

Speakers Bureau: Call for Proposals

The Vermont Humanities Council [Speakers Bureau](#) offers local nonprofit organizations an easy, inexpensive way to host informative and thought-provoking presentations in their communities. Speakers Bureau talks present scholarship and discussion on diverse humanities topics, while living history programs bring historical characters to life through well-researched and well-acted portrayals.

New Presentations

VHC seeks proposals for new presentations that are strongly humanities-based, designed for diverse adult audiences, and highly appealing in content and presentation. Applicants must demonstrate knowledge of their subject (either through academic or other experience) and an engaging presentation style. Visual aids are welcome but not required.

The humanities explore the human experience by encouraging reflection on its nature and value. An ideal topic will bring historical, cultural, or ethical perspectives to bear on topics and issues of interest to our communities. Humanities fields include: archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; history; jurisprudence; languages, both modern and ancient; linguistics; literature; philosophy; aspects of the social sciences that include humanistic content; and the history, theory and criticism of the arts. Our full definition of the humanities can be found [on our website](#).

How it Works

A Vermont nonprofit (the "host organization") reviews the catalogue, selects a presentation, and contacts the presenter to set a tentative date. The host then submits a request form to VHC. If approved, the host organization pays a \$75 fee to VHC, and VHC pays the speaker \$250 (for a lecture) or \$350 (for a living history performance).

Speakers Bureau presenters must be willing to travel statewide. VHC expects presenters to entertain any reasonable request for their program, and to work with the requesting organization to find a mutually agreeable date, time, and location. Speakers Bureau presenters represent VHC as independent contractors.

Speakers are permitted to charge additional fees and/or mileage costs, but since most non-profits have limited programming budgets, the speakers who charge no extra fees are engaged more often. Speakers are encouraged to reach out to libraries, historical societies, and other community organizations to promote their presentations.

Each speaker may deliver up to 8 presentations per year for the first talk, 12 for two catalog talks and 14 for three catalog talks. Experienced VHC speakers may have up to 3 talks. For new speakers accepted into the Speakers Bureau roster, one initial presentation is permitted with an opportunity to propose additional talks after one year.

On the day of a presentation, the speaker must arrive early, give a 45-60 minute presentation as described in the catalogue, and facilitate a discussion at least 15 minutes in length. The full program, including Q&A, should take about 90 minutes.



Please see our [Speakers Bureau website](#) for full program guidelines and the current catalogue of speakers and talks.

Proposal Guidelines

Please submit your proposal through our online [Speakers Bureau Scholar Application Form](#). The form will require you to include the following information:

- Your name and contact information: mailing address, phone number, email address, and website URL (if applicable)
- A biographical statement
- A resume, and/or C.V., which should make clear your experience or qualifications to present on your proposed topic
- Any special arrangements that would be required (e.g. podium, projector, table, changing room)
- A brief description of the presentation's content (about 100-150 words). Please specify whether this is a talk or a living history program. Include a short title which clearly describes your presentation's topic.
- Whether you plan to charge an additional fee and/or mileage reimbursement

Next Steps

- Complete our online [Speakers Bureau Scholar Application Form](#), by **Monday, April 22nd**.
- We will respond by **Friday, April 26th**. Selected applicants will be invited to audition at the VHC offices in Montpelier.
- Auditions will be held on **Monday, May 6th or Tuesday, May 7th**. Auditions will be scheduled throughout the day and will last 15 to 20 minutes each.
- Those who audition will be notified of our final decision by **Monday, May 20th**.

We limit the number of presenters and topics in our catalogue based on several factors, including the relevance and appeal of each topic, the presenter's knowledge and ability, and space restrictions.

Contact Us

Please contact us if you have any questions about the application process:

Richelle Franzoni
Community Programs Assistant
rfranzoni@vermonthumanities.org
802-262-1355

Tess Taylor
Community Programs Director
ttaylor@vermonthumanities.org
802-262-1356

