



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

**SUMMER SEMINARS AND
INSTITUTES**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the most important element of an application to direct an NEH Summer Seminar or Institute?

The most important element is the specific humanities content of the project. Thus the application should address the significance of the subject; the topics, questions, and readings that form the core of the intellectual conversation; and the qualifications of the humanities faculty who lead the project.

Whom should I consult with about my proposal?

NEH program officers can offer advice on a full range of issues, such as content, scheduling, and logistics. We strongly encourage you to contact a program officer and to follow up with a draft proposal (submitted as an attachment to an e-mail message to sem-inst@neh.gov, by the January 22, 2018 deadline). Call 202-606-8471 or send an e-mail message to sem-inst@neh.gov before you submit a draft proposal.

Are there projects or activities that NEH does not support?

Yes. Please review the bulleted list of examples found in Section I of the program guidelines.

We were unsuccessful with our last application. Is there anything we can do to increase our chances for success next time?

Each proposal cycle starts afresh. New peer reviewers, who have no access to information about previous proposals, will assess current proposals according to NEH's evaluation criteria (listed in the program guidelines). You may, however, receive the reviewers' comments about your last application. To request this information send an e-mail message to sem-inst@neh.gov. After you read the comments, you may follow up with a phone call to a program officer.

I just found out that someone else at my institution is planning to apply to direct an NEH Summer Seminar or Institute. Will only one be funded?

Each application is evaluated on its own merits. NEH might fund both applications, one, or neither.

What is the difference between a Seminar and an Institute?

NEH Seminars focus on sustained interaction among the director(s) and sixteen participants (NEH Summer Scholars); they therefore have few, if any, visiting scholars. Institutes, by contrast, comprise a larger group of NEH Summer Scholars (between twenty-five and thirty-six). Institutes are built around a team of scholarly experts who present a range of perspectives on a humanities topic. Consult Section I of the program guidelines for a more complete description.

My institution would not be an appropriate site for a Seminar but the college across town would be. Would I be permitted to hold my Seminar there, and if so, how would that work administratively?

Yes, you may hold your Seminar at a different institution. You may apply through your home institution and subcontract with the other institution. Alternatively, you could have the other institution serve as the applicant. Contact a program officer for further details.

Would it be permissible to co-direct an Institute with a colleague who is not on the faculty of my university, which will serve as the host institution?

Yes. In this situation, both you and the co-director would share the directorial responsibilities for the full period of the project. Your salary would be entered under budget item 1a, and your co-director's would be entered under budget item 3.

May a non-U.S. citizen serve as a project director or a visiting lecturer in an NEH Summer Seminar or Institute?

Yes. Such individuals may be included on the staff of a seminar or institute if they bring unique and important expertise to the endeavor.

May non-U.S. citizens participate as NEH Summer Scholars in a Seminar or Institute?

Only foreign nationals who have been living in the United States or its jurisdictions for at least the three years prior to the application deadline are eligible to apply. Foreign nationals teaching abroad are not eligible to apply.

When should NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes be held?

NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes should begin no earlier than the third week in June and end before the second week of August.

I'd like to hold a welcoming reception for the participants in my NEH Seminar. May I pay for this out of grant funds?

No. You may include in the project budget water or light refreshments for site visits and other project-related activities, but NEH grants funds may not be used to support social events, entertainment, meals, or the purchase of alcoholic beverages. Lunch expenses are allowable only when vendors are inaccessible during the scheduled program, such as during a field trip at a remote location. You may seek funding for a welcoming reception from other sources.

If I hold an Institute away from where I live, may I include in the project budget my travel expenses to and from the Institute site and my living expenses at the site?

Yes.

How are proposals selected for funding? When will I learn the outcome of my application?

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](#).

Applicants will be notified of decisions in August 2018.