

Disclaimer: The following slides were used to supplement a public oral presentation for potential NEH applicants. They are not intended to provide complete information about the NEH's programs and they do not constitute an official statement of NEH policy. For current information about NEH programs, including eligibility requirements and the dates of deadlines, please consult the guidelines posted on the NEH website at neh.gov.



Archaeological and Ethnographic Field Research

Program Introduction Webinar

June 21, 2021

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National Endowment for the Humanities

Thank you for joining us for this webinar, about the NEH's Archaeological and Ethnographic Field Research Program. We are here to tell you a bit about the program, and to answer your questions. The guidelines have just been posted, and applications can now be submitted. The application deadline is September 29, 2021. This webinar, will give you some of the highlights of the program and application process.

A quick introduction. I am Dan Sack, a program officer in the Division of Research Programs, and team lead for the Field Research program. I have been at the NEH since 2010. My background is in religious studies, and I worked at Hope College and the University of Chicago before coming to the NEH. I am joined here today by Jennifer Ingram, a grant management specialist, who can help answer questions about the rules and regulations of the program, and Christopher Thornton, **director** of the Division of Research Programs, who will help collect and answer questions for this session.

I have about 30 minutes of remarks, and then we'll have plenty of time for questions. In the upper right hand corner of your screen, you'll see a place to

open the Q&A window. I will answer as many questions as I can, in the time we have.

This webinar is being recorded. We will post a link to the recording, on the program page of the NEH's website, in a couple of days.

Also note that closed captioning is available. Click the captioning box, on the lower right hand corner of your screen.

Overview

- Program goals
- Program details
- Required application materials
- Review criteria
- Budget issues
- Where to find more information
- Your questions

(Submit questions at any time during the presentation)

Here's our agenda for the session. I'll give an overview of the Field Research program, provide key program details, describe the required application materials, and go through the review criteria. I'll highlight some budget issues, and tell you where to find more information. As I talk, feel free to type in questions.

All you really need to know

- Institutional program
- Projects must be in the humanities or humanistic social sciences
- Grants for field research, not writing
- Applications must include research questions and method
- At least \$20,000 in external matching funds required for tenured faculty
- See the Notice of Funding Opportunity at neh.gov

Here's all you really need to know about this program.

First, this is an institutional program—grants are awarded to institutions, not to individuals. The application needs to include a program director, affiliated with the applying institution, but the grant is administered by the institution.

Second, proposed projects must be in the humanities, or the humanistic social sciences. They may use social scientific methods, but they must address fundamental humanities questions, and be useful to readers in the humanities.

Third, these grants support field research, not writing. The research should ultimately result, in a publication of some sort—a monograph, a digital resource, a field report, or something of the sort—but the work during the grant period, should focus on the field research, rather than on the writing.

Fourth, application narratives must include specific research questions, and describe how the proposed methods will answer those questions. Fishing expeditions without explicit questions, will not be competitive.

Fifth, projects led by tenured faculty, must request at least \$20,000 in matching funds—


federal funds that will match money, raised from outside the applicant institution. Those who are not tenured, are exempt from that requirement.

Finally, everything you need to know about this program, is on our website, at neh.gov. The most important information, is in a document called the Notice of Funding Opportunity—also known as the NOFO, or the guidelines.

Goal of the Program

To support projects engaged in empirical field research utilizing archaeological and/or ethnographic methods to answer significant questions in the humanities

Competitive submissions will embody exceptional research design, deploy rigorous field methodologies, and clearly articulate a project's value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both.



The Field Research program supports individual scholars, and teams of scholars, who are doing empirical field research, to answer significant questions in the humanities. Field research can include archaeological **or** ethnographic methods, or a mixture of the two. Applicants must describe their research design and methods, and—and this is important—make clear the project's value for the humanities.

■ What is field research?

Archaeological methods: Field survey and field-based remote sensing, documentation or visualization, and excavations

Ethnographic methods: Participant observation, surveys and interviews, and documentation

Humanistic fields: Classics, anthropology, art history, ethno-linguistics, ethnomusicology, folklore, history, performance studies, and sociology

Field research is a broad category. It includes archaeological methods, such as field survey and sensing, documentation, and excavations. It also includes ethnographic methods, such as participant observation, surveys, or interviews. While these methods are often associated with the social sciences, projects for this program, must contribute to humanistic fields, including classics, anthropology, art history, ethno-linguistics, ethnomusicology, folklore, history, performance studies, and sociology.

■ Key Program Details

Grants are made to institutions, not individuals

- **Duration: 4 to 36 months**
- **Grant amount: Up to \$150,000**

- **Application deadline: September 29, 2021**
- **Notification of decision: April 2022**
- **Earliest possible start date: June 1, 2022**
- **Latest possible start date: May 1, 2023**

- **The Field Research program makes an average of 7 awards per year.**
- **Funding ratio: 12%**

Here are some key details. First, note that this is an institutional program. Applicants should be US based non-profit organizations. Unaffiliated individuals, for-profit organizations, and non-US organizations, are not eligible.

Field Research grants, are for four to 36 months. For projects 12 months or less, the grant ceiling is \$75,000. For projects more than 12 months, the ceiling is \$75,000 per year, up to \$150,000.

The application deadline this year is September 29, with notifications sent in April 2022. The project can start as early as June 1, 2022, and as late as May 1, 2023.

This is a relatively new program--it just started last year. In its first year, we received 60 applications and made 7 awards, for a funding ratio of 12%. Do not let these numbers discourage you. It is a competitive program, but you can't get a grant unless you apply. If you do not get an award the first time around, we encourage you to reapply, and then reapply.

Funding Restrictions (NOFO, p. 23)

6. Funding Restrictions

Funds under this notice may not be used for the following purposes:

- field schools
- publication costs and manuscript preparation
- stand-alone databases, digitization projects, and other projects that lack an interpretive argument
- professional development or training
- meetings of professional and scholarly organizations, societies, and institutions
- attendance at regularly-occurring professional meetings
- planning or putting on exhibitions
- inventories of collections
- development of tools, including digital tools, databases, visualizations, or maps, unless they contribute to answering the project's research questions
- costs exceeding \$5,000 per 12-month period for conservation or preservation efforts, including site or artifact conservation, community outreach, and public education efforts
- promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view
- advocacy of a particular program of social or political action
- support of specific public policies or legislation
- lobbying
- projects that fall outside of the humanities (including the creation or performance of art; creative writing, autobiographies, memoirs, and creative nonfiction; and quantitative social science research or policy studies)

It's also important to note the kinds of things that our program does **not** support. You can find a full list on page 23 of the NOFO, but note that the list includes field schools, publication costs, the creation of databases without an interpretive focus, inventories of collections, artistic projects, or advocacy and policy work.

■ Application Materials (NOFO pp. 6-21)

- **Narrative (10 pages)**
- **Budget (format provided)**
- **Bibliography (5 pages)**
- **List and resumes of key personnel (2 pages/person)**
- **Work plan (3 pages)**

Institutions should submit their applications, through a portal called grants.gov. Your grant administration office will submit the application. They know how to use it. Here's what the application packet includes. You can find this information in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, pages 6-21.

- (1) Most important is a 10 page narrative. I'll say more about that element in a moment.
- (2) Applications must include a budget. There is a format in the grants.gov package. Consult early and often, with your institution's grant office—they will know how to create the budget, and will know the policies involved, both government and institutional.
- (3) The 5 page bibliography should demonstrate your knowledge of the field.
- (4) The application must include a list of key personnel and 2 page resumes for each of them. Those resumes should demonstrate, your competencies for the work.
- (5) The work plan, describes what you plan on doing during the grant period, and how it will contribute to the project. It should be no more than 3 pages.

There are a few other forms, including a performance site location form and a lobbying disclosure form. They are described in the NOFO.

■ The narrative should include (NOFO, p. 6-7)

Argument for intellectual significance

Research design and methods

Project director and collaborators

Plans for dissemination

➤ **In ten pages! Look at the review criteria and samples**

On pages 6-7 of the guidelines, you will find an explanation of the things that should be in your narrative: First, an argument for the intellectual significance of your project—why is the project important and to whom? Second, the research questions for your work, and how the proposed method will answer them—how will you do it? Third, an introduction to the project participants, including the director and their collaborators—why are these the right people to do the project, and how will they work together? Fourth, the dissemination plans—how will your research, reach your audience or audiences?

You need to do all of this in ten pages! Applications that exceed page limits, will be rejected from consideration. It **is** possible to do all this in ten pages. Our web site includes samples of successful applications. You can take a look, to see how someone else, made a case for their project.

Review Criteria (NOFO, p. 23-24)

Peer reviewers will use the following criteria to review applications in the Archaeological and Ethnographic Field Research program:

1. The **intellectual significance** of the proposed project, including the project's potential to stimulate new research, and its relevance to larger questions in the humanities.
2. The **clarity and feasibility of the research design**, including the appropriateness of the methods to answer an explicit set of humanities questions, and the project's ability to access the research site, a community, or other resources.
3. The **qualifications, expertise, and levels of commitment of the project director and, where relevant, any collaborators**, including the appropriateness and value of the collaboration.
4. The **soundness of the dissemination and access plans to convey information to the relevant audiences**. For organizations whose projects have been previously funded, its productivity in relation to previous goals and accomplishments.
5. The **likelihood that the project goals will be completed within the stated time frame** (not necessarily during the period of performance).

All applications for NEH grant programs, go through peer review. We give evaluators a focused set of criteria to use, when reading applications. A smart applicant, keeps these criteria in mind, when writing the application. Your mission, is making a case for your project, based on the criteria. The criteria are on pages 23-24 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Print them out and keep them handy.

The first criterion is about the intellectual significance of the project. Why is it important? One way to get at that question, is to think about the audience for the project—who needs to know about this, and how will it change the way they do what they do? Remember to root your argument, in the humanities.

The second is the clarity and feasibility of the research design. What are your research questions, and how will your method answer them?

The third is the qualifications of the research team. Why are these the right people to do the project?

The fourth is the dissemination plan. How will your research reach your audiences?

The fifth is the likelihood that you will complete the project, not necessarily during the


grant period.

Budget (NOFO, p. 7-16)

Follow institutional and NEH policies

Use the budget form in [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)—including a budget justification

Allowable costs:

- **travel, lodging, and subsistence**
 - **permits, fees, and visas for the project personnel**
 - **field equipment and supplies**
 - **labor, specialists, translators, and other local vendors**
 - **salary or salary replacement costs for the project director and compensation for collaborating scholars, including support for foreign individuals who are named as collaborating scholars**
 - **Up to \$5,000/year for conservation or preservation efforts, community outreach, and public education efforts**
- 

A key part of the application package, is the project budget. This needs to be created by your institution's grants office, who knows both their own policies and the NEH's policies. Grants.gov will provide a budget format, and require a budget justification.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity also includes a list of allowable costs. They include travel, equipment, and salaries, and up to \$5,000 for preservation, conversation, or outreach efforts.

■ Matching funds (NOFO p. 3-4)

Applicants can request matching funds—federal money that matches funds raised from third party sources.

If the project director is a tenured faculty member, the applicant must request at least \$20,000 in matching funds

Application must discuss plans to raise third party funds

One more financial note. Applicants can request matching funds—federal money that matches funds raised from third-party sources—that is, from sources other than the government or your institution. So you can request, for instance, \$50,000 in outright funds plus \$20,000 in matching funds—money that you will receive, **if** you raise another \$20,000 from someone other than your institution.

For this program, projects led by a tenured faculty member, **must** request at least \$20,000 in matching funds. That means that they must raise at least \$20,000 from another source. Projects led by a non-tenured faculty member, are exempt from this requirement.

If you are requesting matching, you should describe in your application narrative. how you plan on securing the matching funds. You don't need to have the funds in hand, when you submit the application, but you should have a plan to raise them.

www.neh.gov/program/archaeological-and-ethnographic-field-research

Archaeological and Ethnographic Field Research

[Division of Research Programs](#)

The Archaeological and Ethnographic Field Research program makes awards to institutions and organizations conducting empirical field research to answer significant questions in the humanities. Archaeology and ethnography are important methodologies utilized by many disciplines across the humanities and social sciences that provide observational and experiential data on human history and culture.

Archaeological methods may include field survey and field-based remote sensing, documentation or visualization, and/or excavations in support of answering research questions in all aspects of the human past, including but not limited to ancient studies, anthropology, art history, classical studies, regional studies, epigraphy, and other related disciplines. Ethnographic methods may include participant observation, surveys and interviews, and documentation or recording in pursuit of research questions in anthropology, ethnohistorics, oral history, ethnomusicology, performance studies, folklore studies, and related disciplines.

Grant Snapshot

Maximum award amount: \$150,000
Open to: Organizations
Expected output: Public Lecture or Presentation;
Book; Article; Digital Material and Publication; Book
Section; Database/Archive/Digital Edition; Field
Report

Period of performance: 4 to 36 months

Application available: June 2, 2021

Optional Draft due: August 12, 2021

Application due: September 29, 2021

Expected notification date: April 30, 2022

Project start date: June 1, 2022 – May 1, 2023

Contact the Division of Research Programs Team
202-606-8200
fieldwork@neh.gov

Applicants who are deaf or hard of hearing can contact NEH via
Toll Free Relay (TTY users) at 800-877-8399

We've given you a lot of information here. Everything I've said, and a lot more, is on the NEH website, neh.gov. Go to the web page listed here for all the key information. There you'll find the deadline, and the contact information for the program. Note also, that we will review draft applications. This is optional, and does not affect the review process, but comments from program officers can help you strengthen your application. Please send drafts to us by August 12.

www.neh.gov/program/archaeological-and-ethnographic-field-research

Step 1

Step 1 Review your application package

Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity to ensure you understand all the expectations and restrictions for projects delivered under this program and are prepared to write the most effective application.

Application materials

[Archaeological and Ethnographic Field Research Notice of Funding Opportunity 2021 \(PDF\)](#)

[Archaeological and Ethnographic Field Research Grants.gov application package](#)

Program Resources

[SF-429-A Request for Proposals Status Report \(PDF\)](#)

[SF-429-A Instructions \(PDF\)](#)

Sample Narratives

[Texas State University, San Marcos, Origins and Tenacity of Myth, Ritual, and Cosmology in Archaic Period Rock Art of Southwest Texas and Northern Mexico](#)

[University of Hawaii, A Pattern of Islands: Ethnography, Remote Sensing, and Community Archaeology in Kosrae and Pohnpei, Micronesia](#)

maximum award amount: \$100,000

Open to: Organizations

Expected output: Public Lecture or Presentation; Book; Article; Digital Material and Publication; Book Section; Database/Archive/Digital Edition; Field Report

Period of performance: 4 to 36 months

Application available: June 2, 2021

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Also on the page you'll find a link to several important resources.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity, tells you everything you need to know—who is eligible, what should be included in an application, what is allowed and not allowed in a budget, and the review criteria. They're long and a bit bureaucratic, but spend some time reading through them.

There's a link here to the application package on grants.gov

And there are several sample applications—narratives from previously successful applications, that you can use as inspirations, but not models, for your own application.

NEH staff



—NEH



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One more quick note: Since the Endowment is a federal agency, you may assume that the staff are all federal bureaucrats. Well, we are, but Endowment staff are also scholars, many with faculty experience and research records. We see our job, as supporting public and scholarly engagement with the humanities, and we do it, because we believe in the humanities and in scholarship. If you take away nothing else today, know that, unlike some foundations, NEH staff are happy to talk to you, by phone or email. We want to be your allies.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD RESEARCH

QUESTIONS?

FIELDWORK@NEH.GOV

And now we are ready to answer your questions. Please type them into the Q&A box on the right side of your screen. If we don't answer your question today, please send it to fieldwork@neh.gov.