



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

**AMERICA'S HISTORICAL
AND CULTURAL
ORGANIZATIONS:
PLANNING GRANTS**

Deadline: August 15, 2012 (for projects beginning April 2013)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 45.164

Items referred to in this document needed to complete your application:

- Budget instructions
- Budget form
- Grants.gov application package and instructions

Also see the **application checklist** at the end of this document.

Questions?

Contact the staff of NEH's Division of Public Programs at 202-606-8269 or publicpgms@neh.gov. Hearing-impaired applicants can contact NEH via TDD at 1-866-372-2930.

Submission via Grants.gov

All applications to this program must be submitted via Grants.gov. We strongly recommend that you complete or verify your registration at least two weeks before the application deadline, as it takes time for your registration to be processed.

I. Program Description

America's Historical and Cultural Organizations grants provide support for museums, libraries, historic places, and other organizations that produce public programs in the humanities.

Grants support the following formats:

- **exhibitions at museums, libraries, and other venues;**
- **interpretations of historic places, sites, or regions;**
- **book/film discussion programs; living history presentations; and other face-to-face programs at libraries, community centers, and other public venues; and**
- **interpretive websites.**

Types of America's Historical and Cultural Organizations awards

Planning grants support the early stages of project development, including consultation with scholars, refinement of humanities themes, preliminary design, and audience evaluation.

Implementation grants support final scholarly research and consultation, design development, production, and installation of a project for presentation to the public. See application guidelines for [Implementation Grants](#).

All projects should

- build on sound humanities scholarship;
- deepen public understanding of significant humanities questions;
- involve a team of humanities scholars in all phases of development and implementation;
- appeal to broad audiences;
- approach a subject analytically and interpretively through an appropriate variety of perspectives; and
- encourage dialogue and discussion.

Humanities projects tailored to particular groups—such as families, youth, teachers, at-risk communities, and veterans—are welcome.

Planning grants may be used for

- meetings with scholars and other content advisers, program partners, and audience representatives;
- preliminary audience evaluation and beta testing of digital materials;
- travel to archives, collections, sites, or other resources;
- drafting of text for program or discussion guides, exhibition labels, brochures, publications, or other interpretive materials;
- preliminary design for any of the interpretive formats to be used;
- planning for public programs and publicity materials;
- planning for training for docents, discussion coordinators, or other relevant interpretive leaders for the project; and
- development of teachers' guides, lesson plans, and other materials for teachers and students.

Planning grants may not be used for

- single-site temporary exhibitions (that is, those lasting less than three years);
- purchase of art, artifacts, or collections;
- professional development;
- expenses for program venues in foreign countries;
- dramatic adaptations of literary works;
- projects that will satisfy requirements for educational degrees or formal professional training;
- projects primarily for students in formal learning environments (though projects may include components that can be used in classrooms);

- general operations, renovation, restoration, rehabilitation, or construction;
- feasibility studies for new museums;
- institutional planning;
- projects primarily devoted to research rather than interpretation for the general public;
- projects such as encyclopedias and digital archives, unless they include significant interpretive components;
- projects for preservation, cataloging, or archiving;
- projects that seek to persuade participants of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view;
- projects that advocate a particular program of social action; or
- print publications that are not an integral part of a larger set of interpretive activities for which funding is being requested.

Bridging Cultures

Applications that respond to NEH's *Bridging Cultures* initiative are welcome. [Bridging Cultures](#) is an NEH initiative that engages the power of the humanities to promote understanding and mutual respect for people with diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives within the United States and abroad. Projects might have an international focus, addressing history, culture, and traditions in other regions of the world; or projects might explore the great variety of cultural influences on, or subcultures within, American society.

EDSITEment

NEH's [EDSITEment website](#) is a respected source of educational materials for the classroom. We encourage applicants to create resources accompanying their projects that would be appropriate for publishing on EDSITEment or promotion through EDSITEment. (In the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the [program resource page](#), see the question about funding resources for students and teachers.)

Providing access to grant products

As a taxpayer-supported federal agency, NEH endeavors to make the products of its awards available to the broadest possible audience. Our goal is for scholars, educators, students, and the American public to have ready and easy access to the wide range of NEH award products. Such products may include traveling exhibitions, reading and discussion groups, long-term museum

installations, historic site interpretations, community programs in the humanities, digital tools, websites, and the like.

NEH gives preference to those projects that provide free access to the public. Institutions that charge admission must provide at least twenty hours of free access each month to NEH-supported projects.

Evaluation

NEH encourages audience evaluation throughout all stages of a project and requires it for implementation grants.

Planning grants: Early audience evaluation is encouraged but not required. Evaluation could include testing of the project's concept, approach, and key components.

Implementation grants: NEH requires a final report that assesses how well the finished project met its goals to educate and engage the public. Information on the project's reach (size of audience) and impact must be part of this final report. NEH particularly wants to know how fully the project met its stated learning goals and how audiences were more deeply engaged in thinking about humanities ideas and questions as a result of the project.

Indemnity: The Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act

The Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act authorizes the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities to enter into indemnity agreements with U.S. nonprofit tax-exempt organizations and government units. Institutions that are organizing an exhibition with internationally loaned objects are encouraged to apply for indemnity. Indemnity can significantly lower the overall cost of insuring an exhibition with internationally loaned objects. The Indemnity Program is administered by the National Endowment for the Arts. Further information on this program can be [found here](#).

II. Award Information

Successful applicants will be awarded a grant in outright funds, federal matching funds, or a combination of the two, depending on the applicant's preference and the availability of NEH funds.

(Learn more about different [types of grant funding](#).)

Awards for planning typically range from \$40,000 to \$75,000, depending on the complexity of the project, and are usually made for a period of twelve months. Basic planning grants of up to \$40,000 are available for projects that include collaboration with scholars to refine humanities content, undertake archival research, and conduct preliminary object research.

Awards up to \$75,000 are available for the planning of exceptionally ambitious exhibitions, and for more complex projects with the potential to reach extremely wide audiences through any of the following:

- collaboration with multiple institutional partners;
- a wide-ranging combination of diverse formats (for example, exhibitions, book/film discussion programs, digital formats, lecture series, symposia, neighborhood tours, curriculum guides, publications, and broadcast media); or
- programming at a large number of venues.

Cost sharing

Cost sharing consists of the cash contributions made to a project by the applicant, third parties, and other federal agencies, as well as third party in-kind contributions, such as donated services and goods. Cost sharing also includes nonfederal gift money raised to release federal matching funds. Although cost sharing is not required, this program is rarely able to support the full costs of projects approved for funding. In most cases, grants in this program cover no more than 50-60 percent of project costs.

Other award information

An NEH grant for one stage of a project does not commit NEH to continued support for the project. Applications for each stage of a project are evaluated independently.

III. Eligibility

Any U.S. nonprofit organization with IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status is eligible, as are state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. Eligible institutions include but are not limited to public, school, academic, and research libraries; museums; disciplinary and professional associations; cultural institutions; state humanities councils; and institutions of higher learning. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

NEH generally does not award grants to other federal entities or to applicants whose projects are so closely intertwined with a federal entity that the project takes on characteristics of the federal entity's own authorized activities. This does not preclude applicants from using grant funds from, or sites and materials controlled by, other federal entities in their projects.

New applications for projects that would use the same topics and formats from a current implementation project to reach new venues and audiences will not be accepted until the current project has been completed and an evaluation submitted. (The evaluation can be included with the new application.) Only one such application will be accepted for any given project.

Applicants are not required to obtain a planning grant before applying for an implementation grant. Applicants may not, however, submit multiple applications for the same project at the same deadline. If an application for a project is already under review, another application for the same project cannot be accepted by this or any other NEH grant opportunity.

Late, incomplete, or ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Application advice and proposal drafts

Applicants are encouraged to contact program officers, who can answer questions about the review process, supply samples of funded applications (in addition to the samples available on the [program resource page](#)), and review preliminary drafts. NEH recommends that drafts be submitted at least six weeks before the deadline, so that staff will have adequate time to respond. A response cannot be guaranteed if drafts arrive after this date. Staff comments are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal, but previous applicants have found them helpful in strengthening their applications. Drafts should **not** be submitted via Grants.gov, but should instead be sent as attachments to publicpgms@neh.gov.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

The following required elements must be submitted through Grants.gov.

1. Table of contents

List all parts of the application with corresponding page numbers.

2. Narrative

Narratives should not exceed **twenty** single-spaced pages, with one-inch margins. At least eleven-point type should be used. The narrative should contain the following, in this order:

- **The nature of the request**

Provide a one- to two-paragraph overview of the project's format, subject matter, and interpretive goals. Outline the expected size (that is, square footage, approximate number of objects, etc.), anticipated opening date, and venues. Projects with multiple venues should list all of them.

- **Humanities content**

Identify the humanities ideas, themes, and questions that the project will address. Explain the subject's significance to the humanities and discuss the humanities scholarship that informs the project. (In the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the [program resource page](#), see the question about humanities themes.)

- **Project format(s) and participant experience**

Explain how the user or visitor would experience the proposed project. Identify the interpretive strategies and design philosophy through which the project would present humanities content.

Depending on the type of project for which funding is requested, this section typically includes a preliminary description of the exhibition, site interpretation, public discussion program, website, or mobile tour. Include specific examples of interpretive content that would appear in the proposed project.

- **Project resources**

Describe the project's components and material resources (that is, objects, images, documents, audio and/or video materials, Web-based information) and how they will effectively convey the project's themes. If necessary, discuss how you will secure permissions or rights for key materials.

- **Project history**

Give a brief history of the work accomplished on the project to date. Describe the relationship of the project to others on the topic and explain what the project's unique contribution would be.

- **Audience, marketing, and promotion**

Describe the expected audience and present a plan for reaching this audience. If applicable, discuss partnerships that would help publicize the project and/or plans to reach underserved groups.

- **Project evaluation**

NEH encourages early audience evaluation, including testing of the project's concept, approach, and key components. Describe your plans for audience evaluation during the planning grant period and how the results might inform the project moving forward.

- **Organizational profile**

Provide a short profile of your organization and other major partner organizations. These descriptions should include the

- institutional mission, origin, and size;

- annual operating budget;
- annual number of visitors (for museums and historic sites);
- special characteristics and current activities; and
- humanities resources (such as collections or staff).

Limit this profile to one page for your organization and a half page for each of the other collaborating organizations.

○ **Project team**

Identify the project team, including staff members and a consultant team that includes humanities scholars. Depending on the needs of the project, the team may also include education and public program specialists, historic site or cultural tourism experts, writers, media producers, or digital designers.

Briefly describe the qualifications and expected contributions of the project team members and indicate how their expertise is suited to the project. Organize the paragraphs into two sections: one for staff from your institution and one for outside consultants.

Explain the responsibilities of collaborating organizations.

Include in an appendix résumés (of two pages or less) for each person listed, and letters of commitment from all consultants (including humanities advisers or scholars).

○ **Work plan**

Provide a detailed month-by-month schedule of the specific tasks and the individuals responsible for them.

○ **Fundraising plans**

If your organization intends to share some of the costs, explain how your share will be met and outline the fundraising plan.

3. Work samples for digital media components

If your request includes significant digital media components, provide an example of previously completed work from the principal members of the digital team. We would prefer to have this work available through a URL included in the application but would

also accept a DVD, if this is the most appropriate format. Clearly indicate that this URL is your digital work sample. Identify the project personnel who worked on this sample and, if relevant, include additional information on the audience or distribution of the work sample. If you are submitting a DVD, please see the instructions for sending work samples in the “How to Submit Supplementary Materials” section below.

4. **Bibliography**

Include a short bibliography of the humanities scholarship that significantly informs the project.

5. **Résumés and letters of commitment**

Include résumés (of two pages or less) and letters of commitment from the key persons on the project team and all consultants (including humanities advisers or scholars).

6. **Budget**

Using the instructions and the sample budget, complete the budget form (MS Excel format) or a format of your own that includes all the required information. (You can find links to the budget instructions, sample budget, and budget form on the [program resource page](#).) Applicants should submit their budgets in a font of at least eleven points. If you wish, you may attach separate pages with notes to explain any of the budget items in more detail. Applicants are advised to retain a copy of their budget form.

Please attach a copy of your institution's current federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement to the budget form.

7. **Additional information (if applicable)**

If applicable to your project, you must submit the following additional information in a single attachment:

- **Traveling exhibitions**

If the project includes a traveling version of an exhibition that will differ substantially in size, content, artifacts, or experience from the original exhibition, describe the anticipated changes.

For traveling exhibitions, provide the preliminary travel itinerary, if one exists.

- **Discussion programs**

If you are proposing a series of discussion programs at multiple venues, describe the criteria that you will use to select the host venues. If applicable, describe training workshops and other activities to prepare discussion facilitators, scholars, and other project staff. If applicable, list additional scholars and discussion

leaders who would conduct local programs and are not part of the core project staff listed elsewhere in the application.

- **Conservation treatment**

If the project includes funding requested for conservation treatment, and the treatment exceeds 15 percent of the total amount requested from NEH, include a discussion of the rationale for conserving the objects being used. Provide a list of individual objects, sample condition reports, a timetable for the treatment of objects, a description of the conservation methods, and the qualifications of the conservator.

- **User-generated content**

If the project includes user-generated content (UGC), explain the criteria and process to be used for selecting and monitoring the content that will ultimately be made available to the public. If the project includes UGC, you should also describe how you will handle obscene, libelous, indecent, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment).

- **Geospatial data**

If the project requests complete or partial funding for the development, acquisition, preservation, or enhancement of geospatial data, products, or services, you must conduct a due diligence search on the Geospatial One-Stop (GOS) Portal (<http://geo.data.gov/geoportal/catalog/main/home.page>) to discover whether the needed geospatial-related data, products, or services already exist. If not, the proposed geospatial data, products, or services must be produced in compliance with applicable proposed guidance posted at www.fgdc.gov.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

The application must be submitted to Grants.gov. Links to the Grants.gov application package and instructions for preparing and submitting the package can be found on the [program resource page](#).

HOW TO SUBMIT SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

In addition to any required digital work sample, applicants may choose to include **one** additional supplementary item, such as a CD with digital images of art works, photographs, or artifacts; an exhibition catalog; etc., for presentation at the panel meeting. If you are sending supplementary material that cannot be converted to a PDF and submitted via Grants.gov, please provide **eight** copies of the item and list it in the application's table of contents. Each copy of the work sample (both the case and the disk) must be labeled with the name of the project director, the name of the applicant institution, the title of the project, and the title of the work sample.

Send the materials to

Planning Grants: America's Historical and Cultural Organizations

Division of Public Programs
National Endowment for the Humanities
Room 426
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
202-606-8269

NEH continues to experience lengthy delays in the delivery of mail by the U.S. Postal Service, and in some cases materials are damaged by the irradiation process. We recommend that supplementary materials be sent by a commercial delivery service to ensure that they arrive intact by the receipt deadline.

Samples will not be retained by NEH, and they will not be returned to the applicant.

DEADLINES

Applications must be received by Grants.gov on or before August 15, 2012, for projects beginning in April 2013. Grants.gov will date- and time-stamp your application after it is fully uploaded. Applications submitted after that date will not be accepted. Supplementary materials must also arrive at NEH on or before August 15, 2012, to be considered as part of the application.

V. Application Review

Evaluators are asked to apply the following criteria in assessing applications:

1. Humanities content

The likely contribution of the project to public understanding of the humanities, including the significance of the subject and the humanities ideas; the quality and relevance of the humanities scholarship informing the project; and the extent to which the project offers an analytical perspective on the themes and ideas that underlie it.

2. Format and resources

The appropriateness, quality, and creativity of the concept for organizing and presenting the material to advance the project's intellectual goals; the likelihood that the chosen format will effectively convey the humanities content to the audience; and the appropriateness of the materials and resources that support the project's interpretive themes and ideas.

3. Audience

The appeal of the subject to a general audience, the accessibility of the ideas, and the quality of the project's plan to reach broad audiences; and the likely effectiveness of any proposed audience evaluation.

4. Humanities advisers and project team

The qualifications and potential contributions of the advising scholars; the experience and technical skills of the project team; the quality of the project team's previous work; and the likelihood that the institutional partners will collaborate effectively.

5. Work plan

The likelihood that the applicant will achieve the project's goals in a timely and efficient manner.

6. Budget

The appropriateness and reasonability of the project's costs.

All other considerations being equal, the program will give preference to projects that provide free access to materials produced with grant funds.

Review and selection process

Knowledgeable persons outside NEH will read each application and advise the agency about its merits. NEH staff comments on matters of fact or on significant issues that otherwise would be missing from these reviews, then makes recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities. The National Council meets at various times during the year to advise the NEH chairman on grants. The chairman takes into account the advice provided by the review process and, by law, makes all funding decisions.

VI. Award Administration Information

Award notices

Applicants will be notified of the decision by e-mail in March 2013. Institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications will receive award documents by e-mail by May 10, 2013. Applicants may obtain the evaluations of their applications by sending a letter to NEH, Division of Public Programs, Room 426, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, or an e-mail message to publicpgms@neh.gov.

Administrative requirements

Before submitting an application, applicants should review their [responsibilities as an award recipient](#).

Award conditions

The requirements for awards are contained in the [General Terms and Conditions for Awards](#), the [Addendum](#) to it, any specific terms and conditions contained in the award document, and the applicable [OMB circulars governing federal grants management](#).

Reporting requirements

A schedule of report due dates will be included with the award document. Reports must be submitted electronically via [eGMS](#), NEH's online grant management system.

Interim and final performance reports will be required. Further details can be found in [Performance Reporting Requirements](#).

A final [Federal Financial Report](#) (SF-425, PDF) will be due within ninety days after the end of the award period. For further details, please see the [Financial Reporting Requirements](#).

VII. Points of Contact

If you have questions about the program, contact

Division of Public Programs
National Endowment for the Humanities
Room 426
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
202-606-8269
publicpgms@neh.gov

If you need help using Grants.gov, refer to

Grants.gov: www.Grants.gov
Grants.gov help desk: support@Grants.gov
Grants.gov customer support tutorials and manuals:
www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp
Grants.gov support line: 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726)
Grants.gov [troubleshooting tips](#)

VIII. Other Information

Privacy policy

Information in these guidelines is solicited under the authority of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. 956. The principal purpose for which the information will be used is to process the grant application. The information may also be used for statistical research, analysis of trends, and Congressional oversight. Failure to provide the information may result in the delay or rejection of the application.

Application completion time

The Office of Management and Budget requires federal agencies to supply information on the time needed to complete forms and also to invite comments on the paperwork burden. NEH estimates that the average time to complete this application is fifteen hours per response. This estimate includes time for reviewing instructions, researching, gathering, and maintaining the information needed, and completing and reviewing the application.

Please send any comments regarding the estimated completion time or any other aspect of this application, including suggestions for reducing the completion time, to the Chief Guidelines Officer, at guidelines@neh.gov; the Office of Publications, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3136-0134), Washington, D.C. 20503. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Verify your institution's registration or register your institution with Grants.gov.** Complete at least two weeks before deadline.
- Download the application package from Grants.gov.** The [program resource page](#) on NEH's website has a direct link to the package or you can search Grants.gov for this program. The program resource page also has a direct link to the instructions for completing the package.
- Complete the following forms contained in the Grants.gov application package.**
 1. Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Short Organizational
 2. Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs
 3. Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form
 4. Attachments Form—Using this form, attach the parts of your application as described in the guidelines:

ATTACHMENT 1: Table of contents (name the file "contents.pdf")

ATTACHMENT 2: Narrative (name the file "narrative.pdf")

ATTACHMENT 3: Work samples for digital components, if applicable (name the file "digitalworksamples.pdf")

ATTACHMENT 4: Bibliography or filmography (name the file "bibliography.pdf")

ATTACHMENT 5: Résumés and letters of commitment (name the file "resumesandlettersofcommitment.pdf.")

ATTACHMENT 6: Budget and copy of your institution's current federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (name the file "budget.pdf")

ATTACHMENT 7: Additional information, if applicable (name the file "additionalinformation.pdf")

Your attachments must be in Portable Document Format (.pdf). We cannot accept attachments in their original word processing or spreadsheet formats. If you don't already have software to convert your files into PDFs, many low-cost and free software packages will do so. You can learn more about converting documents into PDFs [here](#).

Upload your application to Grants.gov. NEH **strongly** suggests that you submit your application no later than 5:00p.m. Eastern Time on the day of the deadline. Doing so will leave you time to contact the Grants.gov help desk for support, should you encounter a technical problem of some kind. The Grants.gov help desk is now available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day (except on [federal holidays](#)), at 1-800-518-4726. You can also send an e-mail message to support@grants.gov.