NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

NEH CARES:
CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<u>Purpose and Eligibility</u>

What is the purpose of this program?

The purpose of this emergency relief program is to assist institutions and organizations working in the humanities that have been affected by the coronavirus. In keeping with Congress's intent in enacting the CARES Act, proposals for short-term activities should emphasize retaining or hiring humanities staff. See Section A1 in the Notice of Funding Opportunity for additional information.

Does this program provide funding to support social services or humanitarian relief?

No. The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) recognizes the importance of social services and humanitarian relief efforts during the coronavirus pandemic. The NEH's mission, however, is to support the advancement of the humanities, which is not to be confused with humanitarian aid. See section A2 of the notice of funding opportunity for information regarding NEH's humanities mission.

Our humanities organization has closed to the public due to "stay at home" orders in our area. We do not know when we will resume normal operations. What kind of activities can this program support?

This funding opportunity supports a variety of activities in the following areas: education, public programming, digital humanities, scholarly research, or preservation and access. Applicants

must choose the area that best aligns with their proposed activities. For a limited list of examples, see Section A1 of the notice of funding opportunity.

May we request funding for general operating costs (such as rent)?

Yes. You may include the portion of general operating support applicable to the proposed project in your application budget. General operating expenses (also referred to as "overhead" or "facilities and administration") are typically charged as indirect costs. Applicant organizations that have never had a federally negotiated indirect cost rate may count these expenses as direct costs or charge a de minimis rate of ten percent of modified total direct costs. See Section H. Indirect Costs of the Research and Related Budget Instructions in the notice of funding opportunity.

May our organization apply for funds to pay contracted workers?

An organization may apply for support of both contracted and salaried workers.

May individuals apply to this program?

No. Individuals may not apply directly. Humanities scholars and other individuals working in the humanities should be included as project participants in proposals submitted by eligible organizations. See Section C of the notice of funding opportunity for eligibility information.

Award Details

What is the period of performance for awards made in this program?

The period of performance (that is, the time period during which supported activities must be carried out) for all awards may begin as early as June 15, 2020, and must end on or before December 31, 2020. You may request funding for costs incurred prior to the period of performance, as long as they were incurred no earlier than March 27, 2020. (See the next question.)

Our humanities organization has shut down and furloughed staff due to the coronavirus pandemic. May we request funding for costs incurred prior to the period of performance?

Yes. Pre-award costs may be included in the budget, as long as they were incurred no earlier than March 27, 2020 (the day the CARES Act was signed into law). Pre-award expenditures are made at the recipient's risk, and the recipient's authority to approve such costs does not impose an obligation on NEH in the event an award is not made or is made for an amount that is less than the recipient anticipated. All other project activities and expenditures of project funds must occur during the period of performance.

Our organization is a current NEH award recipient. May we apply for funds to cover unanticipated expenses or loss of funds incurred on our project due to the coronavirus pandemic?

No. Your organization may not apply under this program for funds to cover unanticipated expenses or loss of funds incurred on your current NEH award. An organization may not receive more than one NEH award for the same project during the same or an overlapping period of performance.

NEH has taken numerous steps to help current recipients adjust their projects. You may find more information about administrative flexibilities in section III of the [FAQs – Funding for NEH Applicants and Grantees Impacted by the Coronavirus](#) available on the NEH website.

Application Details

May our organization submit more than one application to this funding opportunity?

Your organization may not submit multiple applications under this announcement unless it is a parent organization with independent components (such as a university). A parent organization may submit only one application for each independent component. **(See the next question.)**

What is an independent component?

An independent component must be a unit that is both programmatically and administratively distinct from the parent organization, have its own staff and budget, and generally have an independent board that has substantial responsibility for oversight and management. The board of the component, not the university trustees, manages the component's budget, staff, and programming. To qualify as independent, a component should be equivalent to a stand-alone institution with a separate mission.

Examples of an independent component would be a museum or university press or library on a university campus that serves the general public and does not grant degrees. Academic departments of colleges and universities do not qualify as independent components.

What is the award ceiling for this program?

Award ceilings for this program are based upon the size of your organization's annual operating budget. The maximum award is $300,000. See section B of the notice of funding opportunity for information on the different award ceilings.

How is "annual total operating costs" defined?

"Annual total operating costs" means the total costs of your day-to-day operations during a given fiscal year. As an example, nonprofits must allocate their total annual operating expenses into three categories:

1. **program expenses** directly related to carrying out the organization's mission;
2. **administrative expenses,** such as accounting, office management, auditing, human resources, general legal services, board of directors' meetings, etc., and "facilities" such as depreciation on buildings, equipment and capital improvements, and operations and maintenance expenses; and
3. **fundraising expenses**.

As the notice of funding opportunity explains, you should state the total annual operating costs of your organization for each of the three most recently completed fiscal years in the

"Institutional capacity" section of your narrative. Institutions of higher education should state the total operating costs of the component(s) for which they are applying (not the college/university as a whole).

Grants.gov lists several different application packages for this funding opportunity, with the choice depending on the type of activity proposed. Our organization is proposing activities in multiple areas (such as Education, Research, and Public Programs). How do we choose the correct application package?

NEH recognizes that applicants may be proposing activities in more than one area, and will review all applications accordingly. Please select the application package for the Division that best fits the greatest portion of the activities for which you are requesting support. Application packages are used for sorting purposes. NEH will not reject applicants based on the application package selected. See section D1 of the notice of funding opportunity for information on the various application packages.

Will NEH staff provide comments on draft proposals before the deadline?

No. Given the short timeline and high volume of proposals we expect to receive, NEH staff will not be able to review drafts for this funding opportunity.

Our organization has a D-U-N-S® number but is not registered with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). What should we do?

The requirement for having an active SAM registration in Grants.gov at the time of application has been relaxed in response to COVID-19. Applicants who have a D-U-N-S® number but are not registered with SAM should contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Grants.gov support staff will manually enter applicants' data into the system so that the applicant can circumvent the SAM registration process.

NEH may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable D-U-N-S® and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NEH is ready to make an award, NEH may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as the basis for making an award to another applicant.