

Additional Information for Challenge Grants Applicants about Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

To ensure that a Section 106 review of a project proceeds smoothly, take the following steps before submitting a Challenge Grant application to support construction, renovation, repair, rehabilitation, or ground or visual disturbances:

1. Contact your State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and/or your Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) about your project. Once you have initiated contact, you should then provide the NEH Federal Preservation Officer (FPO@neh.gov) with the name and contact information of the person in the SHPO/THPO office who will be assisting NEH with its review.
2. Request a written determination from the SHPO/THPO, which indicates the following:
 - whether there are any properties near the project site that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register;
 - if there are historic properties, how the NEH-funded project would affect them; and
 - if the effects would be adverse, how they might be avoided, minimized, or mitigated.

To facilitate this determination, you should provide the following to the SHPO/THPO (with copies to NEH):

- *A written description of the project.* The description should include the proposed use(s) for the property and the scope of the proposed construction, renovation, repair, rehabilitation, or ground or visual disturbance.
- *A map, photograph, or drawing clearly demarcating the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE).* The APE is the geographic area within which a project may directly or indirectly affect historic properties. To determine the APE, applicants should consider all locations in which project activities could cause ground, visual, or audible disturbances, or changes in public access, traffic patterns, or land use.
- *Descriptions of all properties in the APE that are listed in the National Register, and descriptions and evaluations of all other properties in the APE that might be eligible for listing (regardless of age), when the National Register criteria are taken into account. (See [36 C.F.R. Part 60](#) and [36 C.F.R. Part 63](#).)* Descriptions should be based on background research on historic properties, oral history interviews, field surveys and/or investigations, and past planning, research, and studies. They should include information such as a property's location, the year of its construction (if a structure), and previous ownership.
- *A description of the NEH-funded project's effects on historic properties.* A project affects a historic property if it has the potential to alter the characteristics that qualify the property for inclusion in or eligibility for the National Register.

- *An explanation of why the criteria for an adverse effect—listed in [36 C.F.R. § 800.5\(a\)\(1\)](#) (PDF)—were found applicable or inapplicable, including any conditions or future actions that might avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects. Adverse effects to historic properties include physical destruction, alteration, or removal of a property.*

If the proposed project involves construction, renovation, repair, rehabilitation, or ground or visual disturbances of any kind, you must provide NEH with copies of the documents that you submitted to the SHPO/THPO. Many SHPOs and THPOs will not render a final determination until NEH offers the challenge grant, so the written determination is not required for the application. All that is required at the application stage is copies of your request (and all supporting materials) to the SHPO/THPO for a determination on the items listed in number 2 above. You may include these materials in the challenge grant application package; alternatively, you may send the documents separately to arrive by the application deadline (see “How to Submit Supplemental Materials” in the application guidelines).

NEH will declare ineligible any proposals for construction, renovation, repair, rehabilitation, or ground or visual disturbance projects that do not include the SHPO/THPO materials and will not enter them in the grant competition.

The SHPO/THPO may request additional documents that will assist him or her with the written determination, and applicants should be able and ready to provide the SHPO/THPO with any such information. Applicants must also provide NEH with all information provided to and received from the SHPO/THPO.

NOTE: A letter from the SHPO/THPO that only provides support for an applicant’s project will not suffice as a written determination.

3. Submit an archaeological survey for the APE to NEH. If you do not include the survey with your application and later receive a challenge grant offer, NEH’s Section 106 review of your project will be delayed until you have submitted the survey to NEH. Although an archaeological survey is not required at the application stage, NEH must receive the survey to complete its Section 106 review.
4. Submit a list containing the names of all consulting parties and their contact information, including titles, mailing addresses, and e-mail addresses. Consulting parties include federally recognized tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, state and local governments, and individuals and organizations with a legal or economic relationship to a project or property (for example, historic societies or commissions).

NOTE: If a project is offered funding, NEH will contact the consulting parties and invite them to consult and comment on the project. NEH will also ask those receiving offers of challenge grants to post public notices about their projects through appropriate media (for example, newspapers, local post offices and libraries, the applicant’s website, etc.). The comment period generally lasts thirty days, depending on the scope of a project.

NEH's Section 106 review usually results in one of the following findings and actions:

1. No historic properties or No effect on historic properties: If NEH finds that there are either no historic properties or that the project will have no effect on historic properties, it will notify the SHPO/THPO of that finding. If the SHPO/THPO does not object within thirty days after receiving the letter, NEH is generally permitted to release grant funds.
2. Project's effects indeterminable: If NEH cannot fully determine a project's effects on historic properties, NEH will continue consultations, draft a programmatic agreement (PA), and invite the ACHP to consult on the PA. If the SHPO/THPO and other parties accept the PA, NEH is generally permitted to release grant funds (after the PA is filed with the ACHP).
3. No adverse effects to historic properties: If NEH finds that the project will not adversely affect historic properties, it will notify the SHPO/THPO and consulting parties of NEH's findings. If the SHPO/THPO or any of the consulting parties do not object, NEH is generally permitted to release grant funds.
4. Adverse effects to historic properties: If NEH finds that a project will adversely affect historic properties, NEH will continue consultations, seek ways to mitigate or resolve adverse effects, and execute a memorandum of agreement (MOA). If the SHPO/THPO and other parties to the MOA agree to it, NEH is generally permitted to release grant funds (after the MOA is filed with the ACHP).

More information on the Section 106 review process, the required documentation, and the responsibilities of an applicant prior to and during the Section 106 review is available [here](#). You can find answers to frequently asked questions about Section 106 [here](#). You can also contact the NEH FPO by e-mail at FPO@neh.gov, by phone at 202-606-8309, or by mail at Federal Preservation Officer, Office of Challenge Grants, National Endowment for the Humanities, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20506.

If you are applying for a construction or renovation project, your narrative should indicate your awareness of and your plans to meet the special requirements for these projects.