



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE  
**Humanities**

**DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS**

# **PRESERVATION ASSISTANCE GRANTS FOR SMALLER INSTITUTIONS**

**Deadline: May 1, 2018 (for projects beginning January 1, 2019)**

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 45.149

Funding Opportunity Number: 20180501-PG

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](mailto: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.

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## I. Program Description

Preservation Assistance Grants help small and mid-sized institutions—such as libraries, museums, historical societies, archival repositories, cultural organizations, town and county records offices, and colleges and universities—improve their ability to preserve and care for their significant humanities collections. These may include special collections of books and journals, archives and manuscripts, prints and photographs, moving images, sound recordings, architectural and cartographic records, decorative and fine art objects, textiles, archaeological and ethnographic artifacts, furniture, historical objects, and digital materials.

Applicants must draw on the knowledge of consultants whose preservation skills and experience are related to the types of collections and the nature of the activities on which their projects focus. Within the conservation field, for example, conservators usually specialize in the care of specific types of collections, such as objects, paper, or paintings. Applicants should therefore choose a conservator whose specialty is appropriate for the nature of their collections. Similarly, when assessing the preservation needs of library, museum, or archival holdings, applicants should seek a consultant specifically knowledgeable about the preservation of collections in these types of institutions.

The program encourages applications from the following sorts of institutions with significant humanities collections:

- small and mid-sized institutions that have never received an NEH grant;
- Hispanic-serving institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Tribal Colleges and Universities; and
- Native American tribes and Native Alaskan and Native Hawaiian organizations.

The program also encourages applications for the following activities:

- consultants working as mentors with advanced students or recent graduates from preservation programs to provide emerging preservation professionals with practical experience. Advanced students and recent graduates may assist in conducting preservation assessments, addressing specific preservation issues, and/or for training staff at the applicant institution.
- the development of disaster plans and collaborative work with local institutions for training in disaster preparedness and emergency response to address the risk to cultural heritage materials from natural disasters, theft, and other types of damage.

### Special encouragement for applicants in federally declared disaster areas

The program is mindful of the importance of preserving cultural heritage in regions affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, as well as wildfires and mudslides in California. Recognizing the long-term nature of recovery efforts, the program is making available special assistance (of up to \$10,000) to cultural institutions in federally designated disaster areas. In addition to the regular activities supported by Preservation Assistance Grants, applicants in these areas are encouraged to seek additional support for disaster planning, response, recovery, and mitigation; preservation assessments; conservation treatments; the temporary relocation and storage of collections; the purchase of supplies; education and training related to disaster

planning and response, and the reformatting of collections as a preservation methodology. (See p. 7 below for a more detailed list of eligible activities for applicants in federally declared disaster areas.)

This program is authorized by 20 USC §956 *et seq.* Awards are subject to 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

**Preservation Assistance Grants may be used for purposes like these.**

- **General preservation assessments**

Applicants may engage a conservator or other preservation specialist to conduct a general preservation assessment and to help draft a long-range plan for the care and sustainability of humanities collections. The consultant visits the institution to assess policies, practices, and conditions affecting the care and preservation of humanities collections and prepares a report that summarizes the findings and contains prioritized recommendations for future preservation action.

- **Consultations with preservation professionals to address a specific preservation issue, need, or problem**

Applicants may hire a consultant to help address challenges in the stewardship of humanities collections. For example, consultants can provide advice about

- developing disaster preparedness and response plans;
- establishing environmental monitoring programs, instituting integrated pest management programs, and developing plans for improving environmental conditions, security, or fire protection for collections;
- studying light levels in exhibition and storage spaces and recommending appropriate methods for controlling light and reducing damage to collections;
- developing detailed plans for improving storage or rehousing a collection;
- assessing the conservation treatment needs of selected items in a collection; and
- implementing preventive conservation strategies that pragmatically balance effectiveness, cost, and environmental impact.

Based on preliminary discussions about the proposed assessment, a consultant may be able to anticipate an institution's need for basic preservation supplies. *In such cases, the applicant may request funds to purchase the recommended supplies and must include the consultant's letter of commitment describing the supplies and justifying their use.* After the on-site visit, the consultant can refine the list of supplies to be purchased.

- **Purchase of storage furniture and preservation supplies**

Applicants that have completed a preservation assessment or consulted with an appropriate professional may request funds to purchase permanent and durable furniture and supplies (for example, cabinets and shelving units, storage containers, boxes, folders, and sleeves). Grant funds may be used to support vendor fees for shipping and installation of storage furniture. If an institution's staff and volunteers have limited experience in rehousing collections, the institution should enlist a consultant to provide guidance and training at the beginning of the project. Applicants requesting storage supplies should discuss how plans for the organization or arrangement of the collections have informed the selection of supplies and equipment.

- **Purchase of environmental monitoring equipment for humanities collections**

Applicants may purchase environmental monitoring equipment (for example, dataloggers or light meters) and related software. If the institution's staff does not have experience using the equipment, the application should include a request for training in the use and installation of the equipment and/or software and the interpretation of the monitoring data.

- **Education and training**

The Preservation Assistance Grants program focuses on the preservation of collections, but it also recognizes that cultural institutions need to gain better intellectual control of and enhance access to their collections. The program therefore offers support—under its education and training component—for attendance at workshops and training courses that address both preservation and access topics.

Workshops and training sessions may be face-to-face or online. Applicants may hire a consultant to conduct on-site training for staff and volunteers. On-site workshops may be tailored to meet an institution's specific needs and holdings. Applicants hosting a workshop are encouraged to enhance the impact of the training by inviting the participation of staff, students, and volunteers from neighboring organizations or institutions.

Education and training requests may address both preservation and access topics. For example, workshops could focus on topics such as the following:

- preservation and care of humanities collections (often offered by collection type, for example, textiles, paintings, photographs, archival records, manuscripts, and books);
- disaster preparedness and response;
- methods and materials for the storage of collections;
- environmental monitoring programs;
- best practices for cataloging rare books, art, and material culture collections;

- proper methods for the arrangement and description of archival collections;
- preservation and access challenges for community-based archives;
- standards and best practices for digital preservation; and
- care and handling of collections during digitization.

In federally declared disaster areas Preservation Assistance Grants may be used for the following emergency-related activities:

- disaster planning, response, recovery, and mitigation;
- preservation assessments;
- conservation treatment;
- temporary storage and relocation;
- the purchase of preservation, rehousing, and cleaning supplies and equipment, which may include vacuums, dehumidifiers, and other disaster remediation supplies;
- education and training related to disaster planning, response, recovery, and mitigation; and
- the reformatting of collections when appropriate as a preservation methodology.

*For all the project activities outlined above, applicants may combine two or more elements of the project types listed above in a single application.* For example, an applicant may request funds for a consultant (and an assistant, if applicable) to conduct a preservation assessment and an on-site preservation workshop for the institution's staff. In such cases, the consultant's letter of commitment should fully describe both proposed activities and the associated fees.

NEH grants may support consultant fees, workshop registration fees, travel and per diem expenses, and the costs of purchasing and shipping preservation supplies and equipment.

## Previously funded projects

An institution that has received a Preservation Assistance Grant may apply for another grant to support the next phase of its preservation efforts. For example, after completing a preservation assessment, an institution might apply to purchase storage supplies and cabinets to rehouse a collection identified as a high priority for improved storage. These proposals receive no special consideration and will be judged by the same criteria as others in the grant competition.

## Standing Together

NEH invites projects related to its [Standing Together](#) initiative, which encourages projects related to war and military service.

All applications will be given equal consideration in accordance with the program's evaluation criteria, whether or not they respond to the Standing Together initiative or are requests from applicants in federally declared disaster areas.

**Preservation Assistance Grants may not be used for**

- projects focusing on collections that fall outside the humanities;
- projects focusing on collections or materials that are the responsibility of an agency of the federal government;
- appraisals of collections to determine their historical or financial value;
- conservation or restoration treatments, or the purchase of conservation or restoration treatment supplies and equipment (for example, mending tape, erasers, and cleaning supplies) or library binding (except for emergency requests from applicants in federally declared disaster areas);
- courses leading to a degree, including graduate-level conservation training or training related to advanced conservation treatment;
- projects that focus on preserving or restoring buildings or other structures;
- capital improvements to buildings and building systems, including the purchase of equipment such as air conditioning systems, lighting systems, and security and fire protection systems (emergency requests from applicants in federally declared disaster areas may, however, include the purchase of dehumidifiers and air conditioners);
- cataloging, indexing, arranging, and describing collections, or purchasing software related to these activities;
- the exhibition or display of collections, and the purchase of furniture and display cases intended for this purpose;
- reformatting of collections (for example, digitizing, photocopying, microfilming, or copying to another medium) or the purchase of equipment for reformatting (for example, computers, scanners, digital cameras, cassette decks, and CD-ROM drives; reformatting as a preservation methodology is, however, permitted in emergency requests from applicants in federally declared disaster areas);
- planning for digitization or building infrastructure;
- development or purchase of software, including but not limited to content and digital asset management systems, except for software related to monitoring the preservation environment;
- purchase of computers;
- salaries and fringe benefits for the staff of an institution, including the hiring of student interns;
- attendance at regular meetings of museum, library, archives, or preservation organizations;
- promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view;
- advocacy of a particular program of social or political action;



- support of specific public policies or legislation; and
- projects that fall outside of the humanities (including the creation or performance of art; creative writing, autobiographies, memoirs, and creative nonfiction; and empirically based social science research or policy studies).

## Award information

The maximum award for Preservation Assistance Grants is ordinarily \$6,000. Applicants may request up to an additional \$1,000 to cover costs associated with having an advanced student or recent graduate from a preservation program assist the project consultant. The additional amount must be reflected in the consultant's letter of commitment and the application budget. The maximum award for such applications is \$7,000.

Applicants in federally designated disaster areas may request up to \$10,000 to cover costs associated with disaster response, recovery, and remediation. (See the list of permitted activities on p. 7 above.)

All grants are awarded for a period of eighteen months, although a grantee may complete a project in a shorter period of time.

## Cost sharing

Cost sharing is not required in this program. However, if eligible expenses are more than \$6,000 (or \$7,000 for a project in which an advanced student or recent graduate would assist the project consultant, or \$10,000 for a project to cover expenses associated with disaster response in federally declared disaster areas), the applicant will need to cover the difference and show the amount in excess of the requested grant amount on the cost-sharing line of the Supplementary Cover Sheet and in the budget.

## Eligibility

U.S. nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status are eligible (including institutions of higher education), as are state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Native American tribal governments. Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

Only one application for a Preservation Assistance Grant may be submitted annually by an institution, although distinct collecting entities of a larger organization may apply in the same year, such as the library and museum of a university or two historic sites within a historical society.

Applicants must demonstrate that they

- care for and have custody of the humanities collections that are the focus of the application;
- have at least one staff member or the full-time equivalent, whether paid or unpaid; and
- make their collections open and available for the purpose of education, research, and/or public programming.

Applications must be complete, must observe the specified page limits, and must be validated by Grants.gov under the correct funding opportunity number to be considered under this notice.

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.

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](#); and
- contact the **program staff** (at 202-606-8570 or [preservation@neh.gov](mailto:preservation@neh.gov)) to discuss your project and raise any questions you may have about the application.

## Evaluation criteria

NEH asks panelists knowledgeable about the preservation and use of humanities collections to assess applications according to the following criteria:

### **The collections and their use in education, research, or public programming in the humanities:**

- The extent to which the applicant described the content of the collections that are the focus of the project, including a detailed description of that content, including the type of materials, their quantity, date ranges, and intellectual and historical content.
- The significance of the collections for education, research, or public programming in the humanities, as appropriate.
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a sufficient commitment to making its collections accessible, as evidenced by the number of days on which the institution is open to the public, the institutional capacity to support access and use, and the availability of staff for this purpose.

### **The proposed activities, the adequacy of the plan of work, and the justification of their importance to the institution:**

- The feasibility and importance of the proposed activities, and the strength of the plan of work, timetable, and budget.
- The extent to which the project contributes to the institution's capacity to preserve its collections and make them accessible.
- The extent to which the proposed supplies and equipment meet preservation standards.
- If applicable, the appropriateness of the workshop topics in relation to the applicant's needs.

### **The appropriateness of the experience and the qualifications of consultants and staff:**

- The extent to which the roles of the consultants and staff are well explained.
- The extent to which the consultants and staff have the experience and qualifications appropriate to the project's goals and implementation.

As noted earlier, prior to preparing and submitting a proposal applicants are encouraged to look at the list of recently funded projects, to examine sample narratives, and to review the Frequently Asked Questions document. Links to all of these documents are available on the

[program resource page](#). Please note, though, that program staff is not able to review draft applications.

## Application elements

Your application should consist of the following parts.

### 1. **Project abstract**

Provide a one-paragraph abstract (up to one thousand characters) describing the nature of the collections that are the focus of the project, their significance to the humanities, and the specific goal(s) and activities that the grant would support. Applicants should copy this paragraph into the Project Information field in the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance—Short Organizational form. (See below, in the instructions for submitting an application to Grants.gov.)

### 2. **Narrative**

Project narratives are limited to five single-spaced pages (six single-spaced pages if the request is for disaster-related activities). The font size should be no smaller than eleven point, and all pages should have one-inch margins. Applicants should keep the application review criteria (which are listed above) in mind when writing their narratives.

See below (at the end of the instructions for the narrative) for additional information that must be provided by applicants from federally declared disaster areas with emergency requests.

Answer the following questions in order. State each question as the heading for the answer to that question.

#### **A. What activity (or activities) would the grant support?**

State the specific activity or activities that the grant would support and the goals of the proposed project.

#### **B. What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?**

Describe the collections that are the focus of the project, emphasizing their significance to the humanities (keeping in mind that projects funded by NEH should promote public confidence that taxpayer funds in support of the humanities are well spent). The description should be at least one page long.

- Identify the categories of materials and indicate, where pertinent, the date ranges, quantities, and intellectual content.
- Highlight specific examples of important items in the collections.

A description of an archival collection, for example, might begin by stating that the collection comprises two hundred letters written by prominent political figures between 1870 and 1885; twenty-four linear feet of records documenting the environmental impact of a regional coal mining company active from 1940 through 1970; fifty-two maps documenting the history and development of the local transportation system; twelve volumes of birth and death records for local residents from 1860 to 1950; and nine hundred photographs depicting community life during the 1930s and 1940s.

A description of a museum collection might begin by stating that there are ten thousand objects from the early 1800s to the present, including approximately one thousand costumes and items of personal adornment, five hundred Native American baskets, four hundred agricultural implements, and hundreds of household products and furnishings.

The description should then proceed to discuss in detail the content of these materials and their significance to the humanities. For example, an applicant might explore topics such as the social, political, or economic development of a community, showing how the collections could illuminate these broader humanities themes in American history and culture.

If the project focuses only on a portion of an institution's collections, briefly describe the overall collections and then provide a detailed account of the portion on which the project focuses.

**C. How are these humanities collections used?**

Explain in detail the use of the collections on which the project focuses and provide evidence of how the collections are or might be used in scholarly publications, educational activities, exhibitions, or media programming. For example, explain how the collections have been or could be used to illuminate specific humanities themes in an exhibition, or how they have been or could be used in educational programs and classroom instructional materials. If the collections are used for research, describe the range of subjects that have been (or could be) explored and show how these materials could contribute to new interpretations of national or regional history. Provide examples of research projects conducted by students, scholars, or genealogists. By discussing the use of collections and the ways in which they can increase the understanding of broad humanities themes, you will help evaluators understand their importance to the humanities and to the institution's mission. This section of the application should be at least one page long.

**D. What is the nature and mission of your institution?**

Describe the mission of the institution and discuss specific budget or staffing considerations that characterize it as a small or mid-sized institution. Demonstrate your institutional commitment to making your collection accessible for education, research, and public programming in the humanities, as evidenced by the following information:

- the number of full-time, part-time, and volunteer staff;
- the number of days per year on which the institution is open to the public; and
- the size of the institutional or departmental budget.

Libraries, archives, or museums that are part of a larger organization, such as a college or university, should provide this information for their institutional unit.

Applicants should also complete the Institutional Profile form. (See the “How to fill out the Institutional Profile Form” heading below, in the instructions for “How to submit your application via Grants.gov.”)

**E. Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment or consultation?**

If yes, provide the date of the assessment, the name(s) of the assessor(s), and, if applicable, explain how any previous assessments or consultations relate to or support the proposed project activity.

Has your institution ever engaged a preservation consultant for purposes other than a general preservation or conservation assessment? If yes, briefly elaborate.

**F. What is the importance of this project to your institution?**

Discuss how this project fits into the institution’s overall preservation needs or plans. Describe the current condition of collections and the environment in which they are stored. Explain how the proposed activities build on previous preservation efforts and how the project fits into future preservation plans. In addition, explain how the project would increase your institution’s ability to improve collection care beyond the period of the grant. For projects involving preservation assessments or consultations, explain how the findings will be disseminated within your institution.

Applicants proposing to attend workshops or training courses should describe their content and explain how the knowledge gained would be used to improve preservation practices at the institution. Workshops must be attended during the period of the grant. If a regularly offered workshop has not been scheduled at the time of application, contact the workshop’s provider to confirm that it will be offered. In an appendix, provide information about the workshop (for example, a description, announcement, or program) obtained from the provider.

**G. What are the names and qualifications of the consultant(s) and staff involved in the project?**

Using short paragraphs, provide the name(s) and qualifications of the consultant(s) selected for the project, as well as the names and relevant experiences of the participating staff. Applicants requesting training in the care and preservation of humanities collections must seek a consultant specifically knowledgeable about the collection type or types on which the project focuses. For preservation training projects, identify the staff member(s) who will attend the training and state their positions and responsibilities.

Consultants are required to submit letters of commitment—stating the costs of their services—that guarantee their participation in the project and describe their plan of work. These letters should be included in one of the application's appendices, along with the consultants' résumés. Consultants should indicate in their letter of commitment if they will work on any of the proposed activities with an advanced student or recent graduate—and if they are requesting additional funds to cover the costs associated with his or her participation in the project.

**H. What is the plan of work for the project?**

Outline the steps of the project, the sequence in which they will occur, the amount of time they will take, and indicate who is responsible for which activities.

**I. Applicants in federally declared disaster areas with emergency requests should also provide the following information in their narratives (up to one additional page is permitted for this information):**

- Discuss how the disaster (hurricane, wildfire, mudslide, etc.) affected your institution and the steps that you have taken toward recovery.
- If your collections were placed at risk or damaged, describe the risks or the extent of the damage and any steps that you have taken to salvage and protect collections.
- If you are requesting support for disaster planning, response, recovery, or mitigation (or education and training related to these activities), describe the current status of your planning or response, the steps that would be taken to create a plan or to train staff, and the name(s) and qualifications of any consultant(s) selected to assist you in developing a plan or training staff. Provide in an appendix a letter (or letters) of commitment and résumé(s) of the consultant(s).
- If you are requesting support for a preservation assessment or consultation, provide the name(s) and qualifications of the consultant(s) selected for the

project. Provide in an appendix a letter (or letters) of commitment and résumé(s) of the consultant(s), as outlined in section G above.

- If you are requesting support for conservation treatment, provide a treatment proposal with cost estimates that have been prepared by a qualified conservator. Include images of the items or a representative selection. If you are proposing treatment of a group of items of similar material and condition, you may submit a conservator's proposal for the group of items. Provide in an appendix a treatment proposal and résumé(s) of the conservator(s) who will perform the treatments.
- If you are requesting support for the temporary relocation and storage of collections, describe the temporary facility, its environment, and the manner in which collections are or will be housed. Discuss your longer-term plans for housing the collection and providing access to it.
- If you are requesting support for reformatting, demonstrate that reformatting is an accepted preservation methodology for the materials and that your project would adhere to existing best practices and standards.

### 3. Budget

Provide an itemized budget showing the project's expenses rounded to the nearest dollar. To illustrate the format that you should follow, please consult the sample budget, which is available on the [program resource page](#).

If the applicant institution is claiming indirect costs and has a current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement, submit a copy of this 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 has never received a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate and is using the government-wide de minimis rate of 10 percent of the total direct costs, less distorting items (including equipment, capital expenditures, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000). See 2 CFR §200.414 (f) for additional information regarding the de minimis rate.

Cost sharing is not required for Preservation Assistance Grants. However, if eligible expenses are greater than \$6,000 (or \$7,000 for projects in which an advanced student or recent graduate assists the consultant, or \$10,000 for projects to cover expenses associated with disaster response in federally declared disaster areas), the applicant will need to cover the difference and should enter the amount in excess of the requested award amount on the cost-sharing line of the Supplementary Cover Sheet and in the budget.



#### 4. **Appendices (supporting documentation, résumés, and letters of commitment)**

For projects based on a previous preservation assessment, attach a copy of the executive summary of the assessment and the relevant sections of the report.

For projects that involve purchasing supplies and equipment, provide a list that identifies each item, quantity, unit cost, and the name of the vendor.

For preservation training projects, attach workshop descriptions, announcements, or programs.

For projects that involve the hiring of a consultant, attach a two-page résumé for and letter of commitment from the consultant. The letter of commitment should describe the proposed activity or activities; it should also include a detailed plan of work and budget, and a preliminary list of supplies that the consultant recommends for purchase. If the consultant is working with an advanced student or recent graduate, the letter should also identify the academic program from which the student or graduate would be selected and discuss the practical experience that the student or graduate would gain from the project.

For projects that involve disaster-related activities, see the bulleted list on pp. 15-16 for the required supporting documentation.

**All projects must include brief résumés (no longer than two pages) for the project director and other key staff.**

### III. Submitting your Application

**All applications to this program must be submitted via Grants.gov.**

The Grants.gov registration process requires completing information in three separate systems:

- Dun and Bradstreet (<https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>)
- System for Award Management (SAM) (<https://www.sam.gov>)
- Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov/>)

In order to apply through Grants.gov, the applicant organization must first have or obtain a valid Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, register (or have an active registration) in the System for Award Management (SAM), and register (or have an active registration) with Grants.gov. Organizations must maintain active SAM registration with current information at all times during which they have an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal agency. 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. You can update your organization's Entity record in SAM [here](#).

Applicant organizations with a valid DUNS number and an active SAM registration must then register (or verify their registration) with Grants.gov. If you have problems registering with

Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov help desk at 1-800-518-4726 or email [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). NEH strongly recommends that applicants register or update their registrations in SAM at least four weeks before the application deadline, and in Grants.gov at least two weeks before the application deadline.

## How to submit your application via Grants.gov

### Access the application forms online or download the forms as PDFs

Using Grants.gov Workspace, you may either complete the application forms online or download the forms as PDFs. Information about Workspace is available [here](#). The NEH website provides a link to the application package on the [program resource page](#). You can access the forms online or download the PDFs at any time. (You do not have to wait for your Grants.gov registration to be complete.)

NOTE: Visit Grants.gov's Adobe Software Compatibility page to verify the compatibility of your current software or to download the appropriate version at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>. Even if you choose to complete the online webforms in Workspace, you will need to convert the files that you will attach (to the Attachments Form and the Budget Narrative Attachment Form) into PDFs. If you have a problem installing Adobe Reader, it may be because you do not have permission to install a new program on your computer. Many organizations have rules about installing new programs. If you encounter a problem, contact your system administrator.

The application package contains five forms that you must complete in order to submit your application:

1. **Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Short Organizational**—this form asks for basic information about the project, the project director, and the institution.
2. **Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs**—this form asks for additional information about the project director, the institution, and the budget.
3. **Institutional Profile Form**—this form asks for additional information about the institution.
4. **Attachments Form**—this form allows you to attach your narrative, budget, and the other parts of your application.
5. **Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File)**—Attach to this form **only** a copy of your institution's current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement (or an explanation why you are not attaching such an agreement).

When you fill out the forms, use normal punctuation and do not type using only capital letters.

## How to fill out the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance—Short Organizational

Please provide the following information:

1. **Name of Federal Agency:** This will be filled in automatically with “National Endowment for the Humanities.”
2. **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** This will be filled in automatically with the CFDA number and title of the NEH program to which you are applying.
3. **Date Received:** Please leave blank.
4. **Funding Opportunity Number:** This will be filled in automatically.
5. **Applicant Information:** In this section, please supply the name, address, employer/taxpayer identification number (EIN/TIN), DUNS number, website address, and congressional district of the institution. Also choose the “type” that best describes your institution (you only need to select one).

If your institution is located, for example, in the 5th Congressional District of your state, put a “5.” If your institution doesn’t have a congressional district (for example, it is in a state or U.S. territory that doesn’t have districts or is in a foreign country), put a “0” (zero).

All institutions applying to federal grant programs are required to provide a DUNS number, issued by Dun & Bradstreet, as part of their application. Project directors should contact their institution’s grants administrator or chief financial officer to obtain their institution’s DUNS number.

6. **Project Information:** Provide the title of your project. Your title should be brief (no more than 125 characters), descriptive, and substantive. It should also be informative to a nonspecialist audience. Provide a brief (no more than one thousand characters) description of your project. The description should be written for a nonspecialist audience and clearly state the importance of the proposed work and its relation to larger issues in the humanities. List the starting and ending dates for your project. Applicants should copy their project abstracts into this field.
7. **Project Director:** Provide the name, title, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone and fax numbers for the project director.
8. **Primary Contact/Grants Administrator:** Provide the contact information for the official responsible for the administration of the grant (that is, negotiating the project budget and ensuring compliance with the terms and conditions of the award). This

person is often a grants or research officer, or a sponsored programs official. Normally, the Primary Contact/Grants Administrator is not the same person as the Project Director. If the project director and the grants administrator are the same person, skip to Item 9.

9. **Authorized Representative:** Provide the contact information for the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) who is submitting the application on behalf of the institution. This person, often called an “Authorizing Official,” is typically the president, vice president, executive director, provost, or chancellor. In order to become an AOR, the person must be designated by the institution’s E-Business Point of Contact. For more information, please consult the [Grants.gov Online User Guide](#), which is available along with other applicant resources [here](#).

## How to fill out the Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs

Please provide the following information:

1. **Project Director:** Use the pull-down menu to select the major field of study for the project director.
2. **Institution Information:** Use the pull-down menu to select your type of institution.
3. **Project Funding:** Enter your project funding information.
4. **Application Information:** Indicate whether the proposal will be submitted to other NEH grant programs, government agencies, or private entities for funding. If so, please indicate where and when. NEH frequently cosponsors projects with other funding sources. Providing this information will not prejudice the review of your application.

For **Type of Application**, check “new” if the application requests a new period of funding, whether for a new project or the next phase of a project previously funded by NEH. Check “supplement” if the application requests additional funding for a current NEH grant. If you are requesting a supplement, provide the current grant number. Before submitting an application for a supplement, applicants should discuss their request with an NEH program officer.

Enter the primary project discipline (and, if you like, the project’s secondary and tertiary disciplines as well).

## How to fill out the Institutional Profile Form

Please choose the appropriate response to each of the six questions on the form.

## How to use the Attachments Form

You will use this form to attach the various files that make up your application.

Your attachments must be in Portable Document Format (.pdf). NEH cannot accept attachments in their original word processing or spreadsheet formats. Please see [Grants.gov's Adobe Software Tip Sheet](#) to verify the compatibility of your Adobe software and for information on how to download the latest Adobe Reader version.

When you open the Attachments Form, you will find fifteen attachment buttons, labeled “Attachment 1” through “Attachment 15.” By clicking on a button, you will be able to choose the file from your computer that you wish to attach. You must name and attach your files in the proper order so that we can identify them. Please attach the proper file to the proper button as listed below:

ATTACHMENT 1: Attach your **project abstract** to this button. Name the file “abstract.pdf”.

ATTACHMENT 2: Attach your **narrative** to this button. Name the file “narrative.pdf”.

ATTACHMENT 3: Attach your **budget** to this button. Name the file “budget.pdf”.

ATTACHMENT 4: Attach your **appendices (supporting documentation, résumés for the project director and other key staff, and résumé(s) and letter(s) of commitment for project consultant(s)—and, if necessary, a treatment plan)** to this button. Name the file “appendices.pdf”.

Use the remaining buttons to attach any additional materials (if appropriate). Please give these attachments meaningful file names and ensure that they are PDFs.

Note that Grants.gov will reject applications with files whose names include any character **other than numbers, letters, underscores ( \_ ), hyphens (-), spaces, and periods.** If you include any other character (for example, a comma) in a filename, Grants.gov will reject your application.

## How to fill out the Budget Narrative Attachment Form (also known as the Budget Narrative File)

The only thing that you should attach to this form is a copy of your institution’s current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement (or an explanation why you are not attaching such an agreement).

If you are not attaching an indirect-cost rate agreement, you must instead attach a brief statement explaining why. As appropriate, use one of the following explanations:

1. The applicant institution is not claiming indirect costs.

2. The applicant institution does not currently have a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement.
3. The applicant institution's the applicant institution is has never received a federally negotiated indirect-cost rate and is using the government-wide de minimis rate of 10 percent of the total direct costs, charge for indirect costs will not exceed the government-wide de minimis rate of 10 percent of direct costs, less distorting items (including equipment, capital expenditures, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subgrant or subcontract in excess of \$25,000).

## Submitting your application to Grants.gov

When you have completed all five forms, perform validation checks on the application as needed, and fix any errors. After you have done so, you are ready to submit your application to Grants.gov.

During the registration process, your institution designated one or more AORs (Authorized Organization Representatives). These AORs typically work in your institution's Sponsored Research Office or Grants Office. When you have completed your application, you must ask your AOR to submit the application, using the special username and password that were assigned to him or her during the registration process.

To submit your application, your computer must have an active connection to the Internet. To begin the submission process, click the "Submit" button. A page will appear, asking you to sign and submit your application. At this point, your AOR will enter his or her username and password. When you click the "Sign and Submit Application" button, your application package will be uploaded to Grants.gov. Please note that it may take some time to upload your application package, depending on the size of your files and the speed of your Internet connection.

After the upload is complete, a confirmation page will appear. This confirmation page indicates that you have submitted your application to Grants.gov and includes a tracking number. Please print this page for your records. The AOR will also receive a confirmation e-mail message.

NEH suggests that you submit your application no later than noon 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 for [federal holidays](#)), at 1-800-518-4726. You can also send an e-mail message to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). For purposes of verification, keep a record of any communication with Grants.gov, including a case number if it is assigned.

**Be sure to read the [document](#) (PDF) that explains how to confirm that you successfully submitted your application.**

## Deadline for submitting applications

**Applications must be received by Grants.gov by May 1, 2018.** Grants.gov will date- and time-stamp your application after it is fully uploaded. Applications submitted after that date will not be accepted.

## 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 Administrative Requirements 2 CFR [§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 December 2018. Institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications will receive award documents by e-mail in December 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 an e-mail message to [preservation@neh.gov](mailto:preservation@neh.gov).

In December 2014 NEH adopted without exception 2 C.F.R. Part 200: [UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS](#). 2 CFR 200 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. NEH will identify in each award document the relevant programmatic terms, conditions, and reporting requirements with which the grant recipient 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:

Division of Preservation and Access  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
400 Seventh Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20506  
202-606-8570  
[preservation@neh.gov](mailto:preservation@neh.gov)

Grants.gov: [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)

Grants.gov help desk: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Grants.gov training documents and videos:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.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 *et seq.* 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](mailto: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 (or obtain) a valid DUNS number.** Complete at least four weeks before the deadline.
- **Register or verify your registration with SAM.** Complete at least four weeks before the deadline.
- Register or **verify your institution's registration 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. You can also search Grants.gov for this program.
- **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. Institutional Profile Form
  4. Attachments Form—Using this form, attach the parts of your application as described in the guidelines:
    - ATTACHMENT 1: Project abstract (name the file “abstract.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 2: Narrative (name the file “narrative.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 3: Budget (name the file “budget.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 4: Appendices (supporting documentation, résumés for project director and other key staff, and résumé(s) and letter(s) of commitment for project consultant(s) (and, if necessary, a treatment plan) (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 your institution's current federally negotiated indirect-cost rate agreement (or an explanation why you are not attaching such an agreement). **Do not attach your application budget here; instead you must**

**attach it to the Attachments Form (see above in the Application Checklist), as attachment 3.**

Reminder: Your attachments must be in Portable Document Format (.pdf). NEH cannot accept attachments in their original word processing or spreadsheet formats. Visit Grants.gov's Adobe Software Compatibility page to verify compatibility or to download the appropriate version of the software at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>. If you have a problem installing Adobe Reader, it may be because you do not have permission to install a new program on your computer. Many organizations have rules about installing new programs. If you encounter a problem, contact your system administrator.

**Upload your application to Grants.gov.** NEH **strongly** suggests that you submit your application no later than noon 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](mailto:support@grants.gov).

**Be sure to read the [document](#) (PDF) that explains how to confirm that you successfully submitted your application.**

## TIMELINE

**Until May 1, 2018:** Contact Division of Preservation and Access program officers (at 202-606-8570 or [preservation@neh.gov](mailto:preservation@neh.gov)) with questions and for advice (optional)

**April 3, 2018:** Obtain (or verify) your DUNS number, and register your institution in SAM or verify your institution's SAM registration by this date

**April 17, 2018:** Register your institution (or verify its registration) with Grants.gov by this date

**May 1, 2018:** Submit application through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on this date

**July 2018:** Peer review panels take place

**November 2018:** Meeting of the National Council on the Humanities, followed by funding decisions

**December 2018:** Applicants are notified of the funding decisions

**December 2018:** Institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications receive award documents by e-mail

**January 2019:** Successful applicants may begin work on their projects