Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants

OFFICE OF CHALLENGE PROGRAMS

FEBRUARY 27, 2023

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John Cox
Senior Program Officer

Program Overview

Capital Projects
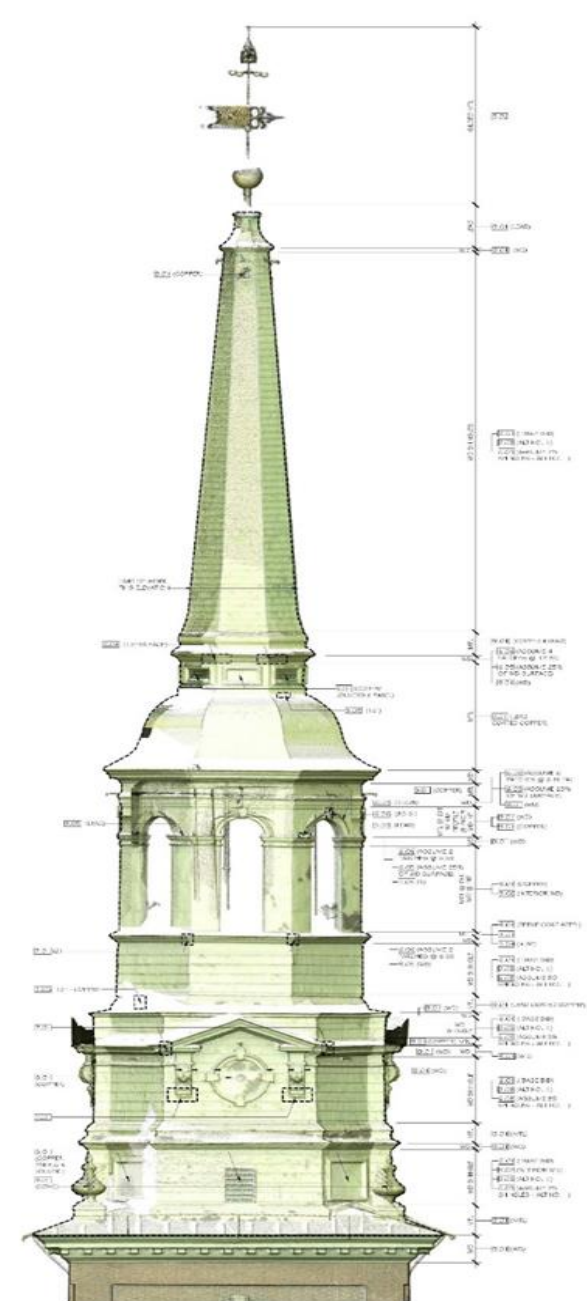
Developing an Application

Important Considerations

Applying for a Challenge Grant

Review Criteria & Review Process

Application Tips and Resources

Q & A

Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants

Office of Challenge Programs

The purpose of the program is to strengthen the institutional base of the humanities by enabling infrastructure development and capacity building. Awards of federal matching funds aim to help institutions secure long-term support for their core activities and expand efforts to preserve and create access to outstanding humanities materials.

- Capital Projects support the purchase, design, construction, restoration, or renovation of facilities for humanities activities. This includes costs related to planning as well as the purchase and installation of related moveable and permanently affixed equipment for exhibiting, maintaining, monitoring, and protecting collections (whether on exhibit or in storage), and for critical building systems, such as electrical, heating ventilation and air conditioning, security, life safety, lighting, utilities, telecommunications, and energy management.

Grant Snapshot

Maximum award amount: $1,000,000

Open to: Organizations

Expected output: Buildings; Equipment

Period of performance: Up to five years

Application available: February 17, 2023

Deadline: May 17, 2023

Expected notification date: December 15, 2023

Project start date: March 1, 2024 – June 1, 2024

What's new in 2023

- Three levels of awards with different match ratios: For requests up to $150,000 the match ratio is 1:1. From $150,001 to $500,000 it is 3:1. For Chair's Special Awards of $500,001–$1,000,000, it is 4:1.

- The Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge program no longer supports Digital Infrastructure projects.

- Only one annual deadline offered.

- Check the NOFO for adjustments to recommended and required page limits and formatting instructions.

- In compliance with the recently passed Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117-58 § 70901, *et seq.*), beginning May 14, 2022, all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in projects involving construction, renovation, or facility infrastructure must have been produced in the United States.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building: Supported Activities

The ICB Program supports the design, purchase, construction, restoration, or renovation of buildings or sites of national, historical, architectural, or cultural significance and facilities that house humanities collections or are used for humanities activities

CHA-261891-19: Burke Museum Association, Fabrication and Installation of Exhibition Infrastructure in the New Burke Museum

CHA-261797-19: Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Taliesin West Accessibility and Infrastructure Improvements
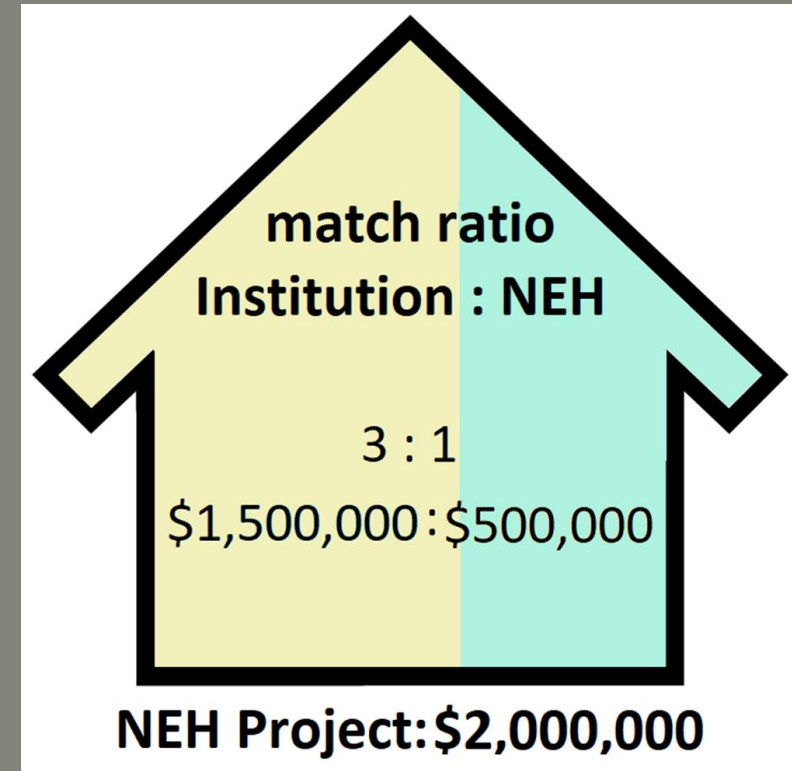
Matching Requirements

In order to receive federal matching funds, recipients must raise and certify funding from non-federal third-party sources.

Recipients can begin fundraising matching funds no more than five months before the application deadline

Applicants are not required to have all funds raised at the time of application

Grant can also support up to 10% of fundraising costs

match ratio
Institution : NEH

3 : 1
$1,500,000 : $500,000

NEH Project: $2,000,000
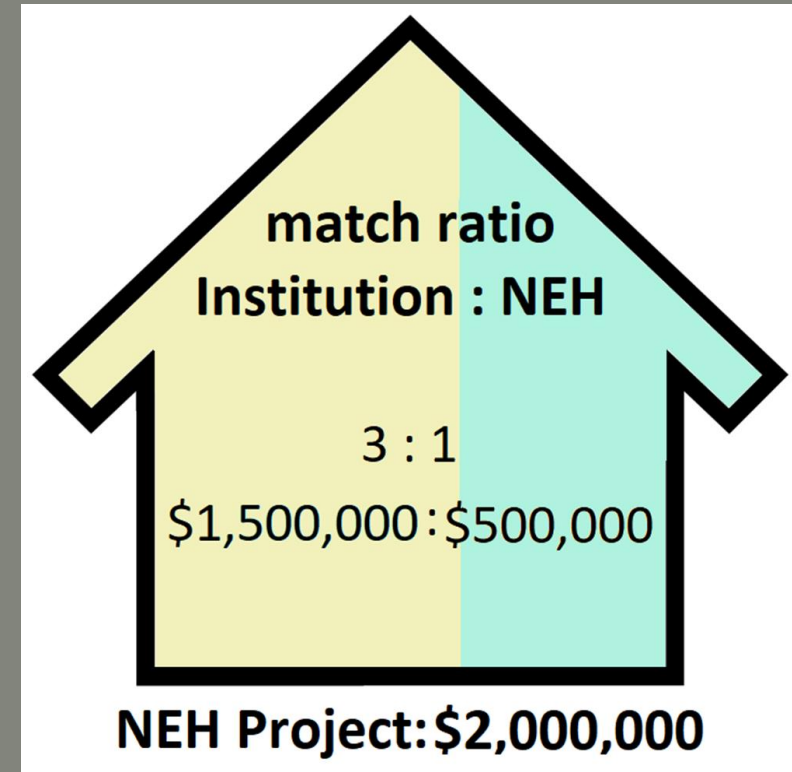
Matching Requirements

1:1 match ratio for HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs, two-year community colleges, federally recognized Native American tribal governments, and Native Hawaiian organizations

For all other applicants:

1:1 match ratio for grant requests of $150,000 or less

3:1 match ratio for grant requests between $150,001 and $500,000

4:1 match ratio for Chair's Special Award requests between $500,001 and $1,000,000

match ratio
Institution : NEH

3 : 1
$1,500,000 : $500,000

NEH Project: $2,000,000

Funding Levels

	Level 1	Level 2	Chair's Special Awards
Period of Performance	Up to two years	Two to five years	Two to five years
Required Match Ratio	1:1 for all applicants	1:1 for applicants meeting special eligibility requirements 3:1 for applicants meeting general eligibility requirements	1:1 for applicants meeting special eligibility requirements 4:1 for applicants meeting general eligibility requirements
Maximum NEH Award	$150,000	$500,000	$1,000,000
Maximum Required Third-party Nonfederal gifts	$150,000	$1,500,000	$4,000,000
Maximum Total Project Costs	$300,000	$2,000,000	$5,000,000

Developing Your Application

Circle diagram center: **Challenge Grants**

Surrounding labels:
- Project Director & Humanities Staff
- Third-party Funders
- Development Staff
- Contractors
- Facilities Staff
- Institutional Grant Administrator
- External Partners

Involve the whole team in the planning and grant writing process.

Include detailed information about long-term strategic planning, fundraising efforts, previous large-scale digital or capital projects, and how the outcomes and deliverables will benefit your institution, humanities research, and/or the public.

If it is a part of a larger project, think about which part might be the most appropriate for NEH support.

Important Considerations: Humanities Significance

How will your project promote or advance the humanities?

Who is your audience, and how will they benefit from the outcomes of the project over the long-term?

If your organization has a range of functions (an arts center or theatre, for example) what specific *humanities* activities will be supported through your proposed project?

Important Considerations: Project Scope

Is your project part of a larger initiative? If so, which *specific* activities will be supported through this grant and matching funds?

How does your proposed project align with institutional strategic plans and long-term goals?

What are the deliverables and/or outcomes of the project?

CHA-268807-20: University of Louisiana Lafayette, J. Arthur Roy House Restoration

Important Considerations: Project Timeline

Do the dates on your workplan, budget, and period of performance align?

Have you allowed sufficient time for fundraising, project planning, and compliance with any applicable federal, state, or local regulations?

Project Timelines

| 12/18/22 | 5/17/23 | 3/1/24 | 7/31/28 | 2/29/29 |

Fundraising Period

Period of Performance

Sample timeline
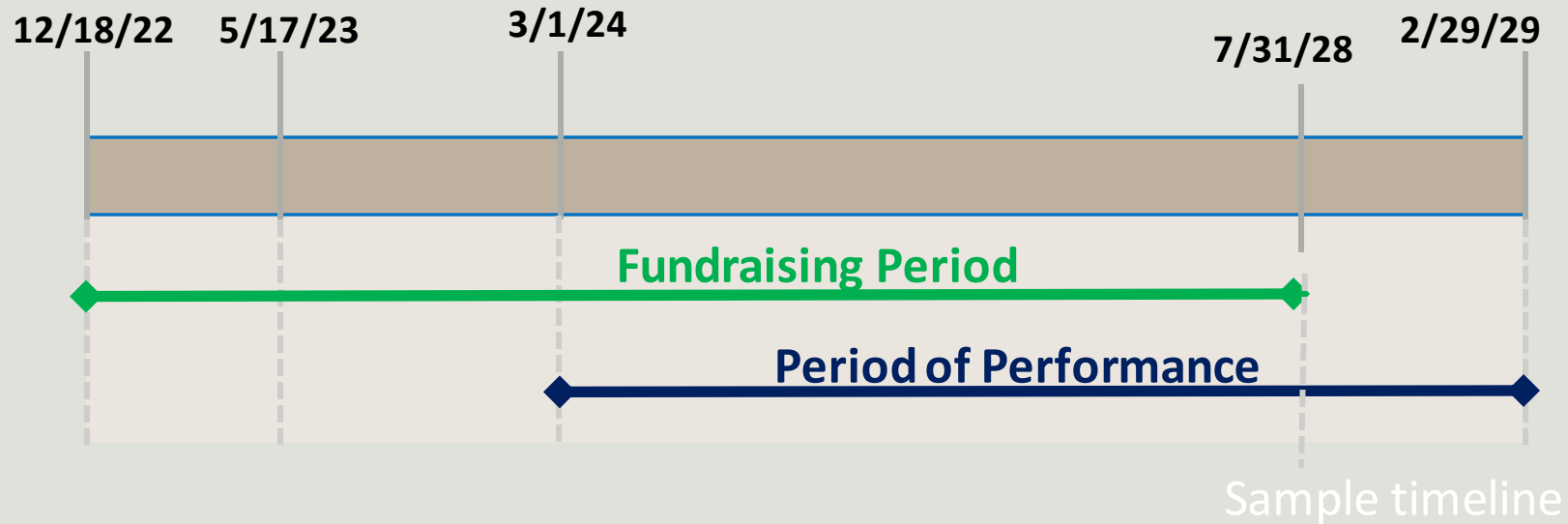
Fundraising Period: The period five months prior to the application deadline (December 18, 2022) through the final certification deadline within the period of performance, in which recipients may raise and certify funds in order to receive NEH matching funds.

Period of Performance: The period in which the project work is being performed and allowable costs may be incurred and charged to the award.

The workplan included with your application should reflect plans for both fundraising and project activities.

Important Considerations: Fundraising Capacity

Does your application include a detailed plan for raising the required match?

Who will be responsible for fundraising?

Refer to NEH Administration of Challenge Grants guidance at: www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/infrastructure-and-capacity-building-challenge-grants

Eligible Applicants

U.S. nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status

Accredited public and 501(c)(3) higher education institutions

State and local governmental agencies

Federally recognized Native American tribal governments

Must work wholly or in part in the humanities

Other Eligibility Information

You are limited to submitting a single application per calendar year.

Previous recipients of Challenge Grants may reapply for a subsequent Challenge Grant in the final year of their period of performance. (This applies to Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants (CHA), Challenge Grants (CH), Cooperative Agreements and Special Projects (ZZ), and Special Initiatives (CZ) recipients).

All application materials must be completed and received by the deadline. If multiple applications are received for the same project, only the most recent submission will be reviewed.

Preparing Your Application
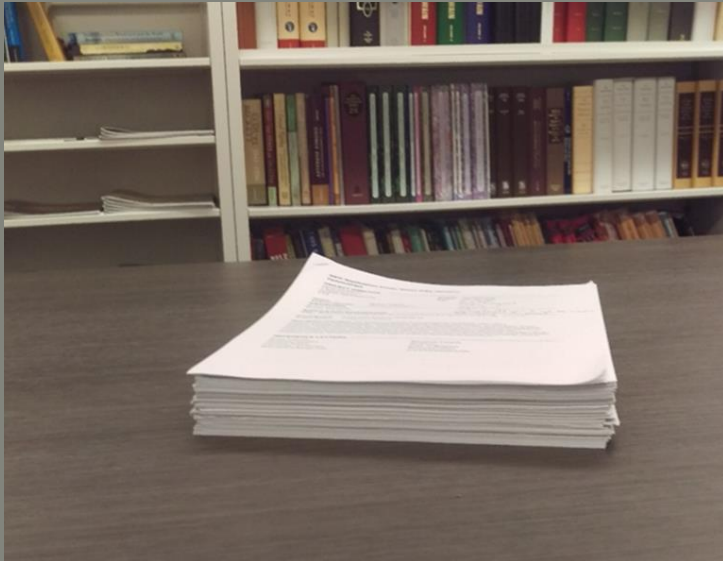
All applications must include:

- Project narrative (10 pages)

- Budget (SF-424C)

- Budget justification

- Work plan

- Institutional profile

- Resumes for key personnel

- Letters of commitment or support

- Planning and design documents (recommended)

- Site conditions

Pay close attention to page limits, formatting, and required attachments. Applications that do not meet the stated guidelines may be declared ineligible.

Please see the Notice of Funding Opportunity for a complete list of required, conditionally required, and recommended application elements

Application Content: Historic Preservation Review

NEH is required by federal law to review grant/cooperative agreement applications involving work involving construction, renovation, repair, rehabilitation, or ground or visual disturbance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Additional guidance on Section 106 and NEPA is available on NEH's website: https://www.neh.gov/grants/manage/section-106-the-national-historic-preservation-act
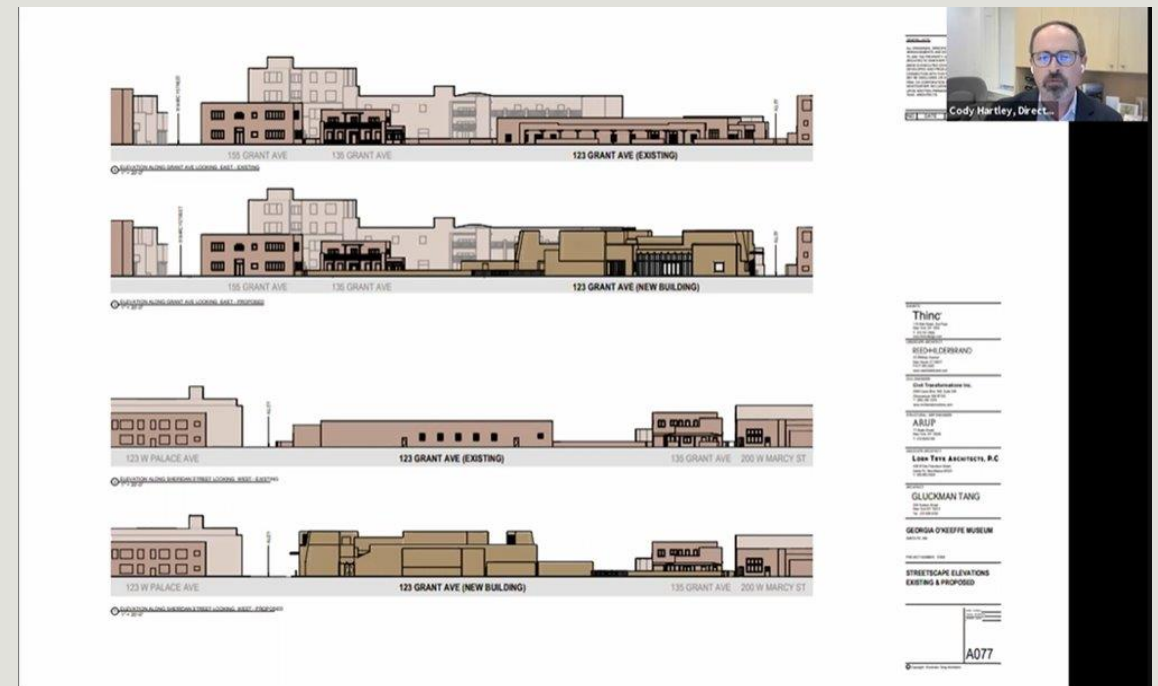
Application Content: Resources

Program Resources

Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants Frequently Asked Questions, 2023

Administration of NEH Challenge Infrastructure and Capacity Building Grants (for awards with prefix CHA issued on or after February 1, 2022) | The National Endowment for the Humanities

Certification of Matching Gifts for NEH Challenge Grants Form (PDF)

Instructions for the Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs

Sample Work Plan

2022 New Recipient Webinar

2022 New Recipient Webinar transcription

Resources for Historic Preservation and Environmental Review

NEH Overview of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

Frequently Asked Questions about the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act

Ann Piesen, MCP
Federal Preservation and Environmental Officer
National Endowment for the Humanities
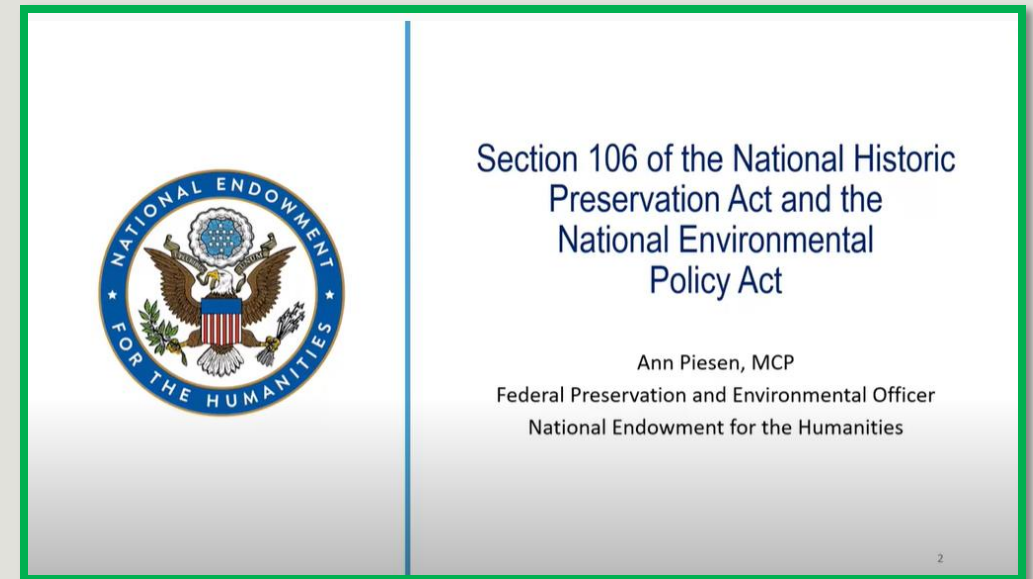
Application Content: Other Federal Requirements

S. National policy requirements specific to construction, renovation, and ground-disturbance

    1. Davis–Bacon Act and related labor requirements

    2. Build America, Buy America

    3. Executive Order 11246 ("Equal Employment Opportunity")

    4. The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. § 4151, *et seq.*)

    5. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. § 300101, *et seq.*)

    6. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA, 42 U.S.C. § 4321, *et seq.*)

    7. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. § 3001, *et seq.*, and 43 CFR Part 10)

    8. Other relevant requirements

Application Submission: Resources

The Infrastructure and Capacity Building site contains links to the following resources:

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity

- FAQs

- Sample narratives and workplans

- Policy guidance and instructions

- Instructions for registering with Grants.gov

Program Resources

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Sample Work Plan

2022 New Recipient Webinar

2022 New Recipient Web

Sample Application Narratives

New York Public Radio, Preservation and Digitization of the New York Public Radio Archives (PDF)

Cabell County Public Library, Construction of a New Branch Library (PDF)

Dubuque County Historical Society, Preservation and Restoration through Campus Improvements (PDF)

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Multidisciplinary Display of Permanent Collection Artwork (PDF)

Reynolda House Roof Renovation (PDF)

University of California, San Diego, Construction of the Institute of Arts and Humanities (PDF)

Application Submission: Grants.gov

Ensure your SAM.gov and Grants.gov registrations and passwords are current. NEH will not grant deadline extensions for lack of registration. Registration in all systems, including SAM.gov and Grants.gov, may take up to 1 month to complete.

Submit your application as early as possible and confirm submission on Grants.gov. NEH cannot accept late applications or add materials after the deadline.

How to Complete the Supplementary Cover Sheet

3. Project Funding

Field	Input
Outright Funds	(yellow box)
Federal Match	(yellow box)
Total from NEH	
Cost Sharing	
Total Project Costs	

What to include:

Enter $0. Challenge Grants do not include outright funds.

Enter the total amount of Challenge funds requested from NEH.

Enter the same as the total amount of Challenge funds requested from NEH

Enter the total matching funds to be raised according to the 1:1, 3:1, or 4:1 ratio

Enter the total from NEH + Cost Sharing

How to Complete the Supplementary Cover Sheet
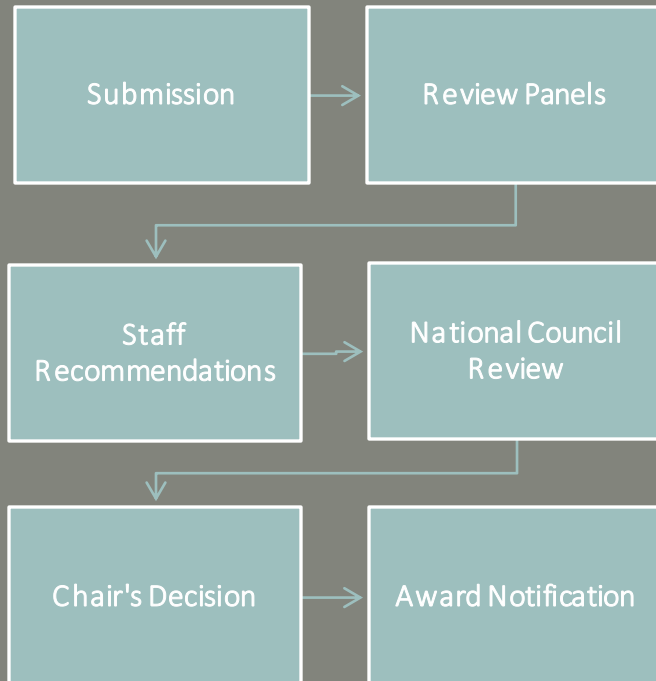
3. Project Funding

Example:

Field	Amount
Outright Funds	$0
Federal Match	$500,000
Total from NEH	$500,000
Cost Sharing	$1,500,000
Total Project Costs	$2,000,000

Review Criteria

- Humanities significance and audience
- Long term impact and institutional commitment
- Project plans
- Fundraising plans
- Project and fundraising teams
- Project outcomes and their sustainability

NEH Review Process

Submission → Review Panels

Staff Recommendations → National Council Review

Chair's Decision → Award Notification

1. NEH Staff review applications for eligibility and completeness

2. NEH uses peer review process to evaluate all eligible and complete applications

3. Peer reviewers evaluate applications according to review criteria

4. NEH staff make recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities

5. The National Council meets, then the Chair considers advice made by the review process and makes funding decisions

Application Tips

Reach out to a Program Officer with a short description of your project in the early stages of development

Carefully read the Notice of Funding Opportunity, FAQs, Sample Narratives, Sample Workplans, and Policy Guidance

Involve stakeholders (fundraising staff, administration, outside consultants) in the planning and grant writing process

Reach out to other institutions that have received Challenge grants

Send a draft for comments by April 5

Request panelist comments after awards are announced

QUESTIONS?

NEH staff are available by phone or email to answer questions and provide technical assistance!

Staff will offer feedback on draft proposals submitted to challenge@neh.gov by April 5, 2023.

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