The American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF) provides support to nurture and perpetuate the practice of Scandinavian folk arts and cultural traditions in the Upper Midwest (North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan).

Broadly defined, folk arts are expressions of community identity and values. They are cultivated informally among individuals by word of mouth or example. Whether practicing a traditional craft, art, technical or occupational skill; performing music or dance; or marking important moments of life or the year with special foods or customs, folk arts are deeply rooted in community life. They foster human creativity and transmit cultural values that affirm community ties.

The American-Scandinavian Foundation is committed to celebrating and preserving Nordic (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sápmi, Sweden) cultures throughout the United States. By supporting folk arts and traditional cultures in the Upper Midwest, in particular, ASF recognizes and celebrates the mastery of individual artists or practitioners, facilitates the cultivation of skills and understanding among younger generations, brings greater visibility to Scandinavian arts and traditions, and highlights the centrality of cultural expression to all of our lives.

Two kinds of awards are available – fellowships for artists and practitioners of traditional skills and grants for public programs and community projects. All of our grants encourage both the practice of folk arts and cultures and the presentation of these arts to public audiences.
GRANTS FOR PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Grants for public programs and community projects are awarded to nonprofit (501(c)3) organizations.

1) Grants for public programs encourage the perpetuation of Scandinavian cultural traditions through the support of community events such as festivals, celebrations, and heritage events as well as workshops, performances, classes, and demonstrations.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

• A local arts organization could bring tradition-bearers together in a festive setting for a public celebration of their work. The artists (e.g. wood carvers, rag rug weavers, braided rag rug makers, knitters, embroiderers, and lace makers) may demonstrate and exhibit their crafts, and musicians and dancers lead workshops before and after a traditional lunch.

• A regional group could organize a ‘folk arts trail,’ a daylong event during which the public may visit folk artists in their homes to see them at work and learn about their traditions.

• A museum could develop an exhibition featuring the work of local master artists and their apprentices. Programs featuring the artists as well as others from the area could complement the exhibition, both raising the visibility of the traditions and encouraging further exploration of the crafts.

2) Grants for public programs heighten the visibility of Scandinavian folk traditions by creating innovative community projects with wide visibility and public appeal.
SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

• A non-profit organization (e.g. a local community center, civic group, museum, or school) could collaborate with a master practitioner to create an artwork or other traditional construction for the community (e.g. a mural). This could involve the construction of new expressions that are grounded in traditional heritage.

• A ‘red list’ of endangered traditional skills could be created to build awareness of these traditions, highlight living master artists who are unrecognized, and devise ways for both documenting the skills and encouraging their perpetuation.

• Culture-sharing events involving traditional arts, food preparation and cooking traditions, music and/or dance could occur between traditional groups (e.g., a local indigenous community and Sami groups) to encourage inter-cultural dialogue and discussion.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

GRANTS FOR PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS are available for Upper Midwest nonprofit organizations only. Proof of an organization’s nonprofit status (as a 501(c)3 or equivalent) is required.

Grants for public programs and community projects range from $5,000 to $50,000.

WHEN WILL THE PROJECTS TAKE PLACE?

Projects for the 2020 deadline may take place between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021. The American-Scandinavian Foundation does not offer retroactive funding.

WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

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<th>APPLICATION DEADLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT</td>
<td>November 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROJECT START DATE</td>
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Questions? Please contact grants@amscan.org

APPLY FOR FELLOWSHIPS FOR PUBLIC PROGRAM GRANTS