

Request for Letters of Interest: Historic Resource Study of African American Communities on the Antietam Battlefield & in Sharpsburg

Project Title: Historic Resource Study of African American Communities on the Antietam Battlefield & in Sharpsburg

Project Budget: \$77,812 (this is the total compensation for the principal investigator(s), RAs, Section 508 Compliance, travel, and research expenses)

Anticipated Start Date: January 2023

Timeline for Completion: March 2025

Deadline for Letter of Interest to NCPH: November 1, 2022

Expected Date to Award Project: December 1, 2022

Questions? Email ncph@iupui.edu

Project Goals

Via our cooperative agreement with the National Park Service, the National Council on Public History seeks a qualified historian (or team of historians) to conduct a Historic Resource Study of African American experiences on the Antietam National Battlefield and National Cemetery, and in Sharpsburg, MD. This study will incorporate historical research and community and descendant engagement efforts to understand the meaning of freedom for African Americans at Antietam throughout the history of the battlefield and cemetery. Lastly, the project historian(s) will prepare a Transfer of Knowledge (TOK) event, to be decided upon between the historian, NCPH, and NPS staff.

Please read the full narrative below for the description of the project's scope of work and timeline. Send letters of interest to the National Council on Public History via ncph@iupui.edu by November 1, 2022. Your letter of interest should come in the form of a single PDF attached to the email, and should include a C/V for each member of the proposed project team, a professional writing sample, and a one-page proposal letting us know why you'd be the right fit for this project. Please include an explanation of your approach to the project and your ability to work collaboratively with partners; a proposed budget; any suggested changes to the schedule of work found at the end of this document; and tell us about your previous experience with long-term research projects (and particularly previous experience doing public history work and expertise in African American History). A full outline of response requirements is on the last page of this document. Membership in NCPH will be required for the PI(s) for the duration of the contract if you are selected for the project, but is not required to submit a letter of interest.

Note: For this particular project we are open to partial proposals divvying up the project budget and workload based on research expertise as well as specialized research and/or community engagement skills. We are particularly seeking relevant expertise in African American History. Proposals could come solely for a piece of the work outlined below, or proposers can submit a proposal for a team that will, together, complete the full project.

Project Background and Scope of Work

Congress established Antietam National Battlefield in 1890. The battlefield was first managed by the War Department, and then the National Park Service beginning in 1933. Today, the majority of the battlefield still reflects its historic agricultural appearance and use, with additional commemorative layers of monuments, roads, signage, and observation points constructed during its use as a battlefield park. The battlefield and Antietam National Cemetery are jointly administered.

Antietam National Battlefield preserves the landscapes and tells the stories of the September 17, 1862, Civil War battle that ended the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia's first invasion into the North. The Battle of Antietam unfolded across the rural farming landscape of Washington County, Maryland, where over 1300 African Americans were held in bondage in 1860, and the free Black population was similar in size ([Slavery and Emancipation in Sharpsburg - Antietam National Battlefield \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)). Between 1840 and 1864, enslaved people lived on seven of the farms that are part of today's Antietam National Battlefield, as well as in the nearby town of Sharpsburg. During the Civil War, locally, at least seven African American men joined the United States Colored Troops, some of whom gained their freedom through enlistment.

The Battle of Antietam is significant in part because it resulted in President Lincoln's issuance of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. But, for the enslaved residents who lived on the battlefield & in the state of Maryland, the Emancipation Proclamation did not confer freedom. Maryland was a border state that did not secede. It would take a new state constitution in 1864 to free enslaved people in Maryland. Maryland's liminal status, as a slave state loyal to the Union, where Black soldiers on the battlefield could help win freedom that their own families might not enjoy, is an important topic for this Historic Resource Study to explore: what did the Emancipation Proclamation mean for enslaved people in Maryland? What was African American life like in the almost two years between January 1863 and November 1864? How did local people react to these events?

While freedom was delayed for many, members of free African American communities began to build their own homes, farms and business prior to the Civil War, and churches, schools, and mutual aid societies followed soon after. Tolson's Chapel is a church and school established by Sharpsburg's free Black community shortly after the Civil War, preserved today as a National Historic Landmark. The everyday stories of life transformed after the war are a vital part of Antietam's history that can be recovered. A recent study (["They Have Erected a Neat Little Church," The Rural African American Experience, 1865–1900, in the National Capital Area by Edith Wallace](#)) profiles the community building efforts of African Americans in Sharpsburg and nearby Red Hill after the war; in addition to events and reactions surrounding emancipation, additional research may focus on identifying connections between these historical communities and descendant families, congregations, and communities today.

After the war, the need to find respectful resting places for fallen soldiers led to the creation and dedication of the Antietam National Cemetery in 1867. Antietam National Cemetery is now the final resting place of almost 5,000 veterans and some of their wives, reflecting their service in the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and Korea. The cemetery closed to new burials in 1953.

Approximately 30 African American soldiers who served in World War I and World War II were also buried in Antietam National Cemetery, including many in segregated graves. This, too, is part of the story of freedom at Antietam, reflecting the denial of full dignity and equality for Black citizens under segregation in the twentieth century. Preliminary research shows that some of these veterans had family ties to African American Civil War soldiers from Sharpsburg. The next important step in research is to compile the basic military records of the African American soldiers buried there, and to better understand how the transition from segregated to integrated graves occurred at all national cemeteries and at Antietam in particular. Exploring the service records and stories of those buried in the cemetery may provide opportunities for understanding the long-term histories of African American families in the region, their contributions across its history, and potential connections to living descendants.

Beyond the battlefield, African American communities in Washington County, including Sharpsburg, nearby Keedysville, and the historically Black Jonathan Street neighborhood in Hagerstown, played a

significant role in local history before and after the Civil War. Jonathan Street remains a central location of African American memory and historic preservation efforts for Washington County. The social and economic connections between these communities, Sharpsburg, and the land now encompassed by Antietam National Battlefield have the potential to reveal significant aspects of the battlefield's history and relevance for people living today.

Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to produce a Historic Resource Study that will provide baseline data on African Americans who lived, fought, or were buried at or near Antietam National Battlefield and Cemetery through the lens of freedom at Antietam and in associated African American communities. Reflections on how places, stories, and people connected to the battlefield embodied and transformed this theme across different eras and sites will enable park staff and partners to better interpret sites significant to African American history.

The study will address the following thematic issues and topics:

1. Enslavement and freedom at Antietam before the Civil War
2. African Americans and the Battle of Antietam
3. Delayed freedom: the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, continued enslavement in Maryland, and reactions to emancipation with the Maryland Constitution of 1864
4. African American veterans and Antietam National Cemetery
5. Family and community ties to the battlefield and region beyond the Civil War and Reconstruction, into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries

The primary goal of this study is to generate new research using primary sources, rather than to synthesize existing NPS documentation, except as necessary to provide context. The impact of emancipation for African Americans associated with the battlefield, and African American veterans in Antietam National Cemetery, are the topics with the greatest need for deeper historical research at this time. The study should also provide preliminary research and suggestions for the park toward identifying descendant communities, by genealogy or proximity and association, and recommend next steps for expanding research and community engagement. The park has basic information (numbers and some names) of people enslaved on farms in today's park boundary; access to multiple studies on the free Black community in Sharpsburg in the Reconstruction era, but with less of a specific connection to park resources; and a list of names and some basic digital research on African Americans buried in the National Cemetery. A fuller summary of research conducted by the park will be made available at the kick-off meeting.

This study will take a public history approach to research methods. First, it will incorporate substantive primary and secondary source documentary research on the history of the battlefield and research into twentieth century African American connections (and disconnections) from the battlefield and cemetery. Repositories with relevant material will likely be local (Washington County and Frederick County), State (Maryland), and national (National Archives); NPS staff have conducted substantial research using available digitized sources, and the PI(s) will need to expand research into collections not available online. A researcher or team with the ability to work with the park, local archives, community organization, etc. beyond the minimum site visits listed in the schedule below would be an advantage.

Second, the study will seek to engage with the perspectives of African American descendant and community stakeholders, especially those located in and near Washington County, Maryland. It will not be the Principal Investigators' responsibility to establish long term relationships with communities or families on behalf of the park, but rather to inform and include to the extent possible. Engagement with

descendant and community stakeholders may include outreach to or interviews with individuals, visits or presentations to local heritage or community organizations, or other activities that the PI(s) determine appropriate based on research, initial contacts, and discussion with NCPH and NPS. There is no requirement for oral histories for feasibility reasons, but NPS welcomes proposals incorporating some forms of community engagement and/or oral history into their methods.

Definition

A Historic Resource Study (HRS), as defined by the National Park Service, “provides a historical overview of a park or region and identifies and evaluates a park's cultural resources within historic contexts. It synthesizes all available cultural resource information from all disciplines in a narrative designed to serve managers, planners, interpreters, cultural resource specialists, and interested public as a reference for the history of the region and the resources within a park. Entailing both documentary research and field investigations to determine and describe the integrity, authenticity, associative values, and significance of resources, the HRS supplies data for resource management and interpretation.” (National Park Service, *Director's Order No. 28, Cultural Resource Management Guideline*)

Technical Requirements

The project PI(s) shall be responsible for producing all submittals in Microsoft Word (2010 or later version) and submitting to NPS in digital form. To facilitate reviewer comments, all pages will be numbered and provide left margin line numbers for all progress reports and drafts.

The final approved Historic Resource Study will be provided in both printed form (10 copies) and as a digital file (PDF format) and contain all sections described below and 7 include footnotes. All citations and formatting will be according to the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.

The following overview details the major sections that must comprise the Historic Resource Study:

Front Matter

1. Cover Page
2. Executive Summary
3. Table of Contents: The table of contents must list the titles of all major divisions and the first-level (principal) subdivisions in the study and provide page numbers for all major divisions.
4. List of Illustrations: A list of illustrations must include captions and give page numbers for photographs, figures/illustrations, maps, and other forms of graphics subject matter. If warranted, separate lists for specific types of illustrations may be used.
5. Acknowledgments: The acknowledgments must include any obligatory or appropriate personal or organizational acknowledgments.
6. Preface: The preface must contain background information about the scope of the research preparation of the study. It will discuss research methods and summarize major findings.
7. List of Abbreviations and/or Acronyms: This list must include nonstandard abbreviations and acronyms used in the report. The spelled-out version of a term should be given the first time the term appears within the study.

Text or Main Body of the Report

8. Introduction: The introduction must include general background information on the geographic location, history, and significance of Antietam National Battlefield and Cemetery in relation to the theme of freedom in African American history.

9. **Historical Data/Narrative and Analysis:** This section represents the main body of the product. This section must address the topics/themes described in the scope of work above and should be split into multiple chapters, logically organized, to address these themes. This narrative must synthesize existing research and provide primary research, as appropriate. Use of primary sources, which may include oral history interviews, in writing this section is critical. Photographs, maps, charts, and other figures will be used as necessary to enhance the text and placed within the text rather than as a separate section. The overview history must contain footnotes (rather than end notes or reference notes).
10. **Conclusion:** The epilogue (or conclusion) must consist of a closing statement that provides further comment, if appropriate, on the interpretation and use of the information found in the study.
11. **Research Recommendations:** These recommendations must include a discussion of topics for future study, including an indication of why the author thinks they are relevant to park management and reference to any known sources that might be useful for this future research. In this case, research recommendations should include preliminary research design for further interviews with descendants of community members and other stakeholders with knowledge of African American life at Antietam and Sharpsburg.

Back Matter

12. **Appendices:** The appendices should include copies of key documents and data including but not limited to: a. Appendix 1. Timeline of major events b. Appendix 2. Maps c. Other appendices as necessary
13. **Bibliography:** The annotated bibliography must list the primary and secondary source materials researched and used for the preparation of the study. The bibliography may be broken into sections by kinds of materials (i.e., primary and secondary sources, etc.) as directed in The Chicago Manual of Style.

Illustrations

A limited number of illustrations should appear at the appropriate place within the relevant chapters. Colored illustrations and maps shall be reproduced in color. After reviewing requests by Recipient, the park will provide reproductions of historic photographs and other illustrations in park collections. Wherever possible Recipient should choose illustrations that are in the public domain. Recipient is responsible for the cost of all reproductions and for securing copyright permission, where applicable. All illustrations should be labeled with captions that fully identify the subject, where published (if published), and provide credit lines identifying where the original can be found. Illustrations should be numbered and referred to by number in the text. A full list of illustrations with captions will be included following the table of contents. Copies of permission agreements, grouped together and clearly labeled, must be included in the research materials that are turned over the park at the completion of the project.

Accessibility

All electronic documents prepared under this Agreement must meet the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The Act requires that all electronic products prepared for the Federal Government be accessible to persons with disabilities, including those with vision, hearing, cognitive, and mobility impairments. View Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, Standards and Guidelines for detailed information.

The following summarizes some of the requirements for preparing NPS reports in conformance with Section 508 for eventual posting by NPS to an NPS-sponsored website. For specific detailed guidance and checklists for creating accessible digital content, please go to [Section 508.gov](https://www.section508.gov), Create Accessible Digital Products. All accessible digital content must conform to the requirements and techniques of 9 the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 or later, Level AA Success Criteria.

Research Materials

The project PI(s) shall submit a compilation of research materials collected by the research team for this project, along with a catalog of titles, authors, sources, etc (e.g. via spreadsheet). Materials of greatest interest to the NPS include copies of primary source documents, photographs, and other images that may be useful in future park research and interpretation; transcriptions and notes from meetings, interviews, and conversations with descendants and other stakeholders; and other research notes and compiled data.

All research material collected in conjunction with this project remains in the public domain and is archived and otherwise managed by the National Park Service. Such materials may include but are not limited to photographs, maps, microfilm, illustrations, audio cassette, and computer diskettes, thumb drives, CD/DVDs, all digital files, and geospatial data. The author may seek permission from the park superintendent to reproduce any or all of the material not subject to archival restrictions before relinquishment to the National Park Service.

All work to be performed under this agreement will comply with all applicable federal standards including but not limited to as found in CFR 36; the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards (http://www.nps.gov/history/locallaw/arch_stnds_9.htm); the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (as amended and annotated); the Antiquities Act of 1906 (Pub.L. 59–209, 34 Stat. 225, 16 U.S.C. § 431–433); the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461-467); the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended--Public Law 89- 665; 16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.); National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (PL 91-190, 83 Stat. 852 42 U.S.C. §4321 et seq. (1969); 1969 Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1972 (AHPA); Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA); American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (AIRFA); Native American Graves and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA); and any other applicable laws, standards and/or guidelines. Additional standards include *NPS Standards for Oral History Handbook* (McDonald, 2004) and standards as published by the Oral History Association.

Proposed Timeline of Work and Payment Schedule

The historic resource study will be reviewed in iterations. The project historian(s) will submit a proposed timeline, which will be approved by NPS. Adjustments to the timeline can likely be accommodated, especially in light of delays due to COVID-19. The following schedule is a suggested timeline:

PRODUCT	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	DUE	Proposed Payment
Kick-off meeting with PIs	Schedule an orientation meeting with park and NPS regional staff, NCPH representatives, and PIs and research team to discuss the research plan, public engagement strategy, goals, and schedule, locations and access to source materials.	January 2023	15%

PRODUCT	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	DUE	Proposed Payment
	<i>The NPS will provide a tour to acquaint the research team with the park and resources - this in person visit can be conducted at any mutually agreeable time between January and July 2023.</i>		
Detailed Outline	<p>Conduct sufficient preliminary research to complete a research plan and detailed outline. Address the topics and issues specified in the Statement of Work. The outline should contain all pertinent information necessary for sound decisions to be reached regarding further topical research and content of the final report. It should also include a list of all repositories consulted and summaries of initial or planned community/descendant engagement efforts. Following NPS review, a meeting or conference call should be scheduled to discuss.</p> <p><i>NPS review period: 30 days</i></p>	July 2023	10%
Community Engagement event	A second in-person visit to continue research as well as to host an in-person community engagement event with African American descendant and community stakeholders, especially those located in and near Washington County, Maryland.	October 2023	5%
Draft of Sample Chapters	<p>The chapter drafts submitted should be two substantive chapters from the main body of the report. The submitted chapters will adhere to the format for the first draft. NPS and NCPH will organize a conference call with PIs within 2 weeks after review if needed.</p> <p><i>NPS review period: 30 days</i></p>	November 2023	10%
First Draft of Study	<p>The first draft will consist of a 66% completed report, including draft front matter, footnotes, bibliography, and draft illustrations and maps. NPS and NCPH will review and meet with PIs to discuss feedback. The PIs will inform NPS of major questions so that NPS can assist with bringing the project to substantial completion. NPS and NCPH will organize a conference call with PIs within 2 weeks after review if needed.</p> <p><i>NPS and NCPH review period: 60 days</i></p>	April 2024	25%
Second Draft of Study	<p>The second draft will be submitted for peer review in addition to NPS review. NCPH will propose appropriate peer reviewers and coordinate peer review. NPS and NCPH will organize a conference call with PIs within 2 weeks after review if needed.</p> <p>PIs will also be responsible for:</p>	September 2024	15%

PRODUCT	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	DUE	Proposed Payment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● obtaining copyright permission and providing appropriate credit line for government printing of all images ● providing images as digital images in high resolution jpg or tif format suitable for printing – see NCR Formatting Guidelines ● identifying images by subject, publication information, and location of original <p><i>NPS and peer review period: 60 days</i></p>		
Final Study	<p>In addition to meeting the requirements for the second draft (except for line numbers), Recipient will select an appropriate illustration for the cover and may provide a descriptive title.</p> <p>Submissions: 10 copies printed and spiral bound. One 508-compliant PDF copy. Original formatted MS word document, images used in the report, and any scanned resource material submitted on external hard drive.</p> <p>Copies of relevant primary sources and research notes shall be submitted to the NPS, with a spreadsheet or similar key to the primary source image/transcription files and source information. Also, copies of clearly labeled permission agreements must be included.</p>	January 2025	15%
Knowledge sharing event	Recipient and NPS will work together to coordinate public sharing of research throughout the project, not just at the end, and to develop a concluding event for the public and professional community (parks, local history organizations, academic and public historians, and others interested in African American history on battlefields)	March 2025	5%

The project historian or team will be compensated by NCPH following NPS approval of each deliverable, according to a payment schedule set between the project historian, NCPH, and NPS staff.

The project historian will submit one electronic copy of each deliverable to the Agreements Technical Representative (ATR) for review. The draft will be prepared using Microsoft Word 2010 or higher. The NPS will provide written comments on the drafts within 45 days of receipt. The second full draft will be reviewed by a historian outside the NPS, as organized by NCPH. Project historian or team will also be responsible for the final report copyediting, design and formatting of the cover, spine, and back for the final printed version of the administrative history.

Stipulations

- The principal investigator must be fully qualified personnel according to the Secretary of the Interior's standards for professional historians, outlined in [NPS-28: Cultural Resource Management Guidelines, Appendix E](#).
- All material collected and created as part of the project will remain the property of the Federal Government. Such material includes oral history recordings and transcripts, documents, photographs, maps, microfilm, drawing, notecards, computer files, etc.
- All reports and material collected resulting from the study will become the property of the United States Government. The project historian may publish reports or other products based on the research conducted under this agreement, provided the NPS role is acknowledged and no sensitive information is shared.

Personnel qualifications

1. The Principal Investigator

The Principal Investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects of managing the proposed study. The PI must have a PhD, MA, or equivalent in United States History (no exceptions). A level of experience equivalent to a PhD is acceptable and may be evidenced by a publication record demonstrating a professional level of research, analysis, and report preparation. It is expected that the publication record will reflect an understanding and ability to apply research methodology, and education and experience beyond that of a project historian. For this project we are looking for a PI with a PhD, *or* a MA with relevant experience doing long-term research and preparing monograph-length works using primary and secondary sources. We particularly encourage submissions from those with extensive experience in African American history and community engagement.

2. Project Historian(s)

Although the overall research design, guidance, and responsibility for the completed study lies with the Principal Investigator, the PI may utilize the assistance of project historians (PH) and other project staff at their discretion to accomplish the research. The minimum requirements for a PH are a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in United States History from an accredited college or university. A Master's thesis in history or its equivalent in research and publication are highly recommended.

3. Standards for consultants

Personnel hired or subcontracted for their special knowledge and expertise must carry academic and/or experiential qualifications in their particular area of expertise. Such qualifications are to be documented by means of vitae attachments when the proposal is prepared and submitted.

Proposal requirements

Your letter of interest should come in the form of a single PDF attached to the email, and should include:

1. *a full C/V for each member of the proposed project team*
2. *a one-page proposal letting us know why you'd be the right fit for this project. Please include an explanation of your approach to the project and your ability to work collaboratively with partners*

3. *a professional writing sample of at least 4,000-5,000 words, demonstrating original research and use of secondary source citations*
4. *a proposed line-item budget for the project budget that includes:*
 - a. *Personnel services including PI and other personnel*
 - b. *Miscellaneous personal expenses*
 - c. *Supplies and equipment*
 - d. *Travel (travel costs must be factored into the budget; there is not a separate fund source for site visits and research trips)*
 - e. *Cost of analysis and report preparation*
 - f. *Overhead, Indirect, and In-kind costs if applicable*
 - g. *Other expenses*
 - h. *Total project cost*
5. *any suggested changes to the schedule of work found above along with a work schedule diagramming the duration of field and archival work outlined in the research strategy section of the proposal.*
6. *an explanation of your previous experience with long-term research projects (and particularly previous experience doing public history work and expertise in African American History).*