



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES  
DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS  
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS AT INDEPENDENT RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated: May 30, 2023

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**1. I am a scholar seeking fellowship support for my research. May I apply to the Fellowship Programs at Independent Research Institutions (FPIRI) program?**

No. This program is for U.S. institutions that meet the eligibility requirements; individuals may not apply. However, recipient institutions under this program offer NEH-supported fellowships to individuals. Individuals must apply directly to recipient institutions.

You may also wish to consider opportunities offered by the Division of Research Programs that support research by individuals: Fellowships, NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication, Fellowships for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan, Summer Stipends, [Dynamic Language Infrastructure - Documenting Endangered Languages Fellowships](#), [Public Scholars](#), and [Awards to Faculty at Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#), [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#), and [Tribal Colleges and Universities](#).

**2. A research center at our university wants to expand its fellowship program. Are we eligible to apply?**

Institutions of higher education are not eligible, but the research center may apply if they have their own 501(c)(3) status and are financed, governed, and administered independently of the institution of higher education. See C. Eligibility Information in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

**3. Our independent research institution does not currently have a fellowship program but is ready to launch one. May we apply for support of this program?**

No. The FPIRI program only supports eligible entities that have administered a fellowship program for at least the three years immediately preceding the application deadline. See C. Eligibility Information in the NOFO.

**4. Is a research center with a fellowship program that currently offers only pre-doctoral awards eligible to apply?**

Yes. However, fellowships funded by NEH's program are restricted to scholars who have completed their professional training. Advanced degree candidates must have completed all

requirements, except for the actual conferral of the degree, by the application deadline for the fellowship.

**5. Can a funded center offer NEH fellowships for periods of less than four months?**

No. NEH-supported fellowships must be for at least four and no more than twelve months. However, you can retain some flexibility in determining fellowship tenures. For example, an institution awarded eighteen months of fellowship stipend funds could offer three six-month fellowships, three four-month fellowships and one six-month fellowship, or two nine-month fellowships. NEH fellowship stipends are calculated at a rate of \$5,000 per month.

**6. Our postdoctoral fellowships are designed to run for two full years. Can NEH support extend beyond twelve months for a fellowship?**

No. The maximum term for an NEH-funded fellowship is twelve months, but you can extend an individual fellow's tenure with funds from other sources.

**7. The period of performance begins in January, but our fellowship selection committee meets in late October of the previous year. How will travel costs and honoraria be covered?**

You may incur allowable costs for the selection of fellows up to ninety days before the beginning of the period of performance. You could therefore incur expenses as early as the preceding October, but pre-award expenditures are at your own risk; the authority to approve such costs does not impose an obligation on NEH in the event an award is not made or is made for an amount that is less than the recipient anticipated.

**8. We see the program restricts management and administrative costs (M&A) to 10% of our award. What are M&A costs?**

M&A costs are for activities directly related to the management and administration of your award, such as financial management and monitoring. M&A expenses must be based on actual expenses or known contractual costs. Requests that are simple percentages of the award, without supporting justification, will not be allowed or considered for reimbursement.

M&A costs are not operational costs; they are the necessary costs incurred in direct support of the award or as a consequence of the award and should be allocated across the entire lifecycle of the award. Examples of M&A activities include solicitation, review, and processing of applications and fellowships; managing and monitoring fellowships; preparing and submitting required programmatic and financial reports; and responding to official informational requests from federal oversight authorities. Salaries treated as M&A costs may be charged as direct costs in accordance with [2 CFR §200.413\(c\)](#).

**9. What are NEH's expectations regarding the process of selecting fellows?**

The fairness of a fellowship program's selection process is of great importance to NEH, which dispenses public funds. An institution supported by this program must demonstrate that the procedures for its fellowship competition—including the selection of the committee members who review applications—are expert and objective. Within the scope of your institution's mission

and resources, you must assemble an annually rotating, diverse, and highly qualified group of reviewers. See A1. Purpose in the NOFO.

**10. What are the reporting requirements in the FPIRI program?**

See section F3. Reporting in the NOFO for information on reporting requirements.

**11. What is the difference between the two financial forms mentioned in the Notice of Funding Opportunity? Do I need to complete both of them?**

Yes, both forms are required.

The Financial Report of Existing Fellowship Program form asks for information about outlays and funding for **one year** of the institution's **entire existing fellowship program**, including non-NEH fellowships and costs not supported by NEH funds.

The Research and Related Budget Form is used to document funds requested from NEH in the current application. You must submit a budget reflecting total project costs. For example, if you request \$100,000 in outright funds and \$100,000 in federal matching funds, you must submit a budget totaling \$300,000 (\$100,000 in outright funds, \$100,000 in federal matching funds, and \$100,000 in required cost share for the federal matching funds).

**12. A FPIRI fellow in our program fifteen years ago just published a book resulting from that research. Should we report it as a product?**

Yes. NEH encourages recipients to report all products directly resulting from NEH-supported research, regardless of when those products appear. Contact NEH staff for assistance with older awards if necessary.

**13. We are claiming Indirect Costs (IDC) on my budget form. Do we include all stipends, only the first \$25,000 of each anticipated stipend, or no stipends at all in the Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)?**

Do not include stipends in your MTDC calculation. Because fellows are individuals rather than organizations, fellowship stipends are participant support costs, not subawards.

While MTDC includes "all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward," it excludes "equipment, capital expenditures, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000."