



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

OFFICE OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES DIGITAL HUMANITIES ADVANCEMENT GRANTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I submit a draft for review?

If you choose to submit a draft proposal, send it as an attachment to odh@neh.gov. Drafts must not be submitted via Grants.gov.

Potential applicants may submit one draft containing any of the application components for the Office of Digital Humanities to review when submitted by December 1, 2020 for the January 15, 2021 deadline, and by May 5, 2021 for the June 24, 2021 deadline. Program staff cannot review drafts submitted after these deadlines.

This opportunity for optional preliminary review is not part of the formal evaluation process and has no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal. Previous applicants have found it helpful in strengthening their applications.

What do you mean by experimentation or innovation?

An experimental project creates something new, offering an interesting new approach to tackling a problem. Applicants are advised to conduct a thorough environmental scan as this is helpful in convincing reviewers that the project is experimental or innovative. Experimentation can take many forms. Some projects are examples of technical innovation, such as the creation of a new piece of software to address a need in the humanities. In other cases, the experimentation does not consist of creating new technology; instead the project makes use of an existing technology in a new way. For example, an applicant might take existing software used for some other purpose and demonstrate how it could be effectively used for humanities research. In still other cases, the experimentation does not pertain to the technology per se; instead it is the project collaboration that is experimental, as with projects that bring together creative individuals from both technical and nontechnical fields to address a longstanding humanities issue in a new way.

What constitutes “planning for the revitalization and/or recovery of existing digital projects”?

Level I Digital Humanities Advancement Grants can be used to support planning for the restarting of projects that are valuable but have languished (and thus need substantive changes in their design, technical architecture, and/or dissemination and preservation strategies). Digital Humanities Advancement Grants cannot, however, support regular, ongoing maintenance of existing projects. Activities that can be supported include:

- the testing and evaluation of an established project with target audiences to determine needs and priorities;
- the planning for a redesign of a project's interface to align with current web design standards, including those that address accessibility for audiences with disabilities;
- the testing of widely-used digital tools (for example, tools used for annotation or visualization) to see if they can be successfully integrated into an established project;
- the consideration of how the project data can be incorporated into a federated or discipline-specific platform such as the Digital Public Library of America, Open Context, etc.; and
- the creation or revision of a plan to manage an established project's data—including digitized images, scholarly essays, annotations, social media, etc.—in the long term. The plan should include a strategy for archiving and sharing data, even if the project is no longer being updated regularly.

Our organization is interested in applying for Level III funding for a project involving a museum or a library, but we see that the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is partnering with NEH to support only Level I or Level II applications to the DHAG program. Can we still apply for a Level III grant?

Yes. Although IMLS is currently joining with NEH to support only Level I and II awards, NEH has a long history of support for projects involving museums, libraries, and archives; it welcomes applications for such projects for all levels of funding. You may also wish to consider other IMLS opportunities, such as the [National Leadership Grants for Libraries](#) program or the [National Leadership Grants for Museums](#) program.

As a reminder, overlapping project costs between two or more applications for federal funding and/or approved federal award budgets is not permitted.

The project that we have in mind seems compatible with the guidelines for another NEH program, but it also seems to fit as a Digital Humanities Advancement Grant. To which program should I apply?

Generally, projects that can be supported through other NEH programs and that seek to achieve the goals of the other programs should be addressed to those programs. However, no rules prevent an applicant from submitting an application to more than one NEH program for different components of a larger project, so long as the application is appropriately modified to fit the guidelines of the different programs. Note that overlapping project costs between two or more applications for federal funding and/or approved federal award budgets are not permitted. If you are not certain to which program you should apply, contact NEH program staff for guidance.

ELIGIBILITY

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

No, foreign entities are not eligible to apply. You also may not make a subaward to a non-U.S. institution or organization. NEH does not provide financial assistance to foreign institutions or organizations. For more information, please see Section C3 in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

If I work at an eligible institution and I am not an American citizen, may I serve as

a Project Director?

Yes. Project directors need not be U.S. citizens or U.S. residents, so long as the applicant institution is eligible.

May our institution apply for more than one Digital Humanities Advancement Grant at a time?

Yes. Institutions may apply for and hold more than one of these awards. However, individuals may serve as project directors or co-directors for only one application to this program per deadline.

Our organization received funding for the start-up phase of our project from a source other than the NEH. Are we still eligible to apply for a Level III Digital Humanities Advancement Grant?

Yes. You are welcome to apply to the program whether or not you previously received an NEH award. However, you must be able to demonstrate that you and your collaborators have completed the start-up phase and are prepared to move on to implementation.

Our organization currently has a DHAG award. We would like to apply for a Level II or III DHAG to continue progressing on the project. However, at the time of the DHAG deadline, our current award will still be open. May we still apply?

Current DHAG project directors may apply for another DHAG, even if the earlier award is not fully completed when he or she applies for a subsequent DHAG award. Nevertheless, evidence of the success of a project's start-up phase is an important consideration when Level II or III DHAG proposals are reviewed. You should demonstrate that you have made enough progress in the start-up phase of your project to be ready to apply for an additional DHAG.

May the project director also serve as the institutional grant administrator?

No. The project director may not serve as the institutional grant administrator. The role of the project director must be distinguished from that of the institutional grant administrator, who functions as the representative of the recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the administration of the award. All financial reports and prior approval requests such as budget revisions, extensions of the period of performance, and changes in key personnel must be signed or countersigned by the institutional grant administrator. Similarly, official correspondence from NEH to a recipient (for example, an offer letter, the award document, an extension, a supplement or amendment) is addressed to the institutional grant administrator and copied to the project director. The project director is the person directly in charge of the conduct of the funded project. Because the project director's involvement in the project is normally critical to its success, the replacement of the project director or the co-director or a substantial reduction in the level of their effort (for example, an unanticipated absence for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in the time devoted to the project) requires prior written approval from NEH.

BUDGET

May the project budget include funds to support activities described in the data management and sustainability plans?

Yes. The budget may include funds for staff and other costs incurred within the period of performance related to preserving, disseminating, and sustaining the digital materials created under the award.

Examples of data management plans from previously-funded Digital Humanities Advancement Grants may be found in the sample applications available on the program resource page.

Sustainability plans are only required of Level III applications.

Is it possible to describe institutional salary requirements in the budget?

Yes. Use the budget justification (attached 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.

My institution has several indirect cost rates. What rate is most appropriate to use for a Digital Humanities Advancement Grant?

An institution may include indirect costs up to the appropriate negotiated rate in the application budget. With rare exceptions, your institution's "Research" rate will not be the appropriate rate for inclusion in your DHAG project budget, as the use of this rate is reserved for projects involving scientific research, not scholarly inquiry of the type most often supported by NEH. Note that the indirect costs are included in the amount awarded for the grant; they are not added to the grant amount. (For example, if an applicant requests \$325,000, this means that NEH would support no more than \$325,000 of a project's costs, including the indirect as well as the direct project costs.)

Is it possible for my institution to use an indirect cost rate that is lower than its negotiated rate or to waive indirect costs altogether?

Yes, your institution may include indirect costs up to the appropriate negotiated rates (see question above) and may elect to request a lower rate. Your institution may also waive the indirect costs.

Who should be named as a key person in section A of the Research and Related Budget form?

Only key project personnel employed by the applicant institution should be included in Section A of the Research and Related Budget form. Project team members who are playing a leadership role should be included in Section A (Key Persons) while additional project team members should be included in Section B. Other Personnel. Depending on their role on the project, costs for other project team members who are not employed by the applicant institution may be included on the budget under F3. Consultant Services or F5.

Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs. It's important to understand that not everyone included in Attachment 1: List of Participants will be included as a Key Person on the budget, and the status an individual is granted for the purposes of the budget will have no impact on their role in the project and its implementation.

Are Automatic Data Processing (ADP) and Computer Service costs the same as equipment?

No. The ADP/Computer Services section in the budget form refers to paid services at the applicant's institution for activities such as high-performance computing, use of GIS licenses, or lab space to complete your project. If you are contracting with a third party to provide any of these services, or plan to rent computer equipment, include them in line F5

Subawards/Consortium/Contractual Costs. If you plan to purchase laptops, these are generally considered "supplies or materials" and belong in line F1.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

May we include letters of support with our application?

No. Letters of support are no longer accepted as part of DHAG applications.

What is required in a letter of commitment?

Letters of commitment are suggested for project participants outside of the host institution, such as advisory board members, consultants, contractors, and workshop facilitators. Letters of commitment may be brief and should demonstrate that the participant is aware they have been included in the grant proposal, and understands the level of commitment that the project will require of them. Letters of commitment are not intended to supplement the narrative by further describing the value or potential impact of your project.

On the Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs, question number 1 asks for the project director's major field of study. Our project director's field of study is not, however, listed in the drop-down menu. What should we choose?

If none of the listed fields seems to fit your project director's major field of study, please choose "Interdisciplinary."

ACCESSIBILITY

Where can we find resources with additional information about developing projects that are accessible for users of all abilities?

Section H of the Notice of Funding Opportunity includes a list of resources which may be useful in developing plans to ensure that grant products are accessible to a broad audience, including individuals with disabilities.