NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Frequently Asked Questions:
Cultural and Community Resilience
Division of Preservation and Access

Published December 6, 2022

Purpose and Background

1.What are the humanities?

According to the 1965 National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, "The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

2. What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative is a whole-of-government effort to deliver at least 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities. This investment is intended to confront decades of underinvestment in disadvantaged communities and bring critical resources to communities that have been overburdened by legacy pollution and environmental hazards. Learn more at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/

3. How can we identify communities that are disadvantaged?

You can use the Climate and Economic Justice Screening tool to identify communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution. A beta site, the tool is in an early, in-progress version with limited datasets that will be regularly updated. Ongoing work includes consultation with Tribal Nations and identifying disadvantaged communities in Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Applicants affected by the tool's deficiencies may choose to incorporate other means to describe how their community is disadvantaged.

4. Our community is not identified as "disadvantaged" according to the Climate and Economic Screening tool. Can we still apply?

Yes, you may apply if your project focuses on supporting community-based efforts to mitigate climate change and pandemic impacts within the U.S. and its jurisdictions. However, NEH will prioritize applications from organizations in disadvantaged communities that advance the goals of the Justice40 Initiative under this opportunity.

5. What is a disease-related pandemic?

A disease-related pandemic refers to the outbreak of a disease over a wide geographic area (such as multiple countries or continents). Examples include the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and the 1918 influenza pandemic.

6. What is Creative Commons and is it required for our project?

Creative Commons is a global nonprofit organization that enables sharing and reuse of creativity and knowledge through the provision of free legal tools. They provide legal tools to help those who want to encourage reuse of their works by offering generous, standardized terms. Creative Commons licenses and tools were designed specifically to work with the web, which makes content that is offered under their terms easy to search for, discover, and use. NEH does not require use of Creative Commons licenses and encourages practices that are relevant to your community. Learn more at: https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/.

7. Should we have consultants and/or a board of advisers set up and committed before we apply?

While having an advisory board is not a requirement, many projects benefit from early consultation with community members, scholarly advisers, and technical experts to plan for implementation. The collaboration of highly qualified and experienced individuals makes it more likely that evaluators will endorse an application.

Eligibility

1. What organizations are eligible to apply to the Cultural and Community Resilience program?

Eligible applicants include U.S. nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, public and 501(c)(3) accredited institutions of higher education, state and local governmental agencies, and federally recognized Native American tribal governments.

Individuals, foreign and for-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

2. May a non-U.S. institution or organization apply for a NEH award?

No, foreign entities are not eligible to apply. NEH does not provide financial assistance to foreign institutions or organizations. Nevertheless, otherwise eligible institutions may apply for collaborative projects involving U.S. and foreign organizations provided they do not use NEH funds for the purpose of issuing subawards to any foreign organization.

If you are interested in submitting an application for a project involving international collaboration, consult beforehand with the Division of Preservation and Access staff at preservation@neh.gov.

Application and submission information

1. Whom should we ask to provide letters of support?

Letters of support should come from persons who can objectively assess the importance of the project to the humanities. Writers may also include people who are community members and who can attest to the need for the proposed work. They should not be project participants or employees of the applicant institution. Also, the letters should be submitted to the project director (not separately to NEH) and submitted with the application.

2. May we submit a draft narrative for preliminary review?

Yes, program officers will review one draft per project submitted by December 1, 2022 (for the January 2023 deadline), and April 11, 2023 (for the May 2023 deadline), at 11:59pm ET, as listed in section D4. of the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Program officers will not read drafts submitted after the deadline.

3. Is completion of a planning project a prerequisite for requesting an implementation award?

No. You do not have to receive a planning award prior to applying for an implementation award, but implementation projects should be based on sound planning. Support for that planning might come from NEH, from other federal or foundation awards, or from an institution's own funds.

4. Whom should we contact if we have technical questions regarding the submission of our application in Grants.gov?

You should contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at support@grants.gov for technical assistance. Always obtain a case number when calling for support.

You may also find answers to your questions on the Grants.gov Online Help page. In addition, Grants.gov maintains a library of instructional videos which may be helpful resources as you prepare your application.

Application Review Information

1. Who will review our application?

Knowledgeable persons will read each application and advise the NEH about its merits. Reviewers include a mix of professionals such as museum curators, librarians, archivists, and administrators of cultural organizations, as well as scholars and community members who use the kinds of collections that are the focus of your project. NEH program officers supplement the peer reviewers' comments to address matters of fact or significant points that the peer reviewers have overlooked. They then make funding recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities, taking into account the program's purpose and intended audience. The National Council meets at least twice each year to review applications and advise the NEH Chair. By law, the Chair has the sole authority to make final funding decisions.

Learn more about NEH's review process.