



RCHS Hmong Exhibition Researcher and Planner

Reports to: Director of Collections and Exhibits

Compensation: \$9,375.00 in three installments

Hybrid role, remote with onsite meetings

Contract, exempt

Project Description

RCHS desires the services of a qualified researcher and writer to complete the research, plan, and design of an exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of Hmong culture in Minnesota. Following a second grant round, the exhibition will premiere in the RCHS exhibition gallery on the first floor of Landmark Center in downtown St. Paul on May 14, 2026.

With a population of more than 62,000, Minneapolis and Saint Paul have the largest concentration of Hmong individuals in the nation. Together, these individuals have worked to shape the modern Twin Cities' infrastructure, agriculture, political system, food culture, and much more. However, Minnesota's Hmong population has also endured acts of racism, discrimination, and prejudice, much of it fostered by a lack of understanding, inclusion, and a sense of belonging.

In order to help foster the understanding, inclusion, and belonging currently lacking, and help break some of the barriers to a healthy, equitable state, RCHS is planning an exhibition celebrating Hmong cultural heritage with active input from the Hmong community. In addition to sharing the community's role in preserving and presenting their own cultural heritage through the establishment of the Center for Hmong Studies (CHS), the Hmong Cultural Center, Hmong Village, and others, this exhibition will display the work produced by RCHS Hmong Fellows participating in the inaugural year of the RCHS/CHS Hmong Community Fellowship program.

It is expected that this exhibition will travel to other organizations after it closes in April 2027.

Scope of Services

This contract Researcher/Planner will lead the planning of this proposed exhibition. While RCHS staff have developed a general thematic framework for the exhibition, the organization understands the final exhibition plan will be shaped by community input and guidance from the

Researcher/Planner. Therefore, the Researcher/Planner will complete the following tasks insofar as they remain relevant to the project as it is refined and developed further.

1. They will work with RCHS staff and the Chair of RCHS's Collections Committee (Lee Pao Xiong) to understand the organization's vision and the project's scope. This team will be responsible for assisting them moving forward, making connections within the community, and approving the preliminary and final plan.

2. They will work with the Hmong community to

- (a) outline the history of Hmong cultural heritage preservation and presentation to date

- (b) identify opportunities and challenges to cultural heritage preservation and presentation moving forward.

They may choose to begin by meeting with RCHS's partners, including CHS, the Hmong Cultural Center, Hmong Village, XIA Gallery, and the Coalition of Asian American Leaders. They will identify and seek out any other resources required for the success of the exhibition. This may involve visits to local archives or conducting oral histories.

3. In order to prepare the exhibition subsection about the work of the RCHS/CHS Fellows, they will meet with each individual to learn more about their work. They will identify any additional resources required to complete this portion of the exhibition.

4. They will develop the exhibition themes, an outline, and a preliminary design for approval by RCHS staff and the Chair of RCHS's Collections Committee. They will incorporate their feedback into the exhibition as required.

5. They will work with an exhibit designer and provide feedback on the exhibit.

6. They will work with RCHS staff on a budget. This involves helping staff identify programming options, publication ideas, and potential traveling exhibition venues.

7. They will complete a draft of their final research report and annotated bibliography that will include all exhibition text, a list of items for display, an exhibition layout, a final cost estimate, and a digital design of the exhibition panels. This final report will be reviewed by RCHS's staff (including its Editor), the Chair of RCHS's Collections Committee, and two members of the Hmong cultural community.

8. They will make the advisors' suggested changes and submit a final draft of their report.

Budget

The selected candidate will be paid \$9,375.00 for the completion of the aforementioned deliverables in 3 installments based on successful benchmark deliveries. This sum will include all aspects of project completion, including, but not limited to: transportation, copies, interviews, transcriptions, etc. This project is funded by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Requirements

The qualified Researcher/Planner will:

1. Demonstrate 2 years of experience working in/with the Ramsey County Hmong community;
2. Provide a research/writing sample;
3. Demonstrate successful experience developing exhibits that include multiple venues and programs;
4. Experience developing budgets and working with multiple private and public entities;
5. Understanding and experience working within the standards of National Association of Interpretation. Their work product must meet those standards.

Desired Qualifications

The desired qualifications of the Researcher/Planner may cover the following:

1. Design and exhibit layout experience;

Deliverables

This planning phase of the project is expected to begin July 18, 2025 and be completed within five months from contract signing, or December 2, 2025. Timing is compressed due to funding needs to produce and install the exhibition in April 2026.

Proposal Submission

Please provide your proposal materials, including a resume and list of professional references to Mollie Spillman, RCHS Director of Collections and Exhibitions, mollie@rchs.com. Application review will begin July 9, 2025. If you have experience designing exhibits, please provide two samples of past exhibits in a portfolio.