



West Virginia Folklife Seeks Applications Statewide for 2026-27 Folklife Apprenticeship Program

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Charleston—West Virginia Folklife, a project of the West Virginia Humanities Council, is now accepting applications for its statewide Folklife Apprenticeship Program.

Since 2017, the West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program has supported expert traditional artists working with dedicated apprentices on a yearlong apprenticeship to teach traditional music, dance, craft, foodways, storytelling and more. This popular program follows the time-tested model of one-to-one teaching so that apprentices may carry on techniques, artistry, stories and traditional knowledge of communities from throughout the Mountain State.

Applications are due September 18, 2026, for the 2026-27 program. The application, guidelines and instructions for how to apply can be found at wvfolklife.org. Mentors and their proposed apprentices must apply together. Applications will be evaluated by a review panel, and successful applicants will be notified in November 2026.

Teaching artists will receive \$3,000, and apprentices \$800, for participating in the program. Pairs may request an additional \$400 to reimburse for expenses related to their apprenticeship. Folklife apprenticeship pairs design their own work plans, and they are expected to participate in a public presentation, recorded interview, virtual meetings as a cohort with other selected pairs and a final public showcase.

The West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program is facilitated by the West Virginia Folklife Program at the West Virginia Humanities Council. The Folklife Apprenticeship Program is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

West Virginia Folklife is dedicated to the documentation, preservation, presentation and support of West Virginia's cultural heritage and living traditions. For more information, visit wvfolklife.org. For questions about the West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program, contact Jennie Williams at williams@wvhumanities.org or 304-346-8500. Follow our YouTube channel @WestVirginiaFolklife to watch past West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship showcases.

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The West Virginia Humanities Council, an independent nonpartisan nonprofit corporation, is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council is supported by the NEH, the State

of West Virginia and contributions from the private sector. The purposes of the West Virginia Humanities Council are educational, and its mission is to support a vigorous program in the humanities statewide in West Virginia.

Captions for photos

[059] -- Apprentice Aristotle Jones (left) listens as his mentor, Bill Hairston, tells stories of growing up in West Virginia. Photo by Michael Keller.

[219] -- Singer Ginny Hawker (left) leads her apprentice Mary Linscheid in Primitive Baptist hymn singing. Photo by Michael Keller.

[322] -- Old-time fiddler Ben Townsend (right) leads his apprentice Bodhi Gibbons-Guinn on a tune performed at Arthurdale Heritage for a West Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Showcase hosted in November 2025. Photo by Michael Keller.