



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Celebrate America! Request for Proposals

[updated 07/16/25]

In honor of the momentous occasion of the 250th anniversary of American Independence, the National Endowment for the Humanities is issuing a call for proposals for *Celebrate America!*, a new initiative to recognize the nation's semiquincentennial on July 4, 2026. Through this program, NEH will award 250 grants of up to \$25,000 each for projects that focus on the founding of the American nation, key historical figures, and milestones that reflect the exceptional achievements of the United States. Awards will be made using federal matching funds.

As part of your application package, you will need to certify that your organization has secured third-party, nonfederal gifts equal to the amount requested from NEH. Note that staff time, funds derived from your organization's existing budget, and in-kind gifts are not an eligible match in this program.

- You can view the application package here: <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/357263>. Select the "package" button and opportunity number ZZ2027 Chairman's Awards: Celebrate America!
- You can find the related Notice of Funding Opportunity at <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/instructions/PKG00290515-instructions.pdf>.
- Refer to [Application Tips](#) for a visual guide to navigate Grants.gov. Use these instructions to correctly fill out the Supplementary Cover Sheet form.

Program Announcement Title	Celebrate America!
Link to Grants.gov Application Package	https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/357263
Application Package Number	ZZ2027
Federal Assistance Listing Number	45.130
Application Deadline	Rolling basis as determined by the Chairman

Anticipated Award Announcement	Approximately 90 days after the application is submitted
Anticipated FY 2025 Funding	Approximately \$6,250,000 in federal matching funds
Estimated Number and Type of Awards	Approximately 250 grants
Award Amounts	Up to \$25,000
Cost Sharing/Match Required	Yes
Period of Performance	Up to 12 months, starting as early as August 1, 2025
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nonprofit organizations recognized as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code • accredited institutions of higher education (public or nonprofit) • state and local governments and their agencies • federally recognized Native American Tribal governments
Published	April 10, 2025

Program Description

The *Celebrate America!* program supports eligible organizations to undertake activities that honor the founding of the country and the principles of the Declaration of Independence. Projects should engage students and/or the public with important themes and events that reflect the country's exceptionalism.

NEH welcomes applications that include activities including but not limited to:

- Speakers, screenings, discussion series
- Community events and family programs
- Exhibits (permanent or temporary) including interpretation
- Meetings, conferences, and symposia
- Professional development and training
- Digital projects resulting in virtual exhibitions, web content, or virtual tours
- Educational materials and curriculum development for K-12 and higher education purposes
- Research leading to documentary films, exhibits, books, or other products that reach the general public

Applications may propose projects that begin as early as August 1, 2025, and will be accepted on a rolling basis throughout the semiquincentennial year. Successful applicants

may be asked to contribute to and/or participate in a virtual NEH celebration of the nation's founding leading up to July 4, 2026, regardless of when their actual event(s) are scheduled.

Award Information

Applications may propose a budget of up to \$50,000 (\$25,000 from NEH, and \$25,000 from nonfederal sources). All funds (NEH and nonfederal sources) must be spent on approved project activities. Eligible organizations may submit multiple applications so long as project activities and costs do not overlap.

Awards will be made using federal matching funds. As part of your application package, you must certify that your organization has \$1 of third-party, nonfederal funds for every \$1 requested from NEH. Staff time, funds derived from your organization's existing budget, and in-kind gifts are not an eligible match in this program.

We expect that *Celebrate America!* will be able to award at least 250 grants of up to \$25,000. In order to ensure all states and jurisdictions can host *Celebrate America!* projects, NEH may limit the number of awards given to an individual state.

Restrictions

See the related [Notice of Funding Opportunity D. 6 Funding Restrictions](#) for information on projects and activities that are not allowed.

Application Information

See the related [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for detailed information on submitting your application. You must submit your application with the following parts through Grants.gov.

Narrative (not to exceed 5 pages) that responds to the following questions:

1. What activity (or activities) would the grant support and how will those activities celebrate the nation's 250th anniversary?
2. What are the humanities topics and themes that will be explored in the project?
3. Who is the anticipated audience for your project?
4. How does the proposed project support your organization's mission and success beyond the grant period?
5. What are the names and roles of staff, consultants, speakers, or other key individuals involved in the project?

Work Plan: Explain the timeline of activities, including any work already completed. Your work plan should reflect the major activities you describe in your narrative along with anticipated start and end dates and identify the individuals responsible for different tasks. As appropriate, identify meaningful support and collaboration with key stakeholders.

Biographies: Provide a one-paragraph biography for the project director, other key members of the project team, consultants, advisors, and guest speakers. Explain each individual's qualifications to fulfill their responsibilities on the project.

Budget: Complete a single detailed budget using the Research and Related Budget form. Your budget must comprise the funds from NEH and the third-party, nonfederal matching gifts. The maximum budget may not exceed \$50,000. All costs must be reasonable, necessary to accomplish project objectives, allowable in terms of [2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles](#), auditable, and incurred during the period of performance. All costs are subject to audit, record retention, and other requirements as set forth in [2 CFR 200 Subpart F – Audit Requirements](#). See the related [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for detailed budget and budget justification instructions starting on page 9.

Budget Justification: Name the source(s) of matching funds at the beginning of your budget justification. Provide a justification to support the costs requested in the budget form. The justification should include an explanation of all the items covered by the award (NEH funds + matching gifts) and equal the total from the budget form. All items listed in the budget form and justification must be allowable and directly support the activities proposed in the narrative. You do not need to specify which budget items are funded partially or wholly by NEH funds and/or matching funds.

Allowable budget items include, but are not limited to:

- salary for project team members; compensation of collaborators, consultants, and participant support costs;
- materials and supplies;
- travel, lodging, and per diem costs for staff, speakers, consultants, or contractors.

Projects may include costs for equipment, but these costs cannot be greater than 1/3 of the total cost of the project. Projects also may include subawards, but these costs cannot be greater than 1/3 of the total cost of the project.

Any food and beverage costs must be fundamental to the project and indispensable for carrying out the scope of the work. Costs must be reasonable and a necessary business expense to carry out the programmatic purposes of the award. [See Allowability of Food Costs on NEH Awards](#).

Indirect Costs: if requesting indirect costs in excess of the 15 percent de minimis rate, include a copy of your federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. If you do not request indirect costs, no additional information is needed.

Gift certification form: As part of the application, your organization is required to certify that you have secured third-party, nonfederal gifts in an amount equal to what is requested from NEH (1:1 match). Complete the [Certification of Matching Gifts Form](#) and attach it as Attachment 7 on the Attachments Form in your application package. The line after “#C” can be left blank. Use only Column 2 (New Gifts) and Column 3 (Total) for your entries. In-kind gifts and funds derived from the recipient organization are not eligible sources of certified gifts in this program.

Grants.gov forms: The application package includes forms that you will complete within Grants.gov Workspace: SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance - Short Organizational; Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs; Project/Performance Site(s) Location Form. Refer to the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) in the Grants.gov application package for complete information on completing these forms and submitting your application.

Application Submission and Review

Applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

1. The connection to the nation's 250th anniversary and significance of the project for the humanities.
2. The appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed activities, work plan, and budget.
3. The organization's ability to address significant topics in the humanities, engage audiences, and provide quality programming and other activities related to the 250th.
4. The qualifications and appropriateness of the project team.

Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. Once you have applied through Grants.gov, NEH program staff, in collaboration with the NEH Office of Grant Management, will screen proposals for completeness, eligibility, and responsiveness, and program staff will make funding recommendations to the NEH Chairman. The Chairman considers the advice provided by program staff and, by law, makes all funding decisions. We may reach out and request additional information or project revisions during the review process. We expect the time between application and award to average approximately 90 days.

To apply through Grants.gov you must have an active SAM registration (if you are unsure of the status of your organization's SAM registration or need to register visit sam.gov). You will also need an active Grants.gov account. If your organization does not have an account, you will need to first obtain a SAM registration before you can establish an account with Grants.gov. Please follow the application instructions carefully to ensure consideration.

For any questions, please contact CelebrateAmerica@neh.gov.