

**Sounding Spirit:
Scholarly Editions from the Southern Sacred Music Diaspora, 1850–1925
Call for Proposals**

The Sounding Spirit initiative seeks proposals for editions of gospel songbooks or hymnals published between 1850 and 1925 representing Black or Native American sacred music making from prospective volume editors.

Deadline: Wednesday, May 15, 2019

For more information:

- Visit the Sounding Spirit website: <http://soundingspirit.org>
- Contact Dr. Meredith Doster, Sounding Spirit managing editor: mdoster@emory.edu

About Sounding Spirit

Sounding Spirit will publish digital and print annotated facsimile editions of five influential but currently inaccessible books of sacred southern vernacular music. Sounding Spirit focuses on gospel music, spirituals, shape-note music, and lined-out hymn singing, documenting the critical role textual communities played between 1850 and 1925 in the constellation of vernacular southern sacred music genres that shaped the American popular music landscape. This initiative examines the roots and intersections of American sacred music traditions through richly annotated editions that harness the unique affordances of digital publishing. Sounding Spirit's annotation-oriented approach to scholarly editing combines analysis of edition *texts* with their cultural significance among *textual communities*. Sounding Spirit tells the story of these textual communities through an interdisciplinary approach to scholarly editing that documents texts' *bibliographic* and *genre* contexts while connecting the books to their contemporaneous *cultural* contexts. By foregrounding relationships among race, place, religion, and culture, Sounding Spirit editions will explore how these textual communities negotiated *modernity*, or created *alternative modernities*, by participating in their respective sacred music traditions.

Supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities' Scholarly Editions and Translations program and published by the University of North Carolina Press and the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship (ECDS), Sounding Spirit invites new readings and interpretations of critical sacred music books currently unavailable to scholars and practitioners. The initiative offers scholars of history, musicology, folklore, regional studies, and religious studies access to key texts for research and teaching. Sounding Spirit also appeals to a general audience, including contemporary textual communities using these and similar volumes of sacred music. Published digitally using Readux, the initiative's editions present high-resolution digitized page images overlaid with accurate transcribed text and multimedia annotations paired with visualizations, apparatus, and critical introductions.

Volume Focus and Editor Qualifications

Work on three Sounding Spirit volumes is currently underway: *The Story of the Jubilee Singers with their Songs* (1875), edited by Sandra Jean Graham; *Class, Choir, and Congregation* (1888), edited by Kevin Kehrberg and Stephen Shearon; and *Original Sacred Harp* (1911), edited by Jesse P. Karlsberg. To complete our initial slate of editions, we seek proposals for two additional Sounding Spirit volumes. Sounding Spirit is particularly interested in texts that represent the sacred music making of *African American and Native American populations* in or with roots in the southern United States. In addition to works published in the southern United States, we welcome texts published outside the US South emanating from groups dispersed through the Great Migration or forcibly displaced along the Trail of Tears or through other campaigns of indigenous removal. Sounding Spirit proposed volumes should feature *gospel music or a hymn singing tradition* and have been published between 1850 and 1925. Words-only hymnals in the lined-out tradition or gospel songbooks with substantive nonwhite authorship or use are of particular interest to the initiative. We also welcome proposals that expand or critique the present framing of Sounding Spirit.

Applicants should have training and expertise in musicology, ethnomusicology, religious studies, African American studies, Native American or indigenous studies, or related fields. Volume editors will benefit from experience with source studies, editing, and contextualizing musical material.

Proposal Process

The application process begins with a preliminary proposal and proceeds to the submission of a formal prospectus. Prospective editors will first identify a specific edition of a historical text ideally suited for Sounding Spirit's focus and frame. Prior to submitting a preliminary proposal, applicants should contact the project's managing editor, Dr. Meredith Doster, to confirm the suitability of the proposed volume. At the preliminary proposal stage, prospective editors will submit a cover letter detailing the proposed volume's relevance to the initiative's framing, as well as a full CV. All preliminary proposal materials will be reviewed by Sounding Spirit's managing editor, editor-in-chief, and a member of the project's editorial board. Select applicants will be invited to interview with members of the project team before preparing and submitting a full prospectus to the project's publishers, UNC Press and ECDS.

At all stages of the application process, prospective applicants are encouraged to consult with Sounding Spirit's managing editor. Applicants should also review the Sounding Spirit website, <http://soundingspirit.org>, for detailed information about the project's processes and deliverables.

Preliminary Proposal Format

After confirming the suitability of your proposal in an email exchange with the managing editor, please submit the following preliminary proposal components in PDF or Microsoft Word format as email attachments. All preliminary proposals should be addressed and submitted to the managing editor at mdoster@emory.edu.

1. *Cover letter.* Describe your proposed volume and rationale for its inclusion in *Sounding Spirit*, highlighting its value as both text and as artifact of a textual community of the southern diaspora. Describe why you are well positioned to edit this text. Letters should include detailed responses to the following questions:
 - a. What volume would you like to edit?
 - b. What is this volume's publication history? What specific edition/printing would you like to edit, and why?
 - c. How and by what populations was this volume used? How does it connect to Black or Native American southern sacred music making? Why is it significant?
 - d. What is your scholarly background? How does it prepare you to take on the task of editing an annotated facsimile edition of this text?
 - e. Describe your experience with source studies, editing and contextualizing musical material, or related work.
 - f. Why are you interested in undertaking this work? How does it align with your professional trajectory? How will the work involved in taking on this project align with your other responsibilities?
2. Academic CV.