Transcript of the NEH Webinar
Collaborative Research 2019-2020: What's New and Application Tips
November 21, 2019

0:05
Stefanie Walker: Hello, good afternoon. Good morning, for some of you. I'm Stefanie Walker Senior Program Officer at any NEH. I look forward to telling you about the National Endowment for the Humanities grant opportunity on Collaborative research. I serve as team leader for Collaborative Research and have been involved with this program for 10 years. I'm joined by two colleagues who I will ask to introduce themselves. Peter, do you want to lean in?

Peter Scott: Hello everyone. I'm Peter Scott. I'm a grants administrator in the NEH Office of Grant Management and the Collaborative Research project is one of the programs that I administer and so I'll be a good resource for questions on budgetary and financial matters. Thank you.

Stefanie Walker: Thanks Peter. And Lydia?

Lydia Medici: I'm Lydia Medici. I've answered some of your questions on email already and I'm always a resource for you to email the program mailbox if you have any further questions.

1:31
Stefanie Walker: Thanks Lydia.
Okay, I'm going to shut off the camera for now while I talk through my presentation, but I'll be back in person when we get to the question and answer session.
1:52
So, I'll be speaking for about 20 to 30 minutes. And then, as I said, spend the rest of your time answering your questions. Please send your questions through the GoToWebinar questions interface at any time during and after the presentation itself. Lydia will collect these questions and Peter and I will try to answer them in order after the presentation.
2:21
To answer the most burning question that many of you seem to have: This webinar will be recorded and archived; an updated link to the webinar will be posted on the Collaborative Research webpage on NEH's website as soon as possible. The webinar with captions will be added to NEH's YouTube channel.
2:56
Since 1997, NEH has funded more than 500 projects in the Collaborative Research program and you can look them up on our website www.neh.gov in the "Grants" section when you click the "Search all past awards" button.
3:17
You can search by keyword, by name, institution, date range, and by grant program. I would say this is an excellent way to get a first impression of whether or not your project would be a good fit for an NEH Collaborative Research grant.
3:39
The NEH does its grant work through six divisions each focused on a different kind of activity and or audience. The division of research program supports the work of scholars. And supports

the work of scholars working individually or in teams doing research for scholarly and general audiences.

4:10

The division offers eight programs split into two families. Some of our programs are designed for individuals, which, obviously, support the work of single scholar. Others are institutional grants that are for groups of scholars who are doing larger projects such as collaborative research. Collaborative Research grants are only available to institutional applicants, and this is a change from prior years.

4:45

I want to talk just briefly about eligibility. Eligibility for this program has been somewhat restricted in that unaffiliated individuals can no longer apply. Such applications have been rare in the past anyway, and it's a tall order for unaffiliated scholars to have the knowledge experience and resources to manage federal grants, for which the management can be quite intricate, and people have to be able to keep auditable records. The agency considered this to be too high risk and has limited the eligibility to institutional applicants only. Typically, most applicants to Collaborative Research are accredited public or 501(c)(3) institutions of higher education. Other U.S. nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status are also eligible, as are state and local governments and federally recognized Native American tribal governments.

6:12

All projects must include at least one collaborating scholar in addition to the project director who him- or herself must be a scholar and not just an administrator or a representative of a press.

6:33

The Collaborative Research program, as stated, is for teams of scholars working on a larger longer-term enterprise, for example, a multi-author book or a conference leading to such a publication.

6:50

Currently, two types of Collaborative Research grants are being offered: Shorter Convening grants that fund workshops or a conference to plan and lay the groundwork for a later collaborative publication. These words are meant to support the early planning stages of a project. And secondly, the longer Publication grants are meant to support the completion of the research and writing for a planned publication. Here are two examples on the lower left of your screen: *Nationalism in the New World*, edited by Don Doyle and Marco Antonio Pamplona, published by the University of Georgia Press in 2006. This book resulted from a conference supported by a Collaborative Research grant to Vanderbilt University, with John Doyle serving as the project director. That was a grant in 2003 for $56,000.

The other book up there is *The Evolution of Moral Progress: Biocultural Theory*, edited by Alan Buchanan and Russell Powell, published by Oxford University Press in 2018. This project was supported by a 2016 Collaborative Research grant to Duke University for two years; Alan Buchanan was the project director, and the award amount was $110,000.

8:46

Lydia Medici: I can't see the slides.

Stefanie Walker (after changing the presentation): All right, sorry about that. But I hope you from now on you will see the correct slides.

Slide: "The Division of Research Programs; What We Fund." All the grant programs in the Research division support work that most scholars do: Research and writing to produce books or other materials that will have an impact on knowledge in their field.

10:21

All of these projects have to be based on original research and have some kind of interpretive approach or aspect. They need to make an argument and contribute to scholarly discourse. This kind of work can result in a variety of different kinds of products.

10:44

A good number of these outcomes and activities are typical for Collaborative Research grants. The expected results of publication grants include special issues of journals with collaborators and contributions, or a co-authored major journal article, or an edited volume, a co-authored monograph. And also, for example, an archaeological site report.

11:17

These publications, print or digital, should be the outcome of a variety of activities. What we fund in this program is collaborative work; travel to meet at a at workshops or a conference time for discussions about the topics, methods, and structure of the envisioned publication; and time to conduct research and write contributions for the planned publication.

11:50

The shorter Convening grants, as I mentioned before, represent a prior or planning phase for a future collaborative publication. I think the slides advancing - great.

Slide: "What does Collaborative Research not fund?" This is a rather long list, but let me try to walk you through it.

12:18

First of all, quite obviously, we don't support projects that are undertaken by individuals without collaboration. We don't fund education projects that propose the development of curricula, teaching methods, or theories, or educational or technical impact assessments. Also excluded are projects for professional development or training and field schools.

12:55

We don't support travel to annual meetings of professional and scholarly organizations societies and institutions.

13:06

Likewise, the development of tools, including digital tools, databases, visualizations, or maps, unless they contribute to answering the project's research questions.

13:24

Excluded are also planning or putting on exhibitions and, similarly, planning or producing documentary films. Those kinds of projects would be supported through our Public Programs division.

13:42

Inventories or catalogs anthologies are also not supported.

13:52

The group of points made on the right, this group of exclusions applies for all NEH grants. We don't support work that promotes a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view; that represents advocacy for a particular program of social or political action; that stands in support of specific public policies or legislation; that is a form of lobbying; or projects that fall outside of the humanities.

14:40

Excluded are, further, projects that fall outside of the humanities, such as the creation or performance of art; creative writing; memoirs; and creative nonfiction; as well as empirically based social science research or policy studies.

15:00

On occasion, projects include collaborations with artists writers or social scientists. But please remember that the project must be rooted in the humanities and the application must make a compelling case for the project's humanities significance. Don't try and do an art project that you then have a few discussions about. Really, the humanities contribution has to be central to the publication project.

15:40

Slide: "What's New?" That's another list that's on our program resource webpage that I want to walk you through.

You might have noticed that the notice of funding opportunity or guidelines look different. They're now in a format that conforms with similar notices for grant opportunities from other government agencies. This hopefully makes it more helpful to your research development staff and institutional grant administrators.

16:20

I also want to mention the Chairman's special initiative "A More Perfect Union: Advancing Civic Education and Celebrating the Nation's 250th Anniversary." This is the Chairman's initiative and contribution to the 250-year anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, coming up in 2026.

16:47

It is an encouragement for those projects that promote a deeper understanding of American history and culture and that advance civics education and knowledge of our core principles of government. Applications that focus on the contributions of underrepresented communities are highly encouraged.

17:11

That said, you needn't make specific reference to this initiative in your application. And there is no extra funding available for projects under the special initiative.

17:27

If your application is funded, the NEH Chairman's Office can choose to designate your project as part of this initiative. I would say, be aware of the initiative, but don't waste precious space in your Narrative to try and make a case for your project as fitting into the initiative.

17:54

Eligibility for the program has been changed. We talked about that earlier, so I'm not going to elaborate on that again. But if you are an unaffiliated scholar, or cannot get your institution to serve as the sponsor, you can seek sponsorship from another eligible nonprofit organization and apply through that organization.

18:29

Archaeological projects that are focused on fieldwork, rather than convening or publication, are currently suspended from the Collaborative Research program while the agency examines its funding in this area. During this hiatus NEH- supported fellowships for archaeological research, which include publication and fieldwork, are available through a partnership with the Archaeological Institute of America. You can go to the AIA website to find further information on this. I want to emphasize here that archaeological projects that seek support for a convening or for the publication of excavation results continue to be eligible in the categories mentioned above, either Convening or Publication.

19:28

Program staff will no longer review drafts, but applicants can and many of them still do contact program and grant management staff at NEH for and answers to specific questions. At the end of this presentation, I will I'll have a slide with my contact information so that you can reach me or Peter Scott for questions relating to Collaborative Research proposals.

20:06

There is a different formatting for the narrative section of the application. It now must be single spaced and not exceed ten pages--that's shorter than before. It used to be 25 pages, double-spaced, but we were advised that the application was too long for reviewers to handle. I just want to point out that applications with narratives that exceed ten single-spaced pages or do not match the formatting guidelines in the notice of funding opportunity will be considered ineligible and will not be reviewed. So, make sure you can adjust your narrative text to the requirements.

20:58

At least half of each type of participant such as directors, collaborators, participants, technical assistants, and student assistants, must be U.S. citizens or residents. This change was made to prevent more than 50% of taxpayer funds going to non-U.S. sources. International collaborations are still welcomed and encouraged.

21:33

Applicants requesting Federal matching funds should identify potential sources of gift funds. Most applicants request outright funds from NEH in this program, but you can also ask for Federal matching funds, either for the entire request or for part of it. This is meant to leverage U.S. Treasury funds to support your project. See the guidelines, pages 7 to 8, under Award Information, for more information and on matching funds, and contact NEH's Office of Grant Management if you have questions about this, but, as I said, most applicants in Collaborative Research ask for outright funds.

Slide: As we move to **Application Tips**, start out by thinking about the timeline of your application from submission to notification and plan ahead. The Federal grant process is long, about nine months for Collaborative Research applications.

22:45

The submission deadline is December 4, 2019 this year. Peer review panels meet in March and in April 2020. NEH's National Council on the Humanities, which meets three times a year, will review the staff's funding recommendations in July. The Chairman of the Endowment makes the final funding decisions shortly thereafter, and then notifications to applicants are sent out in early August. So, keep this cycle or series of steps in mind as you plan and propose your project.

Slide: As you conceptualize your project and write your application, keep the **Evaluation Criteria** in the forefront of your mind. These are the criteria that we ask peer reviewers to use to evaluate your project.

23:49

Your one-page Statement of Significance and Impact and the 10-page Narrative are where readers of your application will look to see how the criteria are addressed.

24:06

Slide: "1. Significance" Tell your reader what your project is about and why it is important. You should explain what it will contribute to your specific field in a way that a humanities generalist can understand.

24:24

You should also situate your project in the broader context of humanities research and knowledge. Describe who will use your publication and for what kind of work. Where appropriate, explain why a particular project calls for interdisciplinary collaboration, be it among different humanities fields or beyond, with the social or natural sciences.

24:54

Take time to polish your one-page Statement of Significance and Impact. This is where you grab your readers' attention and tell them, succinctly, the main points about your project.
25:09
In the first paragraph, state what the project is: Is it a Convening or a Publication project? What is it about and why is this topic important for the humanities? Try to engage, intrigue, and get your readers excited but don't make claims that could seem hyperbolic.

Next, tell the reader how you will accomplish your goals and what the nature of the collaboration is.

Close the one-page statement with information about the planned publication of the project, even if this goes beyond the period of the grant, and which audiences will benefit from it. Of course, your Narrative will elaborate all these points, but avoid repeating the same text or phrases from your initial statement in the narrative. Panelists tend to find that irritating.

Slide: "2. Methods and Execution" Generally, peer reviewers find that a well-written clear application is a predictor of the quality of the planned publication. So, writing a good abstract and narrative is important.
26:35
Propose specific research questions and explain the methods, concepts, and approaches your collaborative team will pursue to address them. Similarly, if special digital or other technologies will be employed explain how and why you will use them.
26:58
Describe and justify the sources for your project: Archives, texts, objects, interviews--whatever the activities include.
27:14
Slide: 3. "Collaborating Scholars" The project director should be one of the lead scholars on the collaborative project; co-directors can be designated, but it is the project director's institution who will be the applicant and award recipient. Co-directors and other collaborators can be compensated through subawards.
27:46
In the designated section of the application narrative on collaborators briefly describe your colleagues' complementary areas of expertise and explain how they will work together. Remember to indicate each person's time commitment on the project.
28:08
For Convening grants with many participants, it may be more useful to add an appendix with a list of names with institutions, field of expertise, and paper topics. Please also indicate whether they have committed to participate or have yet to be invited.
28:38
Slide: 4. "Work Plan and Completion" Provide a detailed work plan in three- or six-month segments. This can be in the form of a chart or a list or a narrative, but make sure it is clear who is doing what at a given time. Ensure that the collaborators you mentioned before, in the work plan here, and the budget all match up.
29:09
In the section of the Narrative on the history of the project, explain how it came to be; what the collaborators have accomplished together to date; and what phase of the project the grant period represents.
29:27

There are specific guidelines for the budget in the notice of funding opportunity. The most common line items are salary replacement and travel expenses for Collaborative Research grants. That's what we see most often. Compensation for consultants and payment for technical services are also allowed, as are conference costs such as facilities rental, AV rental, costs for meals and refreshments, but no alcoholic beverages.

30:01

Collaborators from different us institutions will generally submit a budget for a subaward.

30:09

A budget justification for all the line items in the budget form is required.

30:22

In the overwhelming number of cases the indirect or F&A costs should be calculated using the "Other Sponsored Activities" rate.

30:34

Cost sharing is not required. It can be indicated voluntarily.

30:40

Please read the budget instructions carefully and get in touch with NEH's office of Grant Management for clarification on specific budget questions.

30:55

Slide: "5. Publication Goals" Mention the expected publication and other outcomes of the project briefly in the initial Statement of Significance and Impact and offer greater detail in the designated section of the Narrative. It is not necessary to have a publisher lined up, but mention it if you do or describe the publication plans and timeline. Describe and justify the publication format: print, digital, or a combination. Provide a sustainability plan for digital publications or components. How will the publication reach the intended audience or audiences? Will it be open access? What are the plans for dissemination and self-assessment?

32:03

The outcome of Convening grant should not be the next grant application. Convening projects should describe the ultimate publication. Even if it is still in a planning phase and lacks detail due to the early stage of the project.

32:26

Slide: "Questions?" Thank you for listening. I hope this brief overview has given you some useful information about the program and pointers about the application.

32:38

As mentioned in the beginning, the recording of the webinar with the presentation images will be made available on our website. This last slide, as you see, has my name and contact information as well as that for Peter Scott and Lydia Medici.

Question and Answer Session:

Stefanie Walker: I would now like to open the webinar for questions. I think there were probably a whole bunch that Lydia has already recorded. Peter and I will start to try and answer those.

33:50

The first question is, **can you talk more about the Standing Together theme**. Our projects that deal with history were considered to be part of this theme?

34:15

The Standing Together initiative is still part is still an active initiative at NEH, but the same advice that I gave you for "A More Perfect Union" applies here as well. You're welcome to make reference to it, but it doesn't that shouldn't take up a big part of your justification for your project,

because it is it will also be designated as part of Standing Together after the fact, after you've been recommended for funding based on the evaluation criteria. Those are really what you want to be sure to cover in in your application.

35:12

Okay, so let me repeat this question: My collaborators and I will use up the bulk of funds for salary because this is what will allow us to collaborate. That makes sense.

36:33

We are also proposing two events and know we can raise at least 50% of the funds from the project sponsoring university. Is this acceptable to do? I would say yes; Peter, do you want to respond to that in more detail?

37:00

Peter Scott: This is for a publication project. Right?

37:17

Stefanie Walker: Right. I guess the question back is, are you planning to ask NEH for the remaining 50% for your meeting, but we really… The idea is that you either propose a Convening project which would be the meeting, or you propose a Publication grant project, which would sort of logically happen after the meeting when you are writing up the results for the publication. I guess I don't quite understand what the situation is for this particular questioner.

38:17

Am I allowed to apply for Convening grant to fund all the costs of a workshop total budget $50,000 or is it expected that I already have secured funding from my home institution or another source? So that would be called cost sharing and cost sharing is not required. So, the simple answer to your question is, yes, you are allowed to apply for Convening grant to fund all the costs for a workshop, up to a total of $50,000.

39:15

The next question regards type of publication: **My collaborators and I will plan to produce a 350 plus page translation, a peer-reviewed journal issue, and we also want to publish several targeted co-author journal articles. If we explain and justify why articles are better than a monograph, would that be acceptable?**

39:45

Short answer: Yes, if you can explain and justify why articles are better than a monograph. That's entirely acceptable. There are also certain fields where scholarship is more frequently published as articles rather than books. However, one bit in your question immediately raised a flag. A 250-plus-page translation, that would not be covered by a Publication grant because we have a separate program called Scholarly Editions and Scholarly Translations, and that's where you should apply for any work to support the translation, but perhaps that's not what you're asking NEH for; perhaps you want to ask for support for these co-authored Journal articles, and that would be fine.

40:57

We received a Convening grant for 2019-2020 and are now applying for a Publication grant. What special issues in the application should we pay attention to? I would say the main piece of advice I would offer regarding that is, since you'll be talking about the history of your project, that you should mention that you just had this or you were just awarded this Convening grant and, I don't remember exactly what your timing is, but it's likely you haven't had your convening at the time of the deadline for the Publication grant. So, just give us as much information as you can for what you've done in the meantime to present a convincing case that your meeting or convening will happen, and then what the next steps are going to be, because

productivity and showing that you've put prior awarded NEH money to good use is definitely also a consideration here.

42:21

Would research questions relating to documentary films, but not directly used to produce documentary films, be disqualified? The funding would go only to the research for the scholars. That would be fine. This would not be disqualified. You definitely can propose research <u>about</u> documentary films. Just not a project that only makes a documentary film.

43:06

Could a project to publish a scholarly book also include a public-facing documentary to help disseminate the publication and translate the scholarly application?

43:23

The answer to that is: It depends. This is one of these cases where it depends on whether the emphasis of the project is the book, which is what we would expect in most cases, or whether the documentary is an integral part of the collaborative project. And, you know, if most of your funding and activities that you're requesting under this grant are for the documentary, then I think it would be less competitive, frankly, but if you can try and make a case for it.

44:33

Would you be able to explain what NEH defines as the humanities? For that I would point you to our founding legislation, part of which is printed in our notice of funding opportunity, in the background section usually. Rather than give you a lot of lengthy definition, please go and see the information there. It's a capacious definition of the humanities, really all fields, from languages, all forms of history, area studies, history of law, history of science, and also qualitative social sciences.

What would be an example of a digital tool that helps to answer a research question? Well, that's really a up to you to present a case for that. What we're trying to avoid are projects that do purely, let's say, just create a map or a database. That could be a useful resource, but we want you then to use that resource to answer an intellectual question.

46:32

For a Publication grant, my group wishes to model ways of doing research that have implications for the questions we're asking and the base with which we are engaging. Is it appropriate to say that we also plan to publish quote "working papers" based on these methods, again because it has implications for how scholars in the field work?

47:07

Yes, I guess that's fine. Again, it will just depend on how you present it and how you can pitch it in a way that explains how this is a contribution to humanities knowledge.

47:41

Somebody says, It's very short. Do you mean the application? **Can we include the bibliographic essay component in the appendices or as part of the bibliography document?** No, the bibliographic essay has to be part of the narrative.

48:06

Question about narrative guidelines: If my full narrative is 10 pages, is it okay if subsections are longer than indicated? Yes. I see what you're saying, because the guidelines suggest page numbers for certain sections. Those are indeed just suggestions. If one part is a bit shorter and the other part is a bit longer. That's fine. It's just that the total cannot exceed 10 single-spaced pages.

48:44

And remember when you're talking about collaborators' qualifications don't repeat what's going to be in their resumes anyway. Rather, just briefly state [for example] this person's expertise is in the history of Latin America; she's going to write two essays for this book on these topics; and will contribute 20% of her time during the grant period to this.

49:24

Question about time commitments for Convening grants: In what format do we measure participants time? Percentage of academic year salary, numbers of hours? I don't know, Peter, if there's a preferred way.

49:44

Peter Scott: You can do it in the two ways that you mentioned. They are the are the main ways that people do, and you can do it either way as a percentage of the salary which would show you the percentage of the person's time that is being spent on the project, or in the number of hours is another way to very often for senior scholars is indicated as a percentage of their time, but it can possibly, you're also free to express it in hours if you wish.

50:21

Stefanie Walker: **Do appendices, such as lists of speakers at a convened conference, count in the page numbers of 10-page narrative?** No, that would be an appendix and that's separate from the narrative.

Can childcare be a cost in a research trip? I don't know. Is that a Peter question?

50:53

Peter Scott and Stefanie Walker: If you're including travel in your budget, it has to be travel which is necessary to do the research. So, I'm not sure now if travel by children would be necessary for the project….This is concerning Convening, right? Okay. I mean people get can apply for the government per diem, right? Yes.

So, if you are traveling to the conference that is being funded by the grant and if in order for you to do that travel it is necessary for child care to be part of that, then, yes, you could include those expenses in the budget.

Stefanie Walker: Must the project have one director or can there be two or three co-directors? No, so, you do not have to have just one director, but the applicant institution, that is, the person representing the applicant institution, will be the project director on record for this grant. Then, there can be two or more co-directors. Although you know, I wouldn't go crazy with five co-directors or so, but that's up to you to decide.

53:14

Do we need a letter of commitment for university in-kind contributions? This is again a cost sharing question, and you do not need such a letter. If you want to indicate, you know, buy-in or cost share from your institution to strengthen your argument, you can do so voluntarily, but it is not required.

53:48

Is there an updated template online that includes the confines of how many pages each section should be including spacing per section? Yes, please read the guidelines and there it tells you what the formatting rules are. There are also recommended page numbers or estimates of page numbers per section, but as I said in an earlier question. These are recommendations or suggestions not requirements.

54:28

May grant holders continue in their university jobs during the grant? Yes, most of our applicants, or I should say most of our participants, on Collaborative Research grants are not

working full-time on the project during the grant, although they could, but most of them are working part-time on the project and presumably would continue their university positions during that time.

In addition to the slides and a voice recording will a transcript be available? Yes, we are trying to do that.
55:35
To what extent is the need for formal community partnerships important for a successful grant application? That depends entirely on the project you are proposing. I can't answer the question any other way.
56:33
Besides the narrative should all other materials be double-spaced? I am thinking about the one-page statement of significance in particular. No, don't double-space the one-page statement of significance. I doubt you'll be able to get everything you want to on there in a single double-spaced page. And as far as the appendices are concerned, I don't I think we have other rules about formatting for those and so that's up to you. Just keep in mind that your peer review readers will have to be able to deal with this material, and you don't want to make your bibliography too long either or try and squeeze too much in there. Just don't irritate your readers who will have to read, you know, 15 to 20 such applications. That brings to mind another piece of advice that I often give people: Remember that your narrative is not a scholarly essay. It's an argument for funding so be very clear about what you say; be as specific as possible and do not use footnotes. If you need to refer to a particular book or publication, use parentheses with author name and year and make sure that that publication is in your bibliography. It makes for much easier reading and a much more efficient use of your 10-page narrative.
58:40
Could Stefanie Walker reread or re-describe the section of the presentation on the one-page significance and impact statement? I'll hold that for later to make sure I get through other questions because you will be able to see that in the recorded webinar.
59:08
You mentioned that PIs and co-PIs can request faculty support, but that collaborators should not request funds here. This should be relegated to a subaward. Is this correct? Let me ask Peter to explain what participant compensation should go in the main budget and into subawards.
59:39
Peter Scott: Okay, in the main budget submitted by the applicant institution, you would, there's a section for salaries, and those are for salaries of project participants who are employed by the applicant institution. So, in your main applicant institution you have the salaries and fringe benefits of the people who are employed by the institution. If you have co-directors participate who are employed by other institutions, then their compensation would be listed, those would be subawards. You would list the total amount of the subaward in the main budget - a line under Services, and it would say subaward to ABC University. And then to your main budget you would attach a detailed sub-award budget, which would include the salary and the fringe benefits of the people who are employed by the other institution and on any other expenses, for example, travel expenses if they need to travel to the applicant institution or somewhere for purposes of research. So, those are the main details of how your list those.

Stefanie Walker: For these kinds of budget questions or how to request compensation for your collaborators, please work with your institutional grant administrator and sponsored research professionals it at your institution. They will be familiar with this kind of budget and these kinds of issues.
1:01:41
Can you please describe some common errors you have seen in past grant applications?
1:01:57
I mean the most common one is that information that's available in the guidelines is not being taken, not heeded. So, that's sort of a boring answer, but that is the most common error. It's that something that's requested in the guidelines is not is not there or the narrative is longer than 10 pages, or … the budget has mistakes in it. So, read the guidelines again and again, internalize them. That's I would say the most common error.

Another sort of exhortation: Many applicants are very excited and very close to their particular project and they know why it's important for them or their special field, but you need to be able to step back and explain the importance and significance of your work and the publication to someone who is maybe not a specialist in your field. I always say to people, remember that the peer review panel of four or five people will probably have only one person who is close, or closer, to your own field, and the others will represent other fields of the humanities. They'll be smart academics too, but they may not be conversant with the specific thrust of your of your project. So, you need to be able to explain to a humanities generalist why this is important and what contribution it will make.
1:04:18
We want to tell the stories of a population in the United States whose stories are seldom told. How much might it matter if we want to chronicle the voices of the unheard? It's possible that this could be an important contribution to humanities knowledge, but it depends how this is presented and the case that's made for those.
1:05:01
Are books that combine documentary photography, text, and other scholarly practices, acceptable? Can we include photographs in the application? So, first question: Sure, books that combine photography text and other scholarly practices are acceptable. I mean, you have to explain why or how they fit together, but that would be the case for any application. You can absolutely put pictures into your application. Most of the time, pictures are put in the appendix rather than in the narrative because that's limited to 10 pages. So, you can write your narrative and say "Figure 1" or "Appendix A, Figure 1," and add images in an appendix.
1:06:21
For a Convening grant. I saw that for planning a conference participants have to be identified and committed. Is this the same for a series of working meetings? Do we already have to have commitments for our participating scholars? I would say your application is going to be stronger if you have commitments from as many participants as possible, be at a conference or a series of workshops. For your publication grant, for sure, you will want commitments from your collaborators.
1:07:09
For workshop /seminar Convening grants, are participating scholars usually listed and paid as consultants? That's maybe a Peter question.
1:07:30
Peter Scott: They can be paid as consultants if they are not employed by the applicant institution. If they are participants who are employed by the applicant institution the

compensation would be listed in the salaries and fringe benefits areas. They can be paid as consultants. Yes, if they are.

1:07:54

Stefanie Walker: What about collaborators who are outside of the US? They are usually paid as consultants, right?

Peter Scott: Yes. That's right. Right. So perhaps that was what your question was aiming towards.

Stefanie Walker: Can collaborating scholars be in the budget as consultants. Yes. So that was that's a similar question.

1:08:36

Does the NEH Convening grant typically choose to only fund the planning of publication or a conference /workshop? I had read the grant details as that that they wanted to fund projects that try to accomplish both these goals. No, the idea is that this would happen together. And, as the questioner said, I had rent read the grant details as that they wanted to fund project that tried to accomplish both of these goals: That's correct, but a Publication grant should be beyond the planning stage that Convening grants are meant to fund. That's not to say that collaborators couldn't meet sometime during a one- to three-year period, but they should be at a stage in the project where they're ready to complete their research and writing in preparation for a publication that is already structured pretty clearly.

1:10:18

Should the table of contents list the appendices as one line or should each appendix item be enumerated? Well, yes, I think it would be much more useful if each appendix item is identified.

1:10:44

For the Publication grant, can funds be requested to support image acquisition and publication subventions? Ccurrently we don't fund Publications inventions, but image acquisition is allowable.

1:11:19

I'm hoping to get clarification as to whether advocacy for better inclusion of a marginalized population within a field would be construed as political or social action. I can't answer that question as posed. That really depends on how you present the issue. That's all I can say say to that. I can't speculate on whether what you are thinking of proposing could be construed as political or social action, but I think you should, or you must, avoid making that impression because that would jeopardize your application.

1:12:35

The focus of our project is decidedly, let's say in the humanities, but we have previously captured auto-ethnographic data in pursuit of the same research question that we would analyze within this Publication grant period. Would that be acceptable? Yes, I don't it's not that you can't use auto-ethnographic data, but it will again depend on your own how you present this material and explain why it's important and integral to your main humanities research question.

1:13:28

Is there a limit to how many co-PIs can be included on a Convening grant? Could we have, say, four, providing the workload is clearly explained? These are collaborative grants. So you'll always be working together. I'm not sure why you would need four co-PIs, Principle Investigators, but if you feel that that is how you must present the project then you can you can

do that. Remember that project director and co-project director are important to us primarily for the management of the award. It doesn't indicate some sort of ownership over the project itself, intellectual ownership.

1:14:44

Is it acceptable for convening activities to focus on methodological innovation? We hope to bring together a community of scholars to help us refine techniques for our long-term collaboration, which would result in a traditional interpretive monograph. We would publicly disseminate the methodological techniques as an outcome of the conference. But again, the ultimate outcome would be a collaboratively authored book publication. My collaborative project involves music and language. The short answer is yes. It is acceptable for convening activities to focus on methodological Innovation. Again, you just have to make it clear why this is important and a contribution to the humanities.

1:16:15

My collaborative project involves music and language. Could the budget include compensation for musical performers who are experts in the field being studied? Yes, if those performances are integral to the research work being done for this for this particular project.

1:16:59

How does the committee consider action-based research, i.e. research into the application of theoretically informed practices? We want to apply for a Convening grant for a symposium on how to use media, specifically media studies methods to foster public awareness and critical thinking on issues of global relevance. This means some participants will present on their Research into teaching practices. However, that is distinct from producing educational materials or carrying out learning assessment, in that there are research questions guiding the work. Would that be an acceptable project? I don't know the details about this project, but it sounds like it's one that's perhaps a little bit on the edge of what we typically see, so I can't say would it be acceptable or not acceptable. I can only repeat myself by saying, just make sure that the humanities value of what you are doing is clear and compelling.

1:18:44

Should the compensation or salary replacement for key collaborators be roughly equal to the project director? It just depends on the nature of the project and the and the nature of the collaboration. There is no requirement in one way or another.

1:19:29

Another question about time commitments for Convening grants: If a project director and co-directors are not asking for salary support in the budget, does that impact the percentage of time or hours NEH expects to see? No, so if I understand the question correctly, I would say, in the narrative section on collaborators, you should still indicate the time commitment that director and co-directors are committing to the project, even if you're not asking for funding for that time commitment, because the reader of your application needs to know how much time the director and co-directors are putting into the project. Okay, so it might not be in your budget, but it should be indicated in the narrative.

1:20:42

If the project we are proposing overlaps with another grant NEH grant opportunity, would it make sense to submit it for both opportunities? We designed our project to meet the guidelines for the Collaborative Research grant but feel it could also be competitive for a digital Humanities advancement program. So, yes you can submit applications to both of these grant programs. If you were to be successful in both, then we would have to make sure we

-- NEH would not fund the same activity twice, obviously, so that would have to be sorted out, but you can apply to both grant opportunities.
1:21:38

Since cost sharing is not required, is it a problem if the work plan includes more time/effort than is covered by salary replacement in the budget. Does this discrepancy need to be explained in the budget narrative? I'm trying to figure out whether such an explanation would be in the budget justification or in the narrative. I think it's probably best in the narrative under the collaborator section, and this can be very brief.
1:22:38

Is it necessary to include emails from participants who have committed to a Convening grant event? It seems that having to page series would be sufficient evidence. If we need to convey include email confirmations. What format should in what format should those be submitted? The CV is not the same thing as confirming that someone is participating. So, the main reason I brought out the list of participants in for a Convening grant in an appendix is that you would run you would run out of space. You don't have to provide a two-page CV for every participant in a in a conference. It would just be for the main collaborators. For people whom you've invited, or who are participating in the conference or another form of convening, you can either declare that they have committed to participating, or, if you want to go a step beyond that, you could add copies of a short email saying, "Dear so-and-so, I'm confirming that I'm participating or will come to the conference on XYZ at this and this date, and will speak on XYZ topic." It can be pretty informal. But there's a maximum of 35 pages for the appendices, so, depending on how large your conferences and your appendices…I don't think you'll run out of space for that, but you can make the email smaller or you can simply say we have email confirmations from these people and then just list them.
1:25:06

For publication proposals: Is it necessary to follow the order of the topics and titles of the headers in the narrative? In other words, if we modify headers and slightly change the orders would this be acceptable? We would not declare your application ineligible for those reasons, but I strongly advise you not to do that. I strongly advise you to use the headings exactly as they are laid out in the in the guidelines. Again, think of your readers. They are going to look at a whole number of applications, and those that diverge from the expected, that usually makes it more difficult for a reader to understand. And so, I would say that's not advisable.
1:26:10

If collaborators requested can they be listed as consultants and issued stipends rather than sub-awards? I think that's correct, right [Peter]? Yes, is the answer to that question.
1:26:30

For a multi-author edited volume publication plan, how detailed should the description of individual chapters be, and what evidence of commitment of contributors is required? Well that really depends on what stage your project is at. In general, I would say, the more specific your information is, the stronger your project will appear to readers. There are no particular requirements in this regard, but it's sort of general advice: the more specific you can be the stronger, generally, your application for publication would be.

I have the director at my USA institution and an equal collaborator at a foreign institution. Should the foreign collaborator be a consultant? Right now, it is a subcontract to their institution. I don't quite understand that question, but Peter can confirm that you can only use NEH money to pay or compensate a foreign collaborator in the form of an honorarium

or compensation for a consultant, right? No sub-awards to foreign institutions. The foreign person who is going to be a major collaborator on this would have to be compensated as consultant. Let me repeat that once more so it's clear, because that's a very important point for collaborations that involve non-U.S. people. Your U.S. institution that is going to be the recipient of the award cannot make a subaward to non-U.S. institutions. Your non-U.S. collaborator should be compensated in the budget as a consultant.
1:29:39

We have collected interviews with people in a highly stressful occupation in collaboration with another institution and we want to turn them into a book. Is this suitable? I think the person is asking whether it's suitable to publish a book of interviews. That in itself would probably not be competitive in this program, because we would also have to have an interpretation or an argument made around these interviews. They have to be contextualized in some humanities field.
1:30:45

Someone says they heard me say that publication subvention cannot be included in the budget. Does that mean that the "cost of duplication and printing" mentioned in the guidelines does not refer to the printing of the publication? That is correct. It does not.
1:31:14

I'm at the 3:30 limit here. Thank you for sticking with us for all this time. Two more questions.
1:31:38

Should the interest area of "Protecting Our Cultural Heritage" be treated the same way as the other two areas? We do not need to specifically address those? Yes. Basically, that's correct. I think you mean initiatives; [that] is what we call them, and there is one called Protecting Our Cultural Heritage. This would be treated the same the same way as the other initiatives. If you want to refer to that, you can, but I would advise you to do so briefly and focus the rest of your application narrative on the humanities significance.
1:32:35

Final question: If you offer your time as cost share, no funding requested, should that be clearly defined, even if cost share is not required? Will cost share, even though not required, impact the review and approval of the budget? No, because cost-share is not required, it will not impact the review and approval of the application or the budget. If you want to indicate any cost sharing, that's entirely voluntary.
1:33:17

We're at the end of our webinar. I'll admit that this was first try for me and I do hope that the lengthy question and answer section session was useful to you. You have my contact information and that of Peter Scott and Lydia Medici. If you have other specific questions, feel free to send them our way, and we will try to answer them. Thank you very much for participating and I will now end the webinar. Goodbye.