



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE  
**Humanities**

OFFICE OF **DIGITAL HUMANITIES**

**DIGITAL HUMANITIES  
ADVANCEMENT  
GRANTS**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**What do you mean by experimentation?**

An experimental project creates something new, offering an interesting new approach to tackling a problem. 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 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.

**My organization is interested in applying for Level III funding for a project involving a museum or a library, but I 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 I still apply for a Level III grant?**

Yes. Although IMLS is currently joining with NEH to support only smaller (Level I and II) grants, 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 [National Leadership Grants for Museums](#) and [National Leadership Grants for Libraries](#).

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 I 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, 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 is 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. NEH does not provide financial assistance to foreign institutions or organizations. Nevertheless, eligible American 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. This limitation does not preclude American institutions from obtaining the services of foreign individuals and consultants to carry out various programmatic activities on a fee-for-service basis; it also does not preclude vendor contracts such as in-country transportation services. If you are interested in submitting an application for a project involving international collaboration,

please consult beforehand with the division staff.

**May my 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.

**I received funds for the start-up phase of my project from a source other than the NEH. Am I 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 a Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant (SUG), a DHAG, or another 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 Digital Humanities Advancement Grant as a follow-up to this award. However, at the time of the DHAG deadline, our other award won't yet be fully completed. May we still apply?**

Current DHAG recipients may apply for another DHAG award, 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.

Sustainability plans are required of all Level III applications.

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](#).

### **Does NEH limit the amount of indirect costs that can be included as part of an application for a Digital Humanities Advancement Grant?**

No. 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 NEH 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, though, 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.)

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Should the application include letters of commitment from outside participants and cooperating institutions, or should such letters be sent separately?**

Letters of commitment should be included with the application as Attachment 7.

### **Whom should I ask to provide letters of support?**

Letters of support should come from persons not directly involved with the project who can objectively assess the importance of the project to the humanities. These persons should comment on the importance of the project's subject area, the proposed methodologies, the technical plan, or the potential audience for the project. They should not be project participants. Also, the letters should be sent to the project director (not separately to NEH) and submitted with the application. You may only include a maximum of two letters of support.

### **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 I find resources with additional information about developing accessibility plans for my project?**

The following resources may be useful in developing plans to ensure that grant products are accessible to a broad audience, including individuals with disabilities:

“Considering the User Perspective: A Summary of Design Issues,”  
WebAIM <http://webaim.org/articles/userperspective/>

“Design For Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator’s Handbook”  
(PDF) <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Design-for-Accessibility.pdf>

“How People with Disabilities Use the Web,” Web Accessibility  
Initiative <http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/people-use-web/>

United States Access Board  
<https://www.access-board.gov>.

W3C Accessibility Standards  
<http://www.w3.org/standards/webdesign/accessibility>