



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF **PRESERVATION AND ACCESS**

HUMANITIES COLLECTIONS AND REFERENCE RESOURCES

Deadline: July 20, 2017 (for projects beginning May 2018)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 45.149

If after reading this document you have questions about this grant program, contact the staff of NEH's Division of Preservation and Access at preservation@neh.gov and 202-606-8570. Applicants who are deaf or hard of hearing can contact NEH via Federal Relay (TTY users) at 800-877-8399.

Contents

I. Program Description	4
Implementation grants	4
HCRR Foundations grants	5
The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square	7
Protecting our Cultural Heritage	7
Previously funded projects	8
Providing access to grant products	9
Award information	9
Cost sharing	9
Eligibility	10
II. Preparing and Organizing your Application	10
Resources for preparing a strong application	10
Evaluation criteria	10
Application elements	12
III. Submitting your Application	21
How to submit supplementary materials	21
Deadlines for submitting optional draft proposals and applications	22
IV. What Happens After the Submission of an Application	22
Review and selection process	22
Information for all applicants and for successful applicants	23
V. Additional Information	23
Contact information for the program and Grants.gov	23
Privacy policy	24
Application completion time	24

APPLICATION CHECKLIST24

TIMELINE26

I. Program Description

The Humanities Collections and Reference Resources (HCRR) program supports projects that provide an essential underpinning for scholarship, education, and public programming in the humanities. Thousands of libraries, archives, museums, and historical organizations across the country maintain important collections of books and manuscripts, photographs, sound recordings and moving images, archaeological and ethnographic artifacts, art and material culture, and digital objects. Funding from this program strengthens efforts to extend the life of such materials and make their intellectual content widely accessible, often through the use of digital technology. Awards are also made to create various reference resources that facilitate use of cultural materials, from works that provide basic information quickly to tools that synthesize and codify knowledge of a subject for in-depth investigation.

HCRR offers two kinds of awards: 1) for implementation and 2) for planning, assessment, and pilot efforts (*HCRR Foundations grants*).

Implementation grants

Applications may be submitted for projects that address one or more of the following activities:

- arranging and describing archival and manuscript collections;
- cataloging collections of printed works, photographs, recorded sound, moving images, art, and material culture;
- providing conservation treatment for collections, leading to enhanced access;
- digitizing collections;
- preserving and improving access to born-digital sources, including the updating of existing digital resources;
- creating oral history interview collections about war and military service in conjunction with NEH's Common Good initiative (see below);
- developing databases, virtual collections, other digital resources, or project-specific tools, to codify information on a subject or to provide integrated access to selected humanities materials;
- creating encyclopedias;
- preparing linguistic resources, such as historical and etymological dictionaries, corpora, and reference grammars (separate funding is available for [endangered language projects](#) in partnership with the National Science Foundation); and

- producing resources for spatial analysis and representation of humanities data, such as atlases and geographic information systems (GIS).

Because ensuring the longevity of humanities sources is critical to enabling their ongoing use, applicants may request support for implementing preservation measures, such as reformatting (including microfilming), rehousing, or item-level stabilization procedures, in the context of projects that also create or enhance access to humanities collections.

Applicants seeking support for projects that focus on purchasing storage furniture and rehousing collections; improving environmental conditions (including the installation of climate control systems); and installing security, lighting, and fire-prevention systems should consult the [Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections](#) program.

Major studies of cultural heritage repositories have cited **sound recordings and moving images** as formats that are seriously endangered. This grant program encourages applications that address the need to preserve and access such sources. Applicants may request funds to assess or establish intellectual and physical control of such materials as well as to digitize them.

Applications may address the holdings or activities of a single institution or may involve collaboration. In all cases, projects should be designed to facilitate sharing, exchange, and interoperability of humanities information and products.

HCRR Foundations grants

To help in the formative stages of efforts to preserve and create access to humanities collections or to produce reference resources, *Foundations* grants support planning, assessment, and pilot activities that incorporate expertise from a mix of professional domains. Drawing upon the cooperation of humanities scholars and technical specialists, these projects might encompass efforts to prepare for establishing intellectual control of collections, to solidify collaborative frameworks and strategic plans for complex digital reference resources, or to produce preliminary versions of online collections or resources.

Foundations grants may be used to address one or a combination of the following activities:

- analyzing and evaluating the humanities content strengths, intellectual control requirements, and preservation needs of significant humanities collections, including the development and distribution of collection-level descriptive information (projects to process or catalog collections at more detailed levels should apply instead for an implementation grant);
- identifying and prioritizing humanities materials for digitization, developing project-specific selection criteria, evaluating technical requirements for digital preservation and access, reformatting test-bed items, and/or exploring third-party service arrangements;
- developing plans and protocols for ensuring the preservation of previously digitized or born-digital humanities content, which could include preliminary testing and evaluation of institutional and/or distributed digital repository systems; or

- creating editorial plans, locating and assembling resources, devising strategies for technological and programmatic sustainability, and producing content exemplars for reference resources such as encyclopedias, databases, virtual archives, etymological dictionaries, or online atlases.

See the sample application narratives and Frequently Asked Questions document, all of which are available on the [program resource page](#), for further information about the possible uses of *Foundations* grants.

Foundations projects must encompass a substantial amount of cross-domain participation, typically involving persons with humanities expertise, curatorial experience, and relevant technical skills, such as collection processing and preservation, audiovisual reformatting, metadata creation, or digital preservation. *Foundations* projects should be at no less than a “beta” level of development upon application, demonstrating that the very first stages of effort—for example, initial collections appraisal and accessioning, conceptualization of scope and audience for reference resources, or consortium partner contact and cooperation—have been achieved. Because pilot activities can be crucial to the ultimate success of preservation and access initiatives, applicants are urged to incorporate the creation of test-case products that will inform planning and evaluation.

Successful completion of a *Foundations* project is not a prerequisite for implementation support in this grant program. Also, while *Foundations* awardees may choose to apply later for support at the implementation level, they are not required to do so. Project outcomes for *Foundations* awards must be clearly identified in the application. These could include, for example, the following:

- detailed evaluation reports to guide decision making for preserving and creating access to humanities collections;
- descriptions of prioritized sources and technical requirements for future digitization;
- strategic planning documents for digital preservation efforts; or
- editorial policy, procedure, and scheduling guidelines; tables of contents; and sustainability and dissemination plans for reference resources.

Foundations awardees should submit such grant products to NEH and must submit a “white paper” documenting lessons learned, so that others can benefit from the grantees’ experience. White papers will be posted on the NEH website for open access. Pilot projects should make resulting content available in accordance with NEH’s policy on providing access to grant products. (See the discussion near the end of Section I of these guidelines.)

Partnership/mentorship opportunity

In order to enhance access to humanities collections held by smaller institutions, *Foundations* grants offer an additional \$10,000 (beyond the \$50,000 maximum) to support *inter-institutional* planning and pilot activities. Applicants may be either smaller institutions proposing to work with a larger repository or larger institutions proposing to collaborate with one or more smaller partners. In either case, applicants must demonstrate that each

participating institution is fully engaged in the project and serves as an equal stakeholder in its outcomes. Applicants should discuss how *ongoing* working relationships between participating institutions could be maintained through future implementation phases and beyond. Partnerships or mentorships might be especially well suited for community-based cultural heritage initiatives but are not limited in geographic or topical scope.

The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square

NEH invites projects related to its initiative, [The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square](#). This initiative seeks to connect the study of the humanities to the current conditions of national life. Many of today's challenges require more than ever the forms of understanding and knowledge represented by the humanities. They require the broadest possible engagement of scholars and the public with the resources of the humanities, including but not limited to the study of language, literature, history, philosophy, comparative religion, and ethics. The study of the humanities can help illuminate the complexity of many contemporary challenges while enriching our understanding of the common good.

Note that the Common Good initiative incorporates the [Standing Together](#) initiative, which encourages projects related to war and military service.

In conjunction with the Common Good initiative, applicants to HCRR may request support to create, preserve, and make available oral history interviews with individuals who can provide eyewitness insights on the experience of war—actual military experience, and/or the impact of war on the American home front during wartime and its aftermath. Informants could include veterans, family members, and others, such as local officials or employees of military bases and industries in places in which the experience of war and its consequences were or are deeply felt.

Protecting our Cultural Heritage

In response to the destruction of cultural heritage materials worldwide, NEH encourages applications for projects that study, document, or create digital representations of lost or imperiled cultural heritage materials. Proposed projects should be based on scholarly work and follow standards and best practices. Project teams must include appropriate methodological specialists and humanities scholars. Projects must demonstrate the capacity to be sustained and must be widely accessible to the public. For more information click [here](#).

All applications will be given equal consideration in accordance with the program's evaluation criteria (listed below in Section II of these guidelines, beneath the "Evaluation criteria" heading), whether or not they respond to the Common Good initiative or the Standing Together initiative or focus on lost or imperiled cultural heritage materials.

Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grants may not be used for

- the acquisition of collections, including appraisal for acquisition or monetary purposes;
- the restoration of historic structures, the preservation of the built environment, or the stabilization of archaeological sites;
- the preservation, organization, or description of materials that are not regularly accessible for research, education, or public programming;
- the digitization of United States newspapers (applicants interested in such projects should consult the [National Digital Newspaper Program](#));
- the creation of oral histories other than those specified above;
- the creation of tools and reference works designed *exclusively* for classroom instruction;
- scholarly or public conferences (which NEH supports through its [Collaborative Research](#) program);
- the creation of selective compilations of primary sources in print or digital form, when such works are developed primarily as an adjunct to *interpretive research* (NEH supports such compilations through its [Collaborative Research](#) program);
- the support of projects to document endangered languages (applicants interested in such projects should consult [Documenting Endangered Languages](#));
- GIS projects for civic planning or resource management;
- institutional records management; or
- projects that seek to promote a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view or that advocate a particular program of social action.

Applicants seeking support for initial preservation assessments and other basic steps in collections care should consult the [Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions](#) program. Projects that focus on serving the preservation and access field more generally by developing new standards, practices, methodologies, and workflows for preserving and creating access to humanities collections are eligible for support through NEH's [Research and Development](#) grants. Applicants seeking primarily to develop experimental digital methods and techniques for a variety of purposes not limited to preservation and access should consult the [Digital Humanities Advancement Grants](#) program in the Office of Digital Humanities.

Previously funded projects

An institution whose project has received NEH support may apply for a grant for a new or subsequent stage of that project. These proposals receive no special consideration and will be judged by the same criteria as others in the grant competition. In addition, these proposals must be substantially updated and must include a description of the new activities and a justification of the new budget. The applicant must also describe how the previously funded project met its goals.

Providing access to grant products

As a taxpayer-supported federal agency, NEH endeavors to make the products of its grants 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 grant products. For the Humanities Collections and Reference Resources program, such products may include reference works, digital archives, and websites. For projects that lead to the development of online resources, all other considerations being equal, NEH gives preference to those that provide free access to the public. Additional guidance on access and dissemination matters can be found under the “Dissemination” heading in the instructions for the narrative below.

NEH grantees must follow the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of handicap in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. For more information consult Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator’s Handbook [here](#).

Award information

The maximum award for implementation projects is \$350,000, for up to three years. The maximum award for *Foundations* projects is \$50,000 for up to two years. Applicants for *Foundations* projects involving multi-institutional collaborations between smaller and larger institutions may, however, request an additional \$10,000 (see above, beneath the “Partnership/mentorship opportunity” heading). In such cases, the maximum award would be \$60,000 for up to two years. 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](#).)

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. Humanities Collections and Reference Resources implementation grants typically cover no more than 67 percent of project costs. In most cases, *Foundations* grants cover no more than 80 percent of total project costs.

Eligibility

U.S. nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status are eligible, as are state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. 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. Applicants considering the use of materials from federal entities for HCRR projects should consult with division staff before submitting a proposal.

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

II. Preparing and Organizing your Application

Resources for preparing a strong application

To prepare a strong application, applicants are encouraged to take the following steps:

- read these **guidelines** carefully, noting what information needs to be provided in the application;
- review the **sample narratives**, which are available on the [program resource page](#);
- consult the program's **evaluation criteria**, which are listed immediately below;
- read the **Frequently Asked Questions**, which are available on the [program resource page](#);
- contact the **program staff** (at 202-606-8570 or preservation@neh.gov) to discuss your project and raise any questions you may have about the application; and
- submit an optional **draft proposal** (at least six weeks before the deadline), to which program staff will respond with suggestions and advice.

Evaluation criteria

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

- The project's **significance** for supporting scholarly research, education, or public programming in the humanities. *(In what ways is the topic/subject matter important? Is the proposed material or reference resource of value, and how? Would the collections/resource either fill an important gap or complement other available materials? Who will benefit from this project and in what ways?)*
- The soundness of the proposed **methodology**, including the selection criteria where applicable and the project's adherence to accepted national standards and professional

practices, especially those that would contribute to making grant products interoperable with related resources and facilitate their discovery. *(How would the project employ best practices in preservation and access? Are the proposed procedures clear and appropriate for achieving the project's goals? For Foundations projects, is the planning process well explained and sufficiently collaborative?)*

- The specificity and utility of the proposed grant products and outcomes, and the viability of the project, as indicated by the **work plan**. *(Are the outcomes or “deliverables” clearly identified? Is the project doable within the timeline and with the resources proposed? Is the sequencing of activities appropriate?)*
- The soundness of plans for **sustaining project outcomes**, including digital content; for *Foundations* projects, the appropriateness of the next steps in the undertaking, and their likely viability. *(To what extent will the collections or resource be made accessible in an ongoing manner, beyond the term of the project? For Foundations projects, are “next steps” sufficiently clear and potentially viable?)*
- The qualifications of the project's **staff** and suitability of the staffing arrangements. *(Are the roles and duties of project staff clear, and are staff appropriately qualified for the work proposed? Are job descriptions provided for staff to be hired? Are the right kinds of humanities or technical advisors in place in cases where advice such as this might be needed, particularly for Foundations projects, where cross-domain participation is strongly encouraged?)*
- The quality of the project's plans for **disseminating information** about and providing access to grant products. *(How effectively will the results of the project reach the intended users and, if presented as a model, other practitioners? How well does the project conform to NEH's expressed preference for free and open access to materials and tools?)*
- The reasonableness of the proposed **budget** in relation to anticipated results. *(Are the specific budget items justified in the narrative?)*

As noted earlier, applicants are encouraged to contact program officers, who can offer advice about preparing the proposal and review preliminary proposal drafts if they are submitted at least six weeks before the deadline. Time constraints may prevent staff from reviewing draft proposals submitted after that date. Staff comments are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal, but applicants have found them helpful in strengthening their applications. Draft proposals are optional; they should be submitted by e-mail attachment to preservation@neh.gov.

Application elements

Your application should consist of the following parts.

1. **Description of the project and its significance**

Provide a one-page abstract written for a nonspecialist audience, clearly explaining the project's importance to the humanities, its principal activities, and its expected results. In addition, supply the grants officer who will submit the application with an abridged version of the abstract (limited to a thousand characters, including spaces) for him or her to include in the Project Description field of the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance – Short Organizational (part of the application package that must be submitted to Grants.gov).

2. **Table of contents**

List all parts of the application.

3. **Narrative**

Limit the narrative for implementation proposals to fifteen single-spaced pages; limit the narrative for *Foundations* proposals to ten single-spaced pages. All pages should have one-inch margins and the font size should be no smaller than eleven point. Use appendices to provide supplementary material. Number the pages of the narrative. (Note, though, that you need not number the pages of the other parts of the application.)

Individuals with a variety of professional backgrounds will read these applications and advise NEH on their merits. Project narratives should therefore be written with a minimum of technical jargon.

Keep the application review criteria (see above, beneath the “Evaluation criteria” heading) in mind when writing the narrative, which consists of the following sections.

- **Significance**

Justify the importance of the project on the basis of its long-term benefits to research, education, or public programming in the humanities. Discuss the central humanities themes, questions, or disciplines to be addressed.

For implementation projects involving **humanities collections**, describe the nature, size, and intellectual content of the selected collections; explain how they relate to similar collections, both within and external to your organization; discuss the rationale for focusing on these particular sources; and describe the selection criteria. For *Foundations* projects, provide a brief profile of the nature and importance of the sources that would be the focus of assessment or planning and include examples of materials to be used in any pilot efforts.

For proposed **reference resources** at the implementation level, define the selection criteria and explain how your project relates to existing resources. Demonstrate what this work or tool will provide that other resources cannot. For

Foundations proposals, provide a clear conceptual vision of the scope and contents of the eventual reference resource and its relationship to other pertinent works or tools.

All proposals must discuss actual and anticipated use of the collection or reference work. Identify the audience(s) that the project would effectively serve. Provide evidence of use, when possible, through examples of outcomes such as scholarly publications, educational activities, exhibitions, or media programming.

- **History, scope, and duration**

Use this section to explain the activities leading up to the proposed project and, if relevant, the goals of the larger initiative of which it is a part. Provide a concise history of the project, including information about preliminary research or planning, financial support already received, and resources or research facilities available. If a project will take more than three years to complete, describe the scope and duration of the entire project as well as the specific accomplishments or products intended for the grant period for which funding is requested.

List any project-specific products or publications to date in print or electronic form. When appropriate, indicate print runs, sales, and royalties relating to publications; in the case of online products, include the URL and provide use statistics. If the project has been previously supported by NEH, compare the accomplishments in the current or past grant period with the intended goals.

- **Methodology and standards**

Explain the manner in which the project will be executed. Activities should conform to appropriate national standards and accepted professional practices. (Informational links to relevant standards are provided in the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the [program resource page](#).) If your project's methodology departs from usual standards and procedures, explain why its goals require such an approach and how the results would be interoperable with other relevant resources that do follow existing standards.

Discuss any intellectual property or privacy issues that might affect the availability of collections or the dissemination of reference resources. Applicants should ensure that any applicable permissions, donor agreements, licenses, or proofs of informed consent have been obtained and should provide any pertinent documentation in an appendix.

Include the following, as relevant.

Projects to preserve humanities collections and make them accessible

Provide information about the collections' present physical condition and level of intellectual control. Discuss the manner in which the materials will be organized or reorganized, and the ways in which users will discover and access them. Describe pertinent strategies, policies, and procedures for collection care and service, including the environmental conditions in which collections will be held and the

provisions for their use. (NEH expects that any materials proposed for support will be publicly accessible and housed in a suitable preservation environment.)

Additionally, provide the following information.

- For **archival processing** efforts, discuss the rationale for the arrangement of the collections and the level of description that will be provided. Support is generally limited to the preparation of folder-level finding aids.
- For **cataloging**, describe the level of detail of the records to be created, the record formats, vocabularies, and systems to be used, the extent to which the records will involve original, enhanced, or copy cataloging, and indicate how information will be included in relevant national or international catalog networks.
- For **conservation treatment** projects, describe the amount, types, and condition of material to be treated, and discuss how access will be enhanced; provide the rationale for the chosen approach or method; and identify applicable procedures and/or quality control measures. Include in the appendices treatment proposals and cost estimates prepared by qualified conservators.
- For projects to **digitize collections**, specify the quantity of digital objects to be made available for use; the nature, formats, and quality of the sources from which they would be derived; and the handling and care of original materials during and after reformatting.
- For projects to preserve and provide access to **born-digital sources** (materials with no analog counterpart), specify data formats; the current extent of accessibility or obsolescence; and strategies to ensure enduring use, such as migration, emulation, or data harvesting.
- For projects to **create oral histories** about war and military service in conjunction with the Common Good initiative, identify interviewees, to the extent possible, and provide examples of questions to be asked. Discuss plans for preparatory research, recording equipment, interview setting, securing permissions, and post-interview preservation and access methods, such as audio streaming, transcription, or time-based indexing. For guidance, refer to the statement of [Principles and Best Practices](#) published by the Oral History Association. Interviews of military veterans should be produced so as to facilitate their inclusion in the [Veterans History Project](#) collection of the Library of Congress.

Projects to create reference works or research tools

- Indicate the content, form, and length of entries or citations and describe the **editorial procedures** for writing entries and verifying information. Include in an appendix a preliminary list of entries, organized by subject areas or topics, and the instructions provided to contributors. As applicable, indicate

how the work or tool will be revised, including the addition of new material and the updating of current content.

- Describe the lexicographical principles to be employed for a **language dictionary**.

Projects for planning, assessment, and pilot work (*Foundations* level)

- Identify any professional standards, research, or precedents that will inform the project. Discuss the knowledge and skills that the planning team needs and explain how members have been chosen and assembled. Explain how the team will gather any needed information, and provide copies (via appendices or links) of any assessment tools. Indicate the methods of communication and collaboration to be employed and the framework for decision making.
- Describe the final products and outcomes for the project and how these will guide future stages of work. Specify the nature of any testing or modeling efforts and, where possible, provide examples. If the project will produce and distribute collection information or reference resource content, identify the methods to be employed and the manner in which it will be made accessible.
- If the project pertains to the “Partnership/mentorship opportunity” described above, discuss strategies that could lead not only to immediate, project-specific outcomes, but also to persistent engagement between the collaborating institutions. Explain how the project could enrich the broader mission and longer-term vision, goals, and capabilities of each partner.

If you are requesting complete or partial funding for the development, acquisition, preservation, or enhancement of geospatial data, products, or services, you must conduct a due diligence search at the Data.gov [list of datasets](#) to discover whether the needed geospatial-related data, products, or services already exist. If not, you must produce the proposed geospatial data, products, or services in compliance with applicable proposed guidance posted at www.fgdc.gov.

Proposals employing digital technology and methods should provide a number of details. Indicate not only *what* technical specifications are to be used, but also *how* they will facilitate the project. In particular, provide the following information:

- the hardware and software to be used or refined (note that for projects that entail software development, applicants are encouraged to use open-source code, which should be made publicly available through an online repository such as [SourceForge](#) or [GitHub](#));
- preparations for and implementation of data processing (for example, digital capture, data entry, optical character recognition, or conversion from another electronic format);

- production, preservation, and distribution formats (for example, TIFF, JPEG, PDF/A, WAV), levels of resolution, compression, image enhancement, and the accuracy of textual conversion or transcription;
- provisions for ensuring quality control;
- schema for descriptive, administrative, and preservation metadata and controlled vocabularies;
- system(s) used to manage and present digital content, including pertinent features for facilitating end use;
- methods for enhancing discoverability, via search engine optimization and open data harvesting and/or inclusion in an aggregated resource such as a digital library, cooperative portal, or clearinghouse; and
- procedures for facilitating computational re-use of data, as relevant, for purposes such as text mining, visualization, topic modeling, geo-coding, or other digital methods.

- **Sustainability of project outcomes and digital content**

Describe how the project's results will be maintained and supported beyond the period of the grant. Provide information demonstrating the ability and commitment of the institution to ensure sustained access to collections or reference resources. For *Foundations* projects, discuss the next steps that you envision as an outgrowth of the grant, and how these would be supported.

NEH's Division of Preservation and Access expects that any collections or resources produced in digital form as a result of its awards will be maintained so as to ensure their long-term availability. Discuss plans for meeting this expectation. In addition to pertinent technical specifications requested in the previous section, provide details on digital preservation infrastructure and policies, such as repository system capabilities, storage requirements and capacity, migration or emulation strategies, and collaborative or third-party arrangements, if any.

- **Dissemination**

Explain how the results of the project will be disseminated and why these means are appropriate to the subject matter and intended audience. Where applicable, identify the online systems through which researchers will discover and use finding aids, catalog information, or digital sources. NEH strongly encourages the contribution of descriptive information and digital products to cooperative networks and digital resource aggregators. If relevant, discuss publishing arrangements, publicity plans, estimated prices, and user costs. Describe plans to bring the project to the attention of the relevant communities of users through, for example, conference presentations, publication, public events, or social media.

In accordance with the Common Good initiative, NEH encourages applicants to consider ways in which the collections or resources on which a project focuses can engage the wider public in exploring the humanities. To that end, dissemination might involve activities such as sponsoring

- community humanities programming;
- reading and discussion programs;
- film screenings;
- traveling exhibitions; or
- the development of resources for K-12 educators and students. (NEH's [EDSITEment website](#) is a respected source of educational materials for the classroom. NEH encourages applicants seeking to create such resources to do so in a manner that would be appropriate for publishing on or promotion through EDSITEment.)

HCRR grants can support activities like these, within appropriate limits. See the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the [program resource page](#), for further information.

NEH expects grantees to provide broad access to all grant products through the Internet, on-site use, interlibrary loan, or duplication of materials at cost, insofar as the condition of the materials and intellectual property rights allow. NEH strongly encourages projects that offer open access to online resources, using [Creative Commons licenses](#), as possible and appropriate. All other considerations being equal, NEH will give preference to projects that provide free, online access to digital materials produced with grant funds.

- **Work plan**

Provide a clear summary of the proposed grant products and outcomes, followed by a detailed time schedule indicating benchmarks of accomplishment during each stage of the project. Divide large, complex goals into discrete objectives. For each activity, indicate who will carry out the work.

- **Staff**

Identify the members of the project's staff, including consultants and/or personnel to be hired, and summarize their duties and relevant qualifications for the tasks assigned. Be specific about their individual roles and responsibilities as they relate to project activities, the tasks that they will perform, and the aspects of the project that they will oversee. Indicate the amount of time that the principal members of the project's staff will devote to the project. If the project has an advisory board, list the names and affiliations of the board's members and explain the board's function. Provide two-page résumés for major project staff and all consultants in the appendices.

As relevant, explain how the perspectives of communities that are the subjects of projects would be incorporated in the proposed activities and decision-making process. In the case of Native American groups, indicate how your staffing plan (and other project components) will facilitate adherence to the NEH [Code of Ethics Relating to Native Americans](#). See the links to “Community + Museum Guidelines or Collaboration” and “Protocols for Native American Archival Materials” near the end of the Frequently Asked Questions document, which is available on the [program resource page](#).

4. **History of grants**

If the project has received previous support from any federal or nonfederal sources, including NEH, list on one page the sources, dates, and amounts of these funds. If the project has a long history of support, you may group and summarize the sources and contributions.

5. **Project deliverables (required only for implementation projects)**

In a separate attachment, proposals for implementation projects must include the following quantitative information, as relevant:

- the total amount of linear feet to be arranged and described;
- the number of finding aids and/or collection-level descriptions to be produced;
- the total number and type(s) of items to be cataloged (for example, books, manuscripts, photographs, broadsides, maps, artworks, artifacts, audio or video tapes or disks);
- the total number and type(s) of items to be digitized;
- the total number of hours of sound recordings or moving images to be preserved and made available (if both types are included in the project, provide separate numbers for each type);
- the total number of individual records or entries to be created for a database, encyclopedia, historical dictionary, or cartographic resource: and
- the number and type of any other quantifiable products expected as a result of the grant.

6. **List of participants**

On a separate page, list in alphabetical order, surnames first, all project participants and collaborators and their institutional affiliations. As relevant, this list should include advisory board members, consultants, and authors of letters of commitment and letters of support. Because these individuals may not participate in the review process, this list is used to ensure that prospective evaluators have no conflict of interest with the projects that they will assess.

7. Budget

Using the instructions and the sample budget, complete the budget form 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](#).

If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and has a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, submit a copy of the agreement. Do not attach the agreement to your budget form. Instead you must attach it to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File). (See the instructions for this form in the Application Checklist near the end of this document.) Alternatively, you must attach a statement to the form, explaining a) that the applicant institution is not claiming indirect costs; b) that the applicant institution does not currently have a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement; or c) that the applicant institution is using the government-wide rate of up to 10 percent of the total direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000).

Indirect costs are computed by applying a negotiated indirect-cost rate to a distribution base (typically a portion of the direct costs of the project). If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and has a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, include on the budget form the following information: a) the indirect-cost rate; b) the federal agency with which the agreement was negotiated; and c) the date of the agreement.

If the applicant institution does not have a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate or has not submitted a pending indirect-cost proposal to a federal agency, you may choose one of the following options, if you wish to include overhead charges in the budget:

- NEH will not require the formal negotiation of an indirect-cost rate, provided that the charge for indirect costs does not exceed 10 percent of direct costs, less distorting items (including but not limited to capital expenditures, participant stipends, fellowships, and the portion of each individual subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000). This option is not available to sponsorship (umbrella) organizations. If you choose this option, you must maintain documentation to support overhead charges claimed as part of project costs.
- If the applicant institution wishes to use a rate higher than 10 percent, you must provide an estimate of the indirect-cost rate and the charges on the budget form. If the application is approved for funding, NEH will provide instructions in the award document on how to negotiate an indirect-cost rate with NEH.

If you choose one of these two options, please indicate on your budget form that you are doing so.

All items should be justified by the narrative. Provide further explanation as needed in notes appended to the budget. For any outsourced work, third-party contractor costs should be

included in the budget category “Services.” Attach a complete itemization of these costs to the budget form. If there is more than one contractor, each one must be listed (as a separate line item under “Services”) on the budget form and the costs must be itemized separately.

To the maximum extent practical, all procurement contracts must be made through an open and free competition. They are to be awarded to the bidder whose proposal offers the best value, considering price, quality, and other factors. Applicants must justify procurement contracts in excess of \$100,000 that are not awarded by competitive bids or offers.

Permanent equipment may be purchased for a project if an analysis demonstrates that purchasing is more economical and practical than leasing. Permanent equipment is defined as nonexpendable personal property costing \$5,000 or more and having a useful life of more than one year.

Consistent with the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 10a-c and Public Law 105-277), grantees and subrecipients who purchase equipment and products with grant funds should purchase only American-made equipment and products.

8. Appendices

Appendices should show the final or anticipated form of the project or illustrate the experience of the project’s staff in doing comparable work, for example, bibliographic records, catalog entries, finding aids, entries for encyclopedias or dictionaries, results of specific queries to databases, screenshots for Web interfaces, instructions to contributors, audio files and images, and conservators’ reports. **They should be selective, concise, and specific to the project.** Reviewers are unlikely to respond favorably to lengthy appendices.

As applicable, use the appendices to provide

- sample materials and reports (restrict these to summaries or excerpts where possible; hyperlinks to online versions may also be used in the narrative);
- documentation of permissions, donor agreements, licenses, or proofs of informed consent;
- for conservation treatment projects, treatment proposals and cost estimates prepared by qualified conservators;
- for projects to create reference works or research tools, a preliminary list of entries, organized by subject areas or topics, and the instructions provided to contributors;
- for projects at the *Foundations* level, copies of any tools to be used for assessment of collections;
- subcontracts or bid documentation from outside service providers;
- **brief** résumés (no longer than two pages) for staff with major responsibilities for the project’s implementation and for consultants to the project;

- job descriptions for any additional staff who will be hired specifically to work on the project;
- letters of commitment from the principal cooperating participants or partners, both within and outside the parent institution; and
- letters of support (ideally no more than three) from experts in the project's subject area (and, if necessary, its proposed methodology).

III. Submitting your Application

To be able to submit an application, applicants must have registered with Grants.gov and must have an updated Entity record in the System for Award Management (SAM). More detailed information is immediately below.

All applications to this program must be submitted via Grants.gov. NEH strongly recommends that you complete or verify your Grants.gov registration at least two weeks before the application deadline, since it takes time to process your registration.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requires federal agencies to make information about the expenditure of tax funds available to the public. To facilitate this, the applicant organization must maintain current information in its Entity record in the System for Award Management (SAM). You must therefore review and update the information in your organization's Entity record at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your organization's information or another award term. In order for your organization to apply for an award via Grants.gov, receive an award, or receive payment on an award, the information in its Entity record must be current. You can update your organization's Entity record [here](#). You may need a new SAM User Account to register your organization or update its Entity record. NEH strongly recommends that applicants update (or, if necessary, create) their SAM Entity record at least four weeks before the application deadline.

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

Be sure to read the [document](#) (PDF) that explains how to confirm that you successfully submitted your application. It is your responsibility as an applicant to confirm that Grants.gov and subsequently NEH have accepted your application.

How to submit supplementary materials

If you are sending supplementary materials (those that cannot be scanned and converted to an electronic form and submitted via Grants.gov), please include a list of the supplementary materials in the application's table of contents, with an indication that the materials are being sent separately. The supplementary materials should be sent to the following address:

Humanities Collections and Reference Resources
Division of Preservation and Access
National Endowment for the Humanities
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506
202-606-8570

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.

Deadlines for submitting optional draft proposals and applications

You are welcome to contact the Division of Preservation and Access to seek advice about preparing the proposal. **Draft proposals are optional, but applicants are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this preliminary review.** Please send your draft to preservation@neh.gov, at least six weeks before the July 20 deadline for submitting applications. NEH staff may not be able to review drafts submitted after that date.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **11:59 p.m. (Eastern Time), Thursday, July 20, 2017**. 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 July 20, 2017, to be considered as part of the application.

IV. What Happens After the Submission of an Application

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. More details about NEH's review process are available [here](#).

Prior to making an award, NEH will conduct a risk assessment of successful applicants, consistent with Uniform Guidance [§200.205](#). (See two paragraphs below the next heading for more information about the Uniform Guidance provided by the Office of Management and Budget.) This assessment guards against the risk that federal financial assistance might be wasted, used fraudulently, or abused. Based on its risk assessment, NEH will include in the award documents specific conditions designed to mitigate the effects of the risk.

Information for all applicants and for successful applicants

Applicants will be notified of the decision by e-mail in March 2018. Institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications will receive award documents by e-mail in April 2018. Award documents will identify the relevant terms, conditions, and administrative requirements that pertain to successful applications. The [Grant Management](#) section of the NEH website outlines all the responsibilities of award recipients, including anti-lobbying restrictions, in great detail. Applicants may obtain the evaluations of their applications by sending a letter to NEH, Division of Preservation and Access, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, or an e-mail message to preservation@neh.gov.

In September 2015 NEH adopted without exception a new government-wide regulation for federal awards, referred to as the “Uniform Guidance.” The Uniform Guidance applies to all NEH awards to organizations and is aimed at reducing the administrative burden on award recipients and improving accountability of federal financial assistance for tax payers. (See 2 C.F.R. Part 200: [UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS](#).) NEH will identify in each grantee’s award documents the relevant terms, conditions, and administrative requirements from the Uniform Guidance with which the grantee must comply.

Help NEH eliminate fraud and improve management by providing information about allegations or suspicions of waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement, research misconduct (fabrication, falsification, plagiarism), or unnecessary government expenditures, during the period of award performance, to the NEH Office of the Inspector General. You can find details on how to report such allegations and suspicions [here](#).

V. Additional Information

Contact information for the program and Grants.gov

If you have questions about the program, contact:

Humanities Collections and Reference Resources
Division of Preservation and Access
National Endowment for the Humanities
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506
preservation@neh.gov

Grants.gov: www.grants.gov

Grants.gov help desk: support@grants.gov

Grants.gov customer support tutorials and manuals:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html>

Grants.gov support line: 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726)

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, DC 20506; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3136-0134), Washington, DC 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 and if necessary update your institution's Entity record, or create an Entity record for your institution, at the System for Award Management (SAM).** Complete at least four weeks before the deadline.
- 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, or access it through Grants.gov Workspace.** The [program resource page](#) on NEH's website has a direct link to the package. (Note that Grants.gov tells you to download the "application instruction" as well as the "application package." The "application instruction" is this document, so there's no need to download it.) Alternatively, 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: Description of the project and its significance (name the file “projectdescription.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 2: Table of contents (name the file “contents.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 3: Narrative (name the file “narrative.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 4: History of grants (name the file “granthistory.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 5: Project deliverables (**required only for implementation projects**; name the file “deliverables.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 6: List of project participants, consultants, and advisers (name the file “participants.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 7: Budget (name the file “budget.pdf”)

ATTACHMENT 8: Appendices (name the file “appendices.pdf”)

5. Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File)—Using this form, attach **only** a copy of the applicant institution’s current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement (or an explanation why you are not attaching such an agreement). (See the Grants.gov instructions for institutional applicants, which are available on the [program resource page](#), for additional information.)

Do not attach your application budget to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form; instead you must attach it to the Attachments Form (see above in the Application Checklist), as attachment 7.

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 5:00 p.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.

Be sure to read the [document](#) (PDF) that explains how to confirm that you successfully submitted your application. It is your responsibility as an applicant to confirm that Grants.gov and subsequently NEH have accepted your application.

TIMELINE

Until July 20, 2017: Contact Division of Preservation and Access program officers (at 202-606-8570 or preservation@neh.gov) with questions and for advice (optional)

June 8, 2017: Submit draft application (optional) by this date

June 22, 2017: Create or verify your institution's Entity record at the System for Award Management by this date

July 6, 2017: Register your institution (or verify its registration) with Grants.gov by this date

July 20, 2017: Submit application through Grants.gov by this date

October-December 2017: Peer review panels take place

March 2018: meeting of the National Council on the Humanities, followed by funding decisions

March 2018: applicants are notified of the funding decisions

April 2018: institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications receive award documents by e-mail

May 2018: successful applicants may begin work on their projects