for an experienced audio editor, Jon Pinnow, who has worked on trauma-informed content and with mass shooting stories and to pay for outreach funding to distribute our content to new audiences around CT through The Narrative Project.

Following the strategic priorities of CT Humanities in engagement of individuals and communities in the exploration of contemporary issues and in presenting accessible content that provokes, challenges, educates, and inspires, WSHU Public Radio seeks funding to complete the production of our podcast Still Newtown. WSHU Public Radio is in the post-production phase of this project, editing the interviews, crafting the narrative storyline that will be voiced by WSHU reporter Davis Dunavin and sound editing each episode. WSHU Public Radio and specifically reporter, Davis Dunavin has been working with the Newtown community over the past 10 years following the impact of the Sandy Hook shooting with the community's survivors. Aside from bearing witness to the history and impact of these events, this podcast presents the stories of this community in a way that does not sensationalize the trauma of the town, allowing listeners to engage with contemporary issues of gun control, school safety, mental health, advocacy in an accessible way. To achieve these goals it was important for WSHU Public Radio to find an experienced audio editor to help craft the audio. We found such an audio expert in Jon Pinnow at Colorado Public Radio. Jon's award winning work is featured on reporting associated with the Columbine High School shooting and an audio series titled Teens Under Stress.

The Narrative Project, based in New Haven, CT will assist with some of the publicity of Still Newtown reaching beyond the current WSHU Public Radio audiences.

Over twelve episodes, WSHU reporter – Davis Dunavin will tell the story of how the shooting impacted this community and how they want their stories to be revisited and remembered. The development of this series was fully underway and needed to be revisited with the mass shooting events that occurred this summer in the Big Y grocery store in Buffalo, NY, and at the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, TX. The changing gun legislation further impacted the story and how Newtown residents have, time and time again, risen to be survival experts guiding other communities impacted by mass shootings. Episodes will showcase the voices of survivors, community residents, journalists and trauma experts. The episode run-down currently planned for this series is listed below. At the writing of this grant, specific episode content has not been fully determined. The following run-down is the drafted storyline to tie in each of the collected interviews. Each episode will be no longer than 20 minutes.

Episode 1: Amid That Morning:

Recalling the morning of the shooting

Episode 2: Please Care About This

Interviews with students who have become part of the “community of survivors,” many of whom have become activists.

Episode 3: Squeezing the Lemon

What have the survivors of that day faced, and how has it influenced who they are today?

Episode 4: Families

Speaking with victims’ families and what they have done in response to the day’s events

Episode 5: Music

How music has helped facilitate healing and build new bonds

Episode 6: Not Defined by One DAY

What the community of Newtown is beyond the events 12/14

Episode 7: Leading in Dark Times

A candid conversation with then Newton Selectman Pat Llodra and his impressions and reflections of that time.

Episode 8: News

What the media got right and wrong and the impact the events had on those telling the story.

Episode 9: Tell Your Friends that I am Kind

What one person is doing to honor the memory of her daughter

Episode 10: Healing

What efforts have been made to help the spiritual healing of this community

Episode 11: Sacred Soil

All the gifts shared with the town and the creation of a permanent memorial

Episode 12: Final thoughts

The people of Newtown share, in their own words, how they wish to be remembered.

While these episodes and topics are currently planned, this is a very dynamic project, in which the arc of the story could change unfortunately, based on current events.

The podcast format will follow a traditional, non-fictional storytelling format re-telling the events of December 14, 2012 and the aftermath through long-form, investigative journalism showcasing interviews and solo-reflections from Davis as the narrator and reporter. Content from the 12-episode podcast will be featured in on-air broadcasts on WSHU news segments and The Full Story; a weekly magazine show broadcasted on Friday nights. Episodes will be available weekly starting at the end of November. A gratitude spot for support from CT Humanities will start each episode of the Still Newtown series.

Each week in CT and Long Island, WSHU Public Radio and our digital platforms reach 174,000 radio listeners, 25,413 website visitors, 8,468 combined podcast visitors, 1,629 WSHU App visitors, 24,721 streaming visitors, and 21,226 e-newsletter visitors.

Humanities Goals, Learning Objectives, and Evaluation:

What do you want participants to better understand after having participated in your project?

Please articulate your project's humanities goals and learning objectives--the aspects of human history, culture, values, and beliefs that your project will explore and what people will learn about them.

Please also describe the evaluation techniques you will use to determine if your project has achieved its humanities goals & learning objectives.

WSHU Public Radio is committed to making our community a better place to live. One of the ways we do this is by serving as companion and touchstone every day, and as a source of support during extraordinary events. WSHU Public Radio experienced and witnessed first-hand the impact of the Sandy Hook tragedy on our community. By telling the story of Newtown from the town's perspective, we bare witness to these historic events. The importance of bearing witness to events is the heart of what local journalism can bring to a community. To bear witness to the lived experiences and unity of Newtown throughout the 10 years of the events surrounding the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary and offer a capstone event through this podcast to document the community's resilience and to do so in a respectful manner is of paramount importance for our community, for our state and our nation. By continuing to follow and share the story of Newtown, we continue to demonstrate our commitment to them. By giving voice to their story, we can bring national prominence to them without sensationalizing the day's events.

Elie Wiesel, in his bestselling novel *Night*, speaks profoundly about the ability to bear witness to the unspeakable trauma of the Holocaust. "For the dead and the living, we must bear witness." This is the importance of WSHU podcast's "Still Newtown" to bear witness for the dead and living associated with Sandy Hook; and why we seek funding support for this project.

The primary humanities goal for this project is to learn about the aspects of the stories and human history of Newtown and the events at Sandy Hook that will contribute to an informed public dialogue for gun control, school safety and mental health. WSHU Public Radio will use the Hearken (<https://wearehearken.com/>) - our engagement management system - to solicit feedback on the podcast series craft post-listening/audience-impact survey to determine listener learning and outcomes within a non-partisan context.

A post-listening survey may include questions like:
Did your knowledge of this historic event increase?
Did you knowledge of trauma and mental health increase?
What is the most important thing you learned and what questions remain for you?

A separate metric for success to have 100,000 downloads from across CT and across the country by Spring 2023.

Relationship to Project's Subjects and Participants:

Describe your project team's relationship to your project's subjects and participants. If telling the story of a community or culture, please explain your access to this community and how you will address their needs and interests in your humanities project. What role(s) did the participants or community play in the planning and development of your project? What role(s) will they play in the implementation, production, and/or marketing/distribution stages?

WSHU was one of the first media outlets on the ground covering the story of the Sandy Hook School Shooting. Our reporting focused on the impact on the community, and we are one of few outlets to stay as the recovery story continues. WSHU Reporter, Davis Dunavin, has covered the story of Newtown since that tragic day and is the podcast host. His first-hand knowledge and rapport with the community will help capture the survivors' candid thoughts and remarks. Subjects to be included in the podcast's interviews include former Sandy Hook students, community reporters, journalists and trauma experts.

Audience, Marketing, and Relevance:

Who is your target audience for this project?

Please identify the groups you hope will attend your programs and the methods you will use to promote your project to them (e.g., print, broadcast, social media, specific groups).

Why is this project important to your intended audience? Does it fill a community need? How do you know and why?

WSHU's primary audience for the Still Newtown podcast is our current audience of 250,000 terrestrial, digital and streaming listeners/users throughout CT, Long Island and around the country. Our audiences have followed the events of Sandy Hook from the day of the event through our on-going coverage of the Alex Jones defamation case claiming that Sandy Hook was a staged event to the recent news of a mass shooting in Thailand at a daycare facility. Beyond WSHU listeners, our goal is to market this podcast to the entire state, giving all CT residents access to the story of Newtown's resiliency and community beyond the headlines. WSHU will work with The Narrative Project, a social justice communication organization to help us diversify our audience outreach and community engagement more broadly in CT beyond our current audience. We will further our reach and bring greater attention to the story, specifically in Bridgeport and New Haven, through a traditional post card mailing and couple the mailing with a social media strategy via Instagram and Facebook.

The digital strategy is extremely important as WSHU Public Radio is redefining radio. We are meeting our audiences where they are with on-demand content, that can be streamed online without waiting for the program to be broadcast on-air. Audio audiences under the age of 65 want digital content, on-demand and, in short, episodic segments. With recent audience survey data for public radio nationally and specifically for WSHU Public Radio audiences from Jacobs Media Group and NPR audience data, we know that a third of our current audience is moving toward digital content consumption. We also know that diversifying our audience base means producing digital audio content and digital audience acquisition. With the help of the Poynter Institute, WSHU Public Radio is focusing our efforts on cultivating our next target audience to be 35- to 49-year-old adults who are culturally curious and civic-minded. From recent audience survey work and community conversations, we have heard locally that the community areas of interest are topics in Education, Gun Control, Police & Community relations, and local news stories. This podcast touches on each of those issues.

Nationally, WSHU will work with NPR through their NPR One app to reach approximately 5,000,000 monthly visitors. American Public Media has requested WSHU to produce a special one-hour show

based on the Still Newtown podcast which has the potential of reaching 19 million people through 1,000 radio stations. Our goal is to have 100,000 downloads from across CT and across the country by April 2023.

Total # of Audience Members Anticipated for Entire Project (Total Project Attendance):

19,000,000

Admissions and Other Fees:

0

Program Location and Audience Capacity:

To be delivered as online content and portions aired on WSHU. There is no audience capacity.

Dates and Times of Programs OR Open and Close Date of Exhibition:

The podcast's targeted launch date is November 30, 2022 and will remain available on streaming services indefinitely. One episode will be dropped each week for 12 weeks.

Presenters, Consultants, and Project Team:

Please list ALL presenters, consultants, scholars, and other key individuals working on the project, indicate if they will be paid with CTH grant funding, and list their major project responsibilities AND qualifications. Be sure to highlight humanities scholarship and expertise that they add to the project and, for presenters, indicate on which programs they are participating/presenting.

Davis Dunavin
Reporter/Host
Not paid with CTH funds
WSHU Public Radio
Podcast creator and host of the program

JD Allen
Not paid with CTH funds
Managing Editor WSHU News Room
Podcast editor

Jon Pinnow
Music Audio Editor
Paid with CTH funds
Music and audio editing for the podcast

Cindy Carpien
Script Editor
Not paid with CTH Funds
Script editor for the podcast

The Narrative Project
Storytellers for Justice/Marketing/Outreach
Paid with CTH Funds
Outreach help in Bridgeport & New Haven for podcast

Budget: *See end of document*

Budget Notes and Justification:

We request \$3,750 to hire Jon Pinnow for editing and post-production of the Still Newtown podcast. Jon's expertise in editing and presenting stories will greatly help in presenting the story of Newtown through the voices of the survivors. In addition, we request \$1,000 for the Narrative Project for their help branding and promoting the podcast. There is support in reaching the audience that we don't traditionally reach will be beneficial in helping strengthen the reach of the limited series.

BUDGET SUMMARY: Values fill automatically from the detail pages.

Budget Summary	Source of Funds Summary				
	CTH Funds	External Cash Contributions	Applicant Cash Contributions	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Salaries & Wages	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,594.00	\$0.00	\$17,594
Honoraria	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0
Technical Design Services	\$3,750.00	\$1,699.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$5,949
Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0
Printing, Copying and Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0
Equipment and Room Rental or Purchase	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0
Promotion	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$4,750.00	\$0.00	\$5,750
Evaluation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0
Total	\$4,750	\$1,699	\$22,844	\$0	\$29,293