Recovering Voices – Community Research Grants
SI COLLECTIONS SUPPLEMENT

To search all of Smithsonian’s online collections databases, go to [http://collections.si.edu](http://collections.si.edu). Use the filters on the left-hand sidebar to see collections at a certain repository within your search (known as the ‘catalog record source’).

The Smithsonian uses the term ‘repository’ to discuss both collections and archival facilities. For example, the National Anthropological Archives is a repository separate from the NMAI Archive Center.

Each repository holds a vast number of objects and materials that may be useful to your research. Please be aware that one day in a repository is usually not enough time to meet most research goals. Plan your methodology accordingly, and visit only the repositories that will be most beneficial to your project. A successful proposal will take into account that not everything can be seen in one day. Each repository has its own guidelines, so visiting multiple repositories will take that much more time to orient based on these different rules.

All Smithsonian collections and archives repositories are closed on weekends and federal holidays. The facilities at the Museum Support Center (MSC) and the Cultural Resources Center (CRC) are located in Suitland, Maryland, and are open 9:30am to 4:30pm. There is a free Smithsonian shuttle that transports researchers and staff between the museums on the National Mall in D.C. and the repositories in Suitland.

The first day of Recovering Voices research typically begins at 10:30am to accommodate time for introductions and orientation to the Smithsonian.

Please be aware that many of the collections objects held by the National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of Natural History may have been treated with chemicals to discourage pests. We ask that all visitors wear gloves when handling objects. There is also a lingering smell from the chemicals, so taking breaks during the day is highly encouraged.

**National Anthropological Archives and Human Studies Film Archives**

The NAA/HSFA maintain extensive documentation of many of the world’s endangered languages. These collections represent the four fields of anthropology: ethnology, linguistics, archaeology, and physical anthropology. Materials include field notes, journals, manuscripts, correspondence, photographs, maps, sound recordings, film, and video created by Smithsonian anthropologists and other preeminent scholars.

- The NAA/HSFA is closed to researchers on Mondays, in addition to being closed on weekends and holidays.
- Holdings that have been digitized are available online through the collections search.
- The John Peabody Harrington Collection includes documentation on over 130 languages and is almost entirely digitized. This is discoverable through the online portal [http://anthropology.so.edu/naa/Harrington/index.html](http://anthropology.so.edu/naa/Harrington/index.html)
- Research at the NAA takes place in its reading room at the MSC. The reading room can accommodate groups of varying sizes.
National Museum of Natural History- Anthropology Collections
The Anthropology collections include about 2.2 million specimens in archaeology, ethnotlogy, and physical anthropology. Together, these collections document the cultural and biological diversity of humankind, past and present.

• With the exception of sacred and religious objects, much of the collections are available online through the collections search. Contact collections staff or Recovering Voices for a comprehensive report of collections holdings concerning your community.
• Research in the Anthropology collections takes place at the MSC. Pod 1 is usually where we work, but other Pods in the building store Anthropology collections as well. Each Pod is the size of a football field and is three stories tall. Most Pods have separated floors, but Pod 4 is open to the ceiling to safely store over-sized objects.
• It is possible to smudge and/or conduct a blessing at the MSC. Blessing and singing can take place in the Pods and there is a special Ceremonial Room available for smudging.
• It is preferred to have a pre-arranged list of objects to study. The specific objects do not need to be identified prior to application for the grant, but you should know what collections you propose to work with.

National Museum of Natural History- Natural History Collections
The NMNH holds more than 126.5 million objects and specimens in collections. Every department holds collections that are, in some way, important to Recovering Voices and can be accessed through http://collections.nmnh.si.edu/search/. Knowledge and language are deeply intertwined with how people and cultures interact with and adapt to the world around them. If it is relevant to your research, feel free to schedule time (in coordination with Recovering Voices) to visit the Departments of Botany, Entomology, Invertebrate Zoology, Vertebrate Zoology, Mineral Sciences, or Paleobiology. Please contact the appropriate collections manager prior to submitting your proposal to determine if a department’s collections are available for research. http://www.mnh.si.edu/rc/

National Museum of the American Indian Collections
The National Museum of the American Indian has one of the most extensive collections of Native American arts and artifacts in the world—approximately 266,000 catalog records (825,000 items) representing over 12,000 years of history and more than 1,200 indigenous cultures throughout the Americas. Ranging from ancient Paleo-Indian points to contemporary fine arts, the collections include works of aesthetic, religious, and historical significance as well as articles produced for everyday use.

• Very little of the NMAI collections are available online through the collections search. Please contact collections staff for a comprehensive report of collections holdings concerning your community.
• Research in the NMAI collections takes place at the Cultural Resources Center (CRC), located next door to the MSC.
• Objects for study must be on a pre-arranged list. It is not possible to view objects in the cabinets ‘at a glance’.
• It is possible to smudge and/or conduct a blessing at the CRC. Blessing and singing can take place in the collections area and there is a special Ceremonial Room available for smudging.

National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center
The NMAI Archive Center collects, organizes, preserves, and makes available materials that reflect the historical and contemporary lives of Native peoples throughout the Western Hemisphere. The archival collections are particularly focused on Native art, culture, knowledge, politics, events, and social and political movements.
Many of the Archive Center’s resources are available online through collection descriptions and finding aids here: [http://nmai.si.edu/explore/collections/archive/accessing-collections/](http://nmai.si.edu/explore/collections/archive/accessing-collections/).

Research in the NMAI archives takes place at the Cultural Resources Center. Their reading room can handle small groups.

Contact the Archive Center staff for more information on the materials available.

**Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage Ralph Rinzler Folkways Recordings and Collections**
The Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is dedicated to supporting cultural diversity and increased understanding among peoples through the documentation, preservation, and dissemination of sound. The Folklife Archives also hold recordings and documentation from all Folklife Festivals.

- The Folkways and Folklife recordings archive is available through the collections search mentioned above.
- Research at Folklife is done in the reading room at the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) located in the Capitol Gallery building near the museums on the National Mall. This reading room is very small and can only accommodate one researcher at a time.

**Smithsonian Archives**
The Smithsonian Archives holds approximately 46,800 feet of records and nearly 3 million photographic images. The collections include official records of the Smithsonian, personal papers of individuals associated with the Smithsonian, oral and video histories, and other special materials that document the staff, research, events, exhibitions, and facilities of the Smithsonian.

- The Smithsonian Archives collection is available to search online through the collections search at the top of this document.
- Research at the Smithsonian Archives is done in the Archives reading room located in the Capitol Gallery building near the museums on the National Mall.

**Smithsonian Libraries**
The Smithsonian Libraries is a network of 20 specialized research libraries supporting each of the SI’s museums and initiatives. In particular, the NMNH Joseph F. Cullman 3rd Library of Natural History, the Anthropology Library, and the American Indian Library hold rare books and manuscripts that may be useful to your research. The easiest way to search the Library’s holdings is to search [http://siris.si.edu](http://siris.si.edu).

- Some books cannot be checked out, but can be used as reference material.
- Books that can be checked out should be requested prior to the research visit to be used as reference material onsite in the other repositories. Recovering Voices staff can have library books available to the group at the research site.