

Participation Option 1
General Discussion

Project:

1. How many interviews will you do?
2. Who will you interview?
3. Who will do the actual interviews?
4. What do you plan to do with the interviews when they are completed?
 - a. Create an archive to house them?
 - b. Locate an archive that will house your collection for you. *Note: this may require you to donate your interview files and recordings to that archive.*

Possible costs:

1. Digital recorders
2. Interviewer fees
3. Transcriber fees

Equipment:

1. How will you record the interviews? Via cell phone? Via digital recorder?
2. Will you need to purchase a digital recorder(s)? *Refer to the Equipment Information sheet in the project packet.*
3. If you do not have funds to purchase a digital recorder(s), is this something that you can borrow from another facility?
4. What software will you use to process your interviews? *Refer to the Processing Information sheet in the project packet.*

Training:

1. Will you need training on how to do an oral history interview? If so, schedule training with the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum (live training via Zoom or a previously recorded training link).

Question sets:

1. What information do you want to get from the people you interview?
2. What specific questions do you want to ask the people you interview?
3. Create your questions. *Refer to the sample question sets in the project packet. Note: these are examples of the type of questions used in the Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum's Oral History Program are included as a guide.*

Making initial contacts:

1. Make a list of the people you want to interview and discuss why you want to interview them. *You may want to list them by priority, with those that are higher up in years interviewed first. You want to get their stories while they are alive to tell them.*
2. Decide how you will contact the people. Will you mail a formal letter, announce it in the community, or visit them personally? *Refer to the Sample Contact Letter in the project packet.*

Doing the interviews:

1. Included in the packet are copies of the genealogical form, tips on how to conduct a good interview, and a checklist to track individual interview progress from start to finish. *Note: you will need a release form signed by the person you interview if you think that you may write an article, publish a book, or donate the interview to an archive. Contact a local archive for more information or do an internet search for examples to help you write your release form. Please note that it should be checked for legality prior to use.*

Processing the interviews:

1. How will you process the interviews? In other words, what will you do with the recording? *Refer to the abstract and transcript samples in the project packet.*
2. Do you want to abstract the interview? *(An abstract is a summary, outline, or condensed version of what is in the interview. Your goal is to pick out the main points or highlights of the interview and reduce them down to 3-5 paragraphs.)*
3. Do you want to transcribe the interview? *(A transcript is a written or typed, and printed version of what is on the audio recording.)* This transcript can be edited to remove repeated words, false starts, background noises, coughs, uhs and ums etc., or it can be a literal transcript with every sound, noise, and word (as listed previously) that was recorded.
4. Do you want to do an abstract and a transcript? *Note, if your end goal is to donate it to an existing archive outside of your community or facility, you should at least do an abstract. The archive will need to have an idea of what is on the recording when they accession the item into their collection.*

Abstracting and Transcribing:

1. If you are only doing abstracts, you will listen to the recording, jot down main points, and then type them up. On average, an abstract will take approximately two hours for each hour of audio recording.
2. As of July 2022, the average audio transcriptionist charges between \$90-\$180 per audio hour. Higher rates may be charged depending on quality of sound, multiple speakers, fast speakers, languages other than English, and true verbatim transcripts.
3. Hiring university or college students may be an option and cost less than a professional transcriber does, or perhaps students can do it as interns or for extra credit for a class they are taking. Is there someone in your community who loves to type?
4. Transcription requires good hearing, good typing skills, and a lot of patience.
5. Allow plenty of time for transcribing. For every hour of interview audio, it will take approximately 10-20 hours to transcribe.
6. If you are going to abstract and transcribe the audio interviews, begin with the transcript. You can write the abstract off the transcript and will only need to listen to the recording once instead of twice, saving time. It is suggested that you begin abstracting and transcribing the interviews as soon after the interview as you can since the transcript will require the most time to complete. Other interviews can be conducted while the transcript from the previous interview is being completed. *Refer to the abstract and transcript examples.*
7. You will need to download software to your computer so that you can abstract or transcribe. *Refer to the Software Recommendation sheet in the project packet.*

Archiving:

1. Archiving your interview recordings, abstracts, and/or transcripts is a way to preserve the stories and history for future generations.
2. If you want to create your own archive, please refer to one of the many archives in New Mexico for information on how to start a simple archive for your oral history collection of interviews, abstracts, and files.
3. If you will be donating your collection to a larger archive, please contact an archive to verify if your oral history collection will fit the scope of their collection subjects.

Project Reveal Ideas:

1. How will you reveal the project to the community and the public? Will you make it part of the celebration on July 4, 2026?
2. Will you do a small display that highlights several of the interviews that you have done? If you choose to do this, how long will the display be up so that people can see it?
3. Ideas if you choose to do a small exhibit or display:
 - a. Photo and short bio about people you interviewed
 - b. Photo and excerpt from the interview
 - c. A collage of photos of everyone you interviewed, along with information about the project (why you did it, what it is for, etc.)
4. Invite some of the people you interviewed as special guests for a community picnic on July 4, 2026. Introduce them and give a short bio of their life.