



OFFICE OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES  
**INSTITUTES FOR ADVANCED TOPICS IN THE  
DIGITAL HUMANITIES**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

(Updated October 29, 2024)

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## **Eligibility and Responsiveness**

### **1. May a non-U.S. institution or organization apply for an Institutes for Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities (IATDH) award?**

No, foreign entities are not eligible to apply.

NEH does not provide financial assistance to foreign institutions or organizations. If you are an eligible domestic entity, you may apply for collaborative projects involving foreign organizations provided you do not use NEH funds for the purpose of issuing subawards to any foreign organization, as defined in [2 CFR §§ 200.1](#) and [.331\(a\)](#). You may obtain the services of foreign individuals and consultants to carry out programmatic activities on a fee-for-service basis, as specified in [2 CFR § 200.459](#). You may obtain goods and services from foreign vendors, such as in-country transportation services, in accordance with [2 CFR § 200.331\(b\)](#). If you plan to submit an application involving international collaboration, contact program staff at [odh@neh.gov](mailto:odh@neh.gov).

### **2. May I apply for an award to pay for my tuition and living expenses while I pursue my graduate degree?**

No. NEH makes IATDH awards to institutions and organizations that offer regional and national educational programs. Individuals are not eligible to apply to this program.

### **3. May an IATDH take place at an institution outside of the United States?**

No, an IATDH must be held at a location in the United States or its jurisdictions.

### **4. May an IATDH award support a program that provides opportunities for participants in just one state or at a single institution?**

No. Projects must be national or regional (multistate) in scope.

**5. May an institute be entirely virtual or entirely residential?**

Yes. An institute may adopt a variety of schedules and formats to suit the needs of your topic and intended audience; it may be entirely residential, entirely virtual, or a combined format. However, all participants must be engaged in the same format simultaneously unless modifications are needed for accessibility accommodations.

**6. May we pre-select our institute participants and name them in our application?**

No.

**7. Must all institute faculty be named in the application at the time of submission?**

The most competitive applications name all the institute faculty, clearly define their roles in the work plan, and provide letters of commitment from them.

## **Application Preparation**

**8. Do you offer any guidance about the logistics of planning and hosting an institute?**

We ask all IATDH project directors to discuss these issues in their white papers. Please, consult the [white papers written by directors of past NEH-funded institutes](#).

**9. Whom should we consult about our proposal?**

NEH program staff can offer advice on a full range of issues, including content, scheduling, and logistics. We encourage you to contact program staff and to follow up with a draft proposal (see below). Email [odh@neh.gov](mailto:odh@neh.gov) to consult with a program staff member.

**10. May we submit a draft of my application?**

Yes, but drafts are optional. To submit a draft, please send a narrative, preliminary work plan, course outline, and/or preliminary budget as a single attachment (one file) to [odh@neh.gov](mailto:odh@neh.gov). In the body of the email, indicate the lead project director, institution name, and preliminary title for the institute. Do not submit your draft through Grants.gov. This optional preliminary review is not part of the formal review process and has no bearing on the final outcome of the application; however, previous applicants have found it helpful in strengthening their applications.

If you choose to submit one, you must do so by December 12, 2024 as stipulated in D4 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

**11. What should I consider in discussing my project's significance?**

You should not assume that the project's significance will be evident to readers; be explicit about its importance. Give examples of the ways in which the proposed educational program would provide opportunities to use or examine the uses of digital technology to advance humanities scholarship for its intended audience.

You should indicate in your narrative that you are aware of other similar educational opportunities that currently are available regionally and nationally or that have been offered in the past, including ones not funded by the NEH. Consult the [white papers written by directors of past NEH-funded institutes](#). Explain how your project builds on past work, complements existing opportunities, or breaks new ground.

### **12. What kind of detail should be included in the work plan?**

Depending on the project, your work plan could be organized by type of activity or by period of time (for example, three-month increments). You should present enough evidence to demonstrate that you have thoroughly considered each step necessary to host a successful institute, such as participant outreach and recruitment, application review, curriculum development, preparation of institute materials, program evaluation, and post-institute activities. You should show in Attachment 3: Work plan and course outline that you have considered how much time is necessary for participants to fully engage with proposed topic and methodologies during the offering. If you describe in detail the responsibilities of the project's personnel, evaluators will understand the corresponding commitments of time that are shown in the project's budget and the qualifications and experiences that are described in the "Staff, faculty, and consultants" section of the narrative.

### **13. May the project director also serve as the institutional grant administrator?**

No. The project director may not serve as the institutional grant administrator.

The grant administrator (also called the "institutional grant administrator") functions as the representative of the recipient organization. This individual should have authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the administration of the award. The institutional grant administrator must sign or countersign financial reports and prior approval requests such as budget revisions, extensions to the period of performance, and changes in key personnel.

NEH will address official correspondence (for example, the offer letter or Notice of Action) to the institutional grant administrator and copy the project director.

The project director is responsible for the programmatic aspects and day-to-day management of the proposed project. You must notify the NEH Office of Grant Management immediately if you need to change project directors.

If the project director is not employed by the applicant organization, you must have a formal written agreement with the project director that specifies an official relationship between the parties even if the relationship does not involve a salary or other form of remuneration.

## **Budget**

### **14. May we provide stipends to participants to help defray the costs of attendance to an IATDH?**

Yes. On the Research and Related Budget Form, you may include participants' stipends or other participant support costs under E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs. In the budget justification, explain your rationale for covering participants' costs related to the institute. NEH will use the U.S. General Services Administration's [published per diem rates](#) to assess the reasonableness of proposed travel and subsistence costs.

**15. Is there a standard amount for participant stipends?**

No. You should choose a stipend amount commensurate with the time commitment expected of the participants, as well as related travel, lodging, and per diem costs, if applicable.

*Participant support costs* means direct costs that support participants, and their involvement in a Federal award, such as stipends, subsistence allowances, travel allowances, registration fees, temporary dependent care, and per diem paid directly to or on behalf of participants (see [§ 200.1](#)).

**16. Is there a standard amount to compensate project directors, faculty, or consultants for their work on the project?**

No. Compensation costs charged to the award should be consistent with [2 CFR §§200.430, 431, and 459](#).

**17. May we use NEH funds to host a welcoming reception for the institute participants?**

No. While charges for meals occurring during an NEH-supported meeting, conference, seminar or event are allowable under [2 CFR §200.432](#), NEH has discouraged such charges unless a) it would cause a hardship to schedule the meeting so as to avoid providing a meal to the participants, or b) the event takes place in a locality that precludes the participants from finding their own meals. If a meal is provided to meeting, conference, workshop, or seminar participants and a per diem is also provided, the per diem must be reduced accordingly. You should provide information about these costs in the budget justification (which you will attach to the Research and Related Budget Form).

Charges for receptions, social gatherings, or entertainment are unallowable. Incidental food items, e.g., coffee, water and doughnuts, which are normally provided at meetings, are an allowable charge. However, alcoholic beverages are unallowable under all circumstances.

For additional information, consult our guidance on [Allowability of Food Costs on NEH Awards](#).

**18. Can we describe institutional salary requirements in the budget?**

Yes. Use the budget justification (which you will attach to the Research and Related Budget Form) to contextualize institutional practices in salaries or benefits, such as standard rates for undergraduate or graduate student wages, honoraria, or base salaries for post-doctoral research associates.

## **Application Review**

**19. Our institution is planning to submit two applications to the IATDH program this year. Will only one be funded?**

Not necessarily. It is possible NEH will fund one, both, or none.

**20. Who will read our grant application?**

A variety of individuals will read your application, including peer reviewers, NEH staff, and members of the [NEH National Council on the Humanities](#). Readers will have different backgrounds, study varying disciplines, and have varying degrees of familiarity with digital scholarship methodologies. You must make a case to this broad audience.

We recommend that you write your application so that readers without technical knowledge can understand it. We realize that your project may be technical in nature and that the application may have to address complex issues. But particularly in your one-paragraph description of the project on the SF-424 Short Organizational form and the first section of your narrative, you should write for a general audience that is familiar with the humanities but may have no specific knowledge of technology or of your project's relation to the humanities. In these sections of the application, you should make a "big picture" case for your project's contribution to the humanities.

**21. If we have previously received an award in this program, and intend to submit a proposal to fund another institute on the same topic or method will reviewers have access to the earlier proposal or grant reports?**

NEH treats each application in this program as a new application. Peer reviewers will not have access to the previous application or to any performance reports submitted for another award. If you are submitting a proposal for renewed funding, you must discuss the project anew. Be sure to describe the work you accomplished with previous NEH funding and be clear about the specific activities the new award would support. Explain how your experience as a director has shaped the current proposal. You must also include the final participant evaluations from the most recently offered institute in Attachment 6: Evaluations and description of updates.