



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS

**FELLOWSHIPS, NEH-
MELLON FELLOWSHIPS
FOR DIGITAL
PUBLICATION, AND
FELLOWSHIPS FOR
ADVANCED SOCIAL
SCIENCE RESEARCH ON
JAPAN**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I. Eligibility

1. I am an independent scholar. What are my chances of receiving a Fellowship?

Your chances are the same as any other applicant's. All Fellowships applicants must propose a significant project and present evidence of their qualifications, including publications, presentations, and other relevant experience.

2. I am a graduate student. Am I eligible to apply for a fellowship?

No. But if you have satisfied all the requirements for a degree as of April 28, 2016, and are awaiting its conferral, you are eligible to apply for an NEH Fellowship. Have your dean or department chair fax a signed letter to NEH (to 202-606-8204), stating that you have successfully completed all requirements for the Ph.D.; alternatively, a PDF version of the signed

letter may be included as an attachment to an e-mail message sent to fellowships@neh.gov. In either case, the letter must arrive no later than April 28, 2016.

3. Does NEH support projects whose results will be written in a language other than English?

Yes. Applicants must provide a rationale for projects that will be written in a language other than English. The proposal itself must be written in English.

4. May I apply to translate a work into English if other English translations already exist?

Yes. In the proposal narrative, provide a rationale for a new translation.

5. I am involved in a collaborative project. Can collaborators split a fellowship?

No. The NEH Fellowships program is designed primarily for individual researchers. Awards may not be divided. If you are seeking funding for more than one participant in a collaborative project, each person seeking funding must submit a separate application specifying the individual contribution. Panelists will be asked to evaluate each application on its own merits. Each application should clearly explain how the work will be divided and the extent to which each collaborator's contribution depends on that of the other(s). Applicants who are seeking funding only for themselves but who are working as part of a collaborative team are also eligible. In this case, too, the application should clearly explain how the work will be divided and the extent to which each collaborator's contribution depends on that of the other(s). Applicants proposing to work together may wish to apply instead or in addition for an NEH [Collaborative Research](#) grant.

II. Other Fellowship Opportunities

1. May I apply both to the NEH Fellowships program and the NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication special opportunity?

No. The NEH-Mellon special opportunity is run as a part of the regular NEH Fellowships program. Applicants are permitted to submit an application to only one of those programs at the April 28 deadline.

2. May I apply for other NEH grants to support the same project that I am submitting to the Fellowships program?

Yes. NEH encourages applicants to apply to all programs for which they are eligible. Applicants to the Fellowships program are especially encouraged to consider applying to the NEH [Summer Stipends](#) program (whose deadline is September 29, 2016). If you are affiliated with or have retired from an eligible minority-serving institution, please consider applying to one of the three Awards for Faculty programs, for faculty and staff members at [Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#),

[Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#), and [Tribal Colleges and Universities](#)). The Awards for Faculty programs have an April 14, 2016, deadline.

3. What if I am offered more than one award?

You may accept or hold only one NEH award for individuals in any given fiscal year. (The fiscal year runs from October 1 to September 30.)

In practice, this means that if you accept a Fellowship award, your application to the Summer Stipends competition will be automatically withdrawn. Please contact program staff for further details when you are offered an award.

4. What other programs are offered by NEH or through NEH partners to support individual research in the humanities?

NEH collaborates with several organizations to offer support for research programs:

NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication

Research projects that require solely digital expression and digital publication. This special opportunity is conducted as a part of the regular NEH Fellowships program (see II.1 above). You can find additional information [here](#).

Library of Congress (LOC) – John W. Kluge Center Fellowships

Projects that draw on the collections of the Library of Congress are eligible for support. Interested applicants should apply directly to [LOC's Kluge Center Fellowships Program](#).

Japan-United States Friendship Commission (JUSFC) – [Fellowships for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan](#)

Subjects may include modern Japanese political economy, international relations and society, and United States-Japan relations. Applicants may consult the [JUSFC website](#) for additional information.

NEH Grants for Fellowship Programs at Independent Research Institutions (FPIRI)

Projects eligible for support are undertaken at independent centers for advanced study, libraries, and museums in the United States, and at research centers overseas. Individual scholars must apply directly to the institutions themselves. Available [here](#) is a list of currently funded institutions.

NEH and National Science Foundation Fellowship Program for Documenting Endangered Languages (DEL)

Projects on endangered languages are eligible for support. A full description of the DEL program is located [here](#).

III. Application and References

1. What help is available for preparing the proposal?

Because of the large number of applications, NEH staff members are not able to comment on draft Fellowships proposals. NEH staff will, however, answer questions about preparing your proposal and about your eligibility. The staff may be reached at (202) 606-8200 and at fellowships@neh.gov.

Applicants are encouraged to review the samples of previously funded applications, which are available on the [program resource page](#), as well as lists of recent awards: [Fellowships for University Teachers](#), [Fellowships for College Teachers and Independent Scholars](#), and [Fellowships for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan](#).

2. I applied for a grant last year and my proposal was unsuccessful. Will I be at a disadvantage if I reapply?

No. NEH encourages previous applicants to reapply and does not inform panelists that a proposal was unsuccessful in a previous competition. Moreover, NEH employs different panelists from year to year.

3. My proposal is interdisciplinary. What category should I select from the drop-down menu for “Field of Project” on Form III (the NEH Supplemental Information for Individuals Form)?

NEH supports proposals that cross disciplinary boundaries (as well as proposals that are rooted in a single discipline). On the NEH Supplemental Information for Individuals Form you may select up to three disciplinary fields that characterize your project. If you select more than one, list the primary field first. In selecting referees, you should choose two who can effectively attest to your ability to work in the disciplines that are relevant to your project.

4. One of my referees cannot submit a letter online. Is there an alternative?

NEH strongly encourages referees to submit their letters online. If they are unable to do so, referees may e-mail letters to fellowships@neh.gov or fax them to 202-606-8204. It is possible, though, that e-mailed letters will not be added to your application file as quickly as letters that are submitted online.

5. Can I check to see whether my letter writers have submitted their letters?

Yes. You will be notified by e-mail when each of your letters of reference has been received. After you have received your NEH application number, you may also check the status of your letters of reference by logging in to [the secure area of NEH's website](#). Enter your NEH application number and your Grants.gov tracking number. You will be able to see the names and e-mail addresses of your letter writers and whether their letters of reference have arrived. If necessary, you may send reminders to your letter writers (including the upload link) from this site.

6. One or both of my referees did not receive the e-mail from NEH requesting the upload of his or her letter. What should I do?

Requests for letters are not sent out until seven to ten days after the April 28 application deadline. If, even allowing for this, a request has not been received, it is usually because the e-mail was caught by a junk mail filter or because you have supplied an incorrect e-mail address (the NEH system uses the address exactly as you enter it). You may resend the upload link to your referees by logging on to the [secure area of the NEH website](#). If you need to correct an error in an e-mail address, please contact the program staff at fellowships@neh.gov.

In any case, NEH strongly encourages you to confirm that your letter writers have received the upload link before the June 1, 2016 deadline for submitting letters. You are responsible for ensuring that your letters have arrived by the deadline.

7. Is it possible to change a referee after the application deadline?

Yes. To do so, please contact the program staff at fellowships@neh.gov or at 202-606-8200. Indicate which referee you would like to replace and provide the contact information, including e-mail address, for the new referee.

8. Are late letters of reference accepted?

Yes. All letters will automatically be added to your file as soon as they are uploaded by the referee. But if an external reviewer has already reviewed the file, it is unlikely that he or she will take the late letter into account.

9. Does a missing letter of reference disqualify my application?

No. Your application will still be eligible for review and for an award. Evaluators may, however, find your application less persuasive if one or both letters are missing.

10. How will my application be reviewed?

All applications receive peer review. Scholars in the humanities (or, in the case of Fellowships for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan, scholars in the social sciences with expertise in the study of Japan) will read and rate your application, using the evaluation criteria listed in Section V of the application guidelines. 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. More details about NEH's review process are available [here](#).

11. Can I see the evaluators' comments after the competition?

Yes. The notification you receive about the decision made on your application will contain instructions for requesting the evaluators' comments. If your application is unsuccessful, the comments may help you revise it for resubmission.

IV. Using Grants.gov

1. How do I know if I have submitted my application successfully?

After you submit your application, Grants.gov will send you up to five e-mail messages confirming receipt of your application. These messages represent different stages in the application acceptance process. You should verify that you have received all of the following five confirmation messages. Please note that e-mail filters may send these messages to your spam or junk folder.

Message 1: After you submit your application, Grants.gov will immediately assign the application a Grants.gov tracking number (a number like GRANT11791444). Grants.gov will send you an e-mail with this number. The subject line of the message will include the words "Grants.gov Submission Receipt."

Message 2: At this point Grants.gov attempts to validate the application. If everything checks out, Grants.gov will send you a **second** e-mail confirming that it validated the application, and that it will send the application to NEH. The subject line of the message will include the words "Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt for Application." (This message—and all subsequent messages from Grants.gov—again includes the Grants.gov tracking number.) But if Grants.gov discovers a problem with the application (for example, the project description component of the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance exceeds the thousand-character limit, or a file name includes an unacceptable character such as a comma), then the attempt at validation fails; Grants.gov accordingly rejects the application. Grants.gov would then send you a message, indicating that the application has been "rejected with errors," and that you must resubmit. Once you correct the error and resubmit, the process starts all over again. (In other words, Grants.gov would then send you a new version of Message 1, including a new Grants.gov tracking number.) Note that NEH does not receive an application that Grants.gov rejects because it has errors.

Message 3: After Grants.gov has validated the application, NEH uploads the application. Grants.gov then sends you a **third** e-mail to that effect. The subject line of the message will include the words "Grants.gov Agency Retrieval Receipt for Application." (The "agency" mentioned in the subject line is NEH, which Grants.gov also calls the "grantor agency.")

Message 4: At this point, NEH assigns its own application number (different from the Grants.gov tracking number) to the application. (The NEH application number will begin with two capital letters, followed by a hyphen, followed by six numbers: for example, HD-123456.) NEH then informs Grants.gov of the application number that it has assigned. Grants.gov then sends you a **fourth** e-mail, providing the NEH application number (as well as, again, the Grants.gov tracking number). The subject line of the message will include the words "Grants.gov

Agency Tracking Number Assignment for Application.” (What Grants.gov calls the “agency tracking number” is what NEH calls the application number.)

Message 5: Now that NEH has the application, it runs its own check to make sure that the application’s attachments are in proper PDF format. If everything is OK, NEH informs Grants.gov that it has accepted the application. Grants.gov then sends you a **fifth** e-mail, informing you that NEH has accepted the application. The subject line of the message will include the words “Grants.gov Agency Notes Assigned for Application.” (If NEH accepts the application, the “Agency Notes” are as follows: “Application accepted by agency.”) But if NEH rejects the application, NEH sends its own e-mail directly to you. In that case you will receive two e-mails, one from NEH and one from Grants.gov. The NEH e-mail will inform you of the problem with the application (for example, an attachment was not submitted as a PDF). It will also tell you that you need to correct the error and then to resubmit. In that case the e-mail that Grants.gov sends you will reiterate the fact that NEH rejected the application because of problems with the attachments. After you receive these e-mails you must resubmit the application and await receipt of the five messages explained here.

Grants.gov normally sends these e-mail messages within twenty-four hours of the submission of an application. Delays can, however, occur when system usage is heavy. Each message includes your application’s Grants.gov tracking number, and the fourth and fifth messages also include the NEH application number. Keep these messages for your records.

If you receive a message (ordinarily, the second or the fifth message) indicating that your application has been rejected, read it carefully. It should explain what was wrong with your application, and what you must do to fix the problem. Once you fix the problem, you can resubmit the application (so long as you do so before the program’s application deadline).

If you submit an application and don’t receive all five of the e-mail messages, check your “spam” folder, which may contain one or more of them. If you still can’t find them, contact Grants.gov immediately to determine the status of your application, by calling 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726) or sending an e-mail to support@grants.gov. Include the Grants.gov tracking number in correspondence regarding the application. You can also use the Grants.gov [Track my Application](#) tool to check the status of your application.

As stated above, it is your responsibility as an applicant to confirm that Grants.gov and subsequently NEH have accepted your application, by verifying that you have received all five of the messages described here.

3. What is the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Individual Form, and where do I find it?

The Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Individual Form is a standard government application form. It is included in the “Mandatory Documents” field of the application package that you download from Grants.gov. To begin filling out the form, click on Application for Federal Domestic Assistance – Individual Form to open it.

4. What is a DUNS number? How do I find out my institution's numbers

DUNS stands for “data universal numbering system.” DUNS numbers are issued by Dun and Bradstreet (D & B) and consist of nine digits. If you have institutional affiliation, you should be able to get this number from your sponsored research office. Omit hyphens when entering the number into the electronic application forms.

More information about DUNS numbers is available [here](#).

V. Information on NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication

1. How long will the special opportunity for NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication last?

The April 28, 2016 deadline is the first, pilot year. If there is sufficient interest in this special opportunity and the quality of the applications is sufficiently high, the funding organizations will consider continuing the special opportunity for an additional two years.

2. I am working on a digital publication. Am I required to apply to the NEH-Mellon special opportunity?

No, but you are strongly encouraged to apply to it. The NEH Fellowships program has always supported projects that culminate in digital publications and will continue to do so. The partnership between NEH and Mellon encourages such scholarship at a moment when university and other presses are experimenting with digital publication solutions.

3. How will the review of applications submitted to the NEH-Mellon special opportunity differ from applications submitted to the NEH Fellowships program?

Because NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication is a special opportunity within the larger NEH Fellowships competition, applications will be judged by the same criteria and held to the same standards of scholarly excellence. Applications received for the special opportunity will be evaluated by a separate peer review panel of scholars engaged with humanities research and knowledgeable about digital humanities/digital publications.

4. How many NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication will be awarded?

There is no set number. The number of awards will depend on the quality of the applications received.

5. If I submit an application to the NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication special opportunity, may I also submit an application for an Award for Faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (or at Hispanic-Serving Institutions or at Tribal Colleges)? How about to the NEH-Japan-US Friendship Commission's Fellowships for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan?

Yes, you may also apply to these other programs.

6. I am working on developing a website to accompany a book. Am I eligible for support through the NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication special opportunity?

Your project might be technically eligible, but it would not be competitive. NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication encourage those scholars who are working on projects that can only be carried out through digital publication. Digital “side projects” such as websites that accompany print publications fall outside the goals of the special opportunity. It is not unusual, however, for such projects to compete in the NEH Fellowships program.

7. I am working on creating a digital publication from an existing print publication. Am I eligible for support through the NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication special opportunity?

Yes. However, simply “retrofitting” previous scholarship for digital publication would likely be less competitive, UNLESS you could demonstrate that the new digital publication would create new and significant insights that go intellectually beyond the print material.

8. I am working on a book that I would like to see sold to those with e-readers, such as Kindles or Nooks. Am I eligible to apply?

No. Printed books and their e-reader equivalents are not supported by this program. NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication support projects that can be carried out only through digital publication. Successful projects will likely incorporate visual, audio, and/or other multimedia materials or flexible reading pathways that could not be included in traditionally published books (and their e-reader formats).

9. I am working as a part of a collaborative effort on a digital publication. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. See I.5 above.