

Transcript of the August 31, 2020 Pre-application Webinar for DLI-DEL Fellowships [edited for clarity]

Slide 1: Webinar Title

Slide 2: Introductions

[00:25]

Stefanie: OK, Hello, good afternoon, good morning, good evening for some. I am Stefanie Walker and I'm looking forward to telling you about NEH's grant opportunity DLI DEL Fellowships. I am a Senior Program Officer at the National Endowment for the Humanities or NEH. And I serve as team leader for DLI-DEL Fellowships and have been involved with this program for about five years.

I'm happy to be joined today by a couple of colleagues, Jacquelyn Clements, Program Officer in the Division of Preservation and Access, and Christopher Sciotto, Grant Administrator in NEH's Office of Grant Management. I will ask them to join me during the question and answer session to see if they can answer some of your questions directly.

I will be speaking for about 30 minutes and then spend the rest of our time answering your questions. Please send your questions, type your questions into the Go To Webinar interface under questions--don't use chat, please--at any time and after my presentation. I will go through them in order to read them out loud and try to answer them.

I also want to emphasize that this webinar will be recorded and archived. What we will do is put an updated link on the DLI-DEL Fellowships Program page on NEH's website. A written transcript will also be available.

Slide 3: Program Overview

[03:07]

OK, let's get started! So, I'm going to start by saying what not what's new, but what's the same. Although "Dynamic Language Infrastructure" has been added to the program's name, it is essentially the same jointly funded partnership between NEH and NSF, the National Science Foundation, as before. And DLI-DEL Fellowships remain part of the program as they were before.

I want to emphasize that this is a longstanding partnership that started in 2005, 15 years ago now, and grew out of the two agencies' shared concern for the looming extinction of thousands of languages across the globe, and, in particular, threatened, indigenous languages in the United States.

Slide 4: Statistics

[04:13]

Since fiscal year 2006, NEH has funded 98 fellowships in the DEL program. As before, these fellowships are offered for a period of 6 to 12 months at a monthly stipend rate of \$5000.

Therefore, the minimum award is \$30,000 for six months; the maximum award is \$60,000 for 12 months.

Slide 5: Map

[04:53]

This map shows you where the language communities of previous fellowship awards are located. This covers all awards between 2006 to 2020. You can see that there are certain clusters in North America, Central America and Amazonia, as well as in the South Pacific, especially Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. But you can see a spread more or less across the globe.

Slide 6: Example 1

[05:33]

I also wanted to highlight two recent examples of DLI-DEL fellowships.

Alex Jaker received his fellowship award in 2016. Originally from Saint Paul, Minnesota, he is currently a postdoc at the University of Toronto, working on Dene (Athabaskan) languages. His professor, Keren Rice, who has served as NSF program officer of the DLI-DEL program, is his mentor. Jaker's Yellowknife verb grammar, which he worked on with native speaker Emerence Cardinal, is in press now with the publication arm of the University of Alaska's Alaska Native Language Center.

Slide 7: Example 2

[06:29]

Ross Perlin received his fellowship in 2020. He is the founder and co-director of the Endangered Language Alliance, a New York City based non-profit that works with immigrant and refugee speakers of endangered languages to document their language and provide resources for cultural revitalization and sustainability. His work under the fellowship--language documentation, collecting stories, recording dialogue--and his relationship with Seke speakers in a diaspora community in New York City were even featured in the New York Times in a January 2020 article.

Slide 8: DLI-DEL Fellowships Basics

[07:25]

So, after this sort of quick introduction, let me repeat what the basic outlines of DLI-DEL fellowships are. They support the analysis and documentation of endangered languages worldwide. Individuals can apply, not organizations. I'll say more about that in a bit. The award amount is \$5000 per month, for a minimum period of six and a maximum period of 12 months. I would like to add here that full-time and continuous tenure is preferred during your fellowship. But you may break your award into two parts, one of which must be at least three months in duration. So, if you had a six month fellowship, for example, and you have to teach a semester in between, you could take three months initially, then break for your semester, for, let's say, six months, and then take your second three month chunk of your fellowship. However, during the fellowship period, when you are actually on your fellowship, you must

devote 100% of your time to your project and not take on other teaching or other professional obligations.

The deadline for DLI-DEL fellowships this year is September 30th, but we will realign with the NSF deadline of September 15 in 2021.

The earliest start date for your fellowship is May 1, 2021, but you may defer as late as your start date as late as September 1, 2021.

Slide 9: What's New

[09:38]

So, what's new? NEH will handle the intake and review process for DLI-DEL Fellowships, and this means you must apply through the grants.gov portal and not FastLane or Research.gov as you might for other NSF applications and grants.

The application elements are different, but much or most at the request of content is the same. Likewise, the review criteria are formulated somewhat differently but they are similar overall, they are very similar.

It's these four points here that I will elaborate on in my next slides.

Slide 10: Program page 1

[10:40]

Especially those of you who are accustomed to the NSF interface and FastLane should familiarize yourself with NEH's format and application process. Your starting point or first stop should be the DLI-DEL Fellowships program page. I have the URL at the top and the screenshot below. In addition to a brief program description on the left side, the Grant Snapshot, on the right, gives you pertinent information about the program. These are things I've already mentioned to you, but you can find them again on the website on the program page.

Slide 11: Program page 2

[11:29]

Scrolling down on this page, you will see step by step instructions about how to apply. The most important here is Step 1, where you can download the DLI-DEL Notice of Funding Opportunity for fellowships. This Notice of Funding Opportunity, or NOFO, is what NSF would call its solicitation or, with other words, the detailed information and instructions about how to apply for this fellowship. Download the PDF document, read it carefully, and keep it at hand as you assemble your application.

The next link below that takes you to the application page on grants.gov. The so-called "Package" tab on Grants.gov takes you to the place where you can actually submit the application and related forms.

The third link here pulls up a list of recent awards to give you a sense of the kinds of projects that have been funded previously, so that you can perhaps compare or match your project to projects that have already been funded.

Slide 12: Program page 3

[13:02]

Scrolling down, there are further steps and information, Step 2 has links to the grants.gov registration page and further tools and tips. Remember that you must register with grants.gov before submitting your application. And you must register as an individual, not as an organization and not through your organization. It's a good idea to take care of this step as soon as possible so that it doesn't delay or confuse you when you are actually submitting your application.

Step 3 refers you back to the Notice of Funding Opportunity document. Step 4 tells you that you will receive a confirmation from grants dot gov when you have successfully submitted your application.

Step 5 explains that you may receive up to five e-mail messages that represent different stages in the application acceptance process. It's a good idea not to wait until the last minute on the deadline day to submit your application. And also, you should track your application's progress through the grants.gov portal. If you don't see the confirmation e-mails, please remember to check your junk or spam folder to see if they ended up there. And, finally, note that the grants.gov Helpdesk is the best source of support for questions about registration and the submission process, not NEH staff. We can help you only in limited ways with issues with grants.gov, but they have a very good Helpdesk.

Slide 13: Funded Products and Activities

[15:11]

Here's a short list of typical products and activities of DLI-DEL Fellowship holders. Grant products include, but are not limited to scholarly books and articles, dictionaries, lexicons, grammars, archival, and digital collections, audio and video recordings, databases, conference papers. Likewise, funded activities include, but are not limited to typically travel to language communities to do fieldwork and salary replacement for research and writing time.

Slide 14: Funding Restrictions

[16:05]

Here's a rather long list of what DLI-DEL Fellowships do not fund. I'll walk you through parts of this. Most of the restrictions are self-explanatory. Documentaries, podcasts, and exhibitions are funded through NEH's Public Programs division, not through this grant opportunity. Inventories and catalogs of collections are funded through NEH's Preservation and Access division and usually not through this funding opportunity.

Research by students enrolled in a degree program, including research for doctoral dissertations and theses, are not funded here. I'll elaborate on that in the next slide.

The preparation or revision of educational materials, including, but not limited to, textbooks, curriculum development, development of teaching methods, or theories; and educational impact, language impact or technical impact assessments, as well as writing for children, guidebooks, how to books and self-help books are not funded with DLI-DEL Fellowships. So, you might be asking yourself how, for example, dictionaries or grammars fit into this? While dictionaries, lexicon, grammars may aid subsequent or future language revitalization efforts, DLI-DEL Fellowships do not fund such efforts directly.

The column on the right contains restrictions that are consistent through all NEH programs. If you have any questions about these, let me know, but I'm not going to read them all out for you now individually here, but you're welcome to ask me any questions about them.

Slide 15: Eligibility

[18:30]

Let's get to a few of the main aspects of the application.

Who is eligible to apply? US citizens anywhere in the world, residing anywhere in the world, are eligible to apply for DLI-DEL Fellowships. And non-US citizens are also eligible to apply if they have resided in the US for at least three years prior to the application deadline.

Among the considerations, please keep the following in mind. For most applicants where it says you must have completed your training or degree this means they are eligible after completing their PhD dissertations. However, I want to emphasize that a PhD degree is not required, it is not an eligibility requirement for this fellowship. You must have completed your professional training, but it could be at any level. If it's not a PhD in linguistics or a related discipline, in your application you will have to convince the peer reviewers that you are qualified to undertake work you propose.

Organizations are not eligible to apply on behalf of scholars, so you do not need to be faculty at or even be affiliated with a University or organization.

I think that if you look at past awardees in the two examples I've showed you, show you that awardees of these fellowships have included numerous junior and independent scholars. They are actually our typical applicants in, in this program.

Slide 16: Application Components

[20:51]

What are these new application components, or what does the application for NEH look like? When you go to the Grants.gov application package, it starts out with several forms that provide cover sheet information and a statement about where your work will be performed and the attachments form for other components that are listed below.

The core of the application is made up of five required attachments: The Narrative is the most important. This is where you describe your project and make the case for funding it. The

narrative must be succinct and well organized. Keep in mind that it's just three pages long. I'll say more about the narrative in a minute.

For the Work Plan, you should describe any preparation of your project and then include a detailed plan in three-month increments about what you will do and where. Remember that you must devote 100% of your time to the project during the fellowship. If the entire project cannot be completed in a year, that's OK, but please provide a plan and timeline for completion beyond the Fellowship.

The Bibliography, since it is limited to a single page, include just the most pertinent words related to your project. And remember that if you've published on this topic yourself before, you can list that in your CV and don't need to put it in the bibliography.

The Résumé is a two-page CV that lists current and past positions; your degrees with dates and titles of dissertations; any awards, honors, and grants, especially those that are relevant to your project; as well as publications with full citations, again in particular, those that are relevant to your proposed work.

Samples means, provide 1 or 2 pages with examples that illustrate the methods and results of your linguistic work. For example, a sample dictionary or grammar entry, interlinear glossing, questionnaires, task prototype protocols, records, and any other materials that help to explain your project. But you're limited to two pages for that. It's a very tight, concise application.

Please note that a budget is not required for NEH DLI-DEL Fellowships, and that's because your award amount is fixed at \$5000 per month.

You may have to supply supplemental attachments and information.

The Letter from the Speaker Community is particularly important if you are planning to do fieldwork and documentation. You should show that the appropriate permissions have been sought and granted from the speaker community.

The Data Management Plan is just like if you're submitting an NSF application, if your project includes language documentation, describe how your data will be archived, sustained, and supported. Include information on access and restrictions of access.

And then next, related to the above, include a Letter of Support from the archive where your materials will be deposited.

As mentioned earlier, if you have fulfilled all the requirements for your degree but it has not yet been conferred, include a letter from your dean or department chair that confirms your status.

And, finally, if you are delinquent in the repayment of any federal debt you must provide explanatory information. Most commonly such debt would include federal student loans, delinquent taxes, delinquent child support payments, or delinquent and delinquent payroll track taxes for employees.

Slide 17: Application Narrative Subheadings

[26:11]

Let's say a few more things about the Application Narrative. This is really the core piece of your application. Preparing an excellent narrative is worth spending some time on because this is where you describe your project and make your case for funding it. The narrative must be succinct and well organized. Remember that it should be free of technical terms and jargon, so that peer reviewers, in particular, the non-specialists who will read your application in the later stages of the review process, can understand what your project is about and why it's important. The application guidelines instruct you to use certain subheadings in the narrative.

The first one is called Significance, Impact and Endangerment. So, basically, this is where you answer the question about what the intellectual merit of your proposed project is. Explain your project's goals and expected impact. Discuss the level of endangerment of the language you will be investigating the urgency of documentation and analysis. And any points to make about the language is linguistic, historical, cognitive, cultural, or social significance.

The next subheading is Organization, Concepts, and Methods. What is the research design of your project? Here you would discuss the basic ideas and questions to be examined, and how your research will address them. You should explain the methods for documentation and discuss the theoretical framework in relation to the research questions. Explain specific concepts and terminology here, if that's necessary.

Competency, Skills, and Access: Why are you the right person to do this work? Obviously, here you will talk about your background and preparation. You don't need to repeat what's in your attached CV, but explain, perhaps, what work that has led up to the project you are applying for here. For example, it could be an expansion or revision of work you did for your PhD.

And finally, Final Product and Dissemination: What are the results and, if you want, deliverables going to be from your work? It could be, like I said, publications of different sorts. Archival documentation material that you're going to archive, a combination of these things. You might also, for the dissemination part, explain how publications are going to be distributed, or whether you will be talking about your work at one or more conferences.

Slide 18: Review Criteria

[29:56]

Here on this slide are the five criteria that peer reviewers will be asked to use for their evaluations of your application. So, it makes sense to craft your application so that it covers each of these aspects fully and convincingly. The application guidelines in the NOFO, the document with the detailed instructions, tell you which parts of the proposal are keyed to which criterion of the five that are listed here. But please note that the criteria can be relevant to more than one section of the application and that, taken together, the parts of the proposal's should form a coherent whole. That is, Narrative, Bibliography, Work Plan, CV, and any of the appendices.

[Criterion one] The significance, the intellectual merit and broader impact of the proposed project, its value to linguistics and humanities scholarship, and the level of endangerment of the language to be studied. This, as you might imagine, is mainly addressed in the first part, in the significance part of your Application Narrative.

The second criterion are Methods and Preparation: The quality is a conception and description of the project's research design, including the depth of collaborations with speaker communities. This is, again, our key to your narrative section on methods, but also refers to your work samples Bibliography, and where included, the speaker to Community Support Letter, or information.

[Criterion three], skills, that's keyed to the Narrative section on competencies and skills, and your CV, largely.

[Criterion four] The outcomes and dissemination, again, that matches up with the final product and dissemination part of the narrative, but also, the data management plan and archive letter, where applicable.

[Criterion five] And the work plan, is directly linked, as you might imagine, to the work plan attachment.

Slide 19: Timeline

[33:07]

As a final tip, think about the timeline of your application first mission from submission to notification and plan ahead. The process is quite long about seven months for a DLI-DEL Fellowship application. So, if your submission is by September 30th, the peer review panel will be convened by NEH and will meet late in the year. Then, NEH Staff prepares recommendations in early 2021, and NEH's Council on the National Council on the Humanities, kind of our advisory board which meets three times a year, reviews the staff's funding recommendations in March. The chairman of the Endowment, John Parish Peede, makes the final funding decisions shortly thereafter. And notifications to applicants are sent out in late March, early April. And, just as a reminder, your start date, you can start as early as May want with, with your board.

Slide 20: NEH Staff Contact Info

[34:20]

So, thank you very much for listening. I hope this quick overview has given you some useful information about the program and pointers about the application. As mentioned in the beginning, a recording of the Webinar with the presentation images and a written transcript will be made available on our website.

I'm going to switch over to questions to the Q&A session and answer any questions. I will read the question out loud and then I will try to answer it. And if I need help from my colleagues, Jacquelyn or Chris, I will ask them to speak up. If I don't get to your particular question, I will try and follow up on it by e-mail.

Question 1:

So, initial questions had to do with the sound, and people asked, will there be a recording of this? As I've said several times now, yes, there will be a recording.

Question 2:

Another question was about US citizens or US residents. I have to repeat that foreign nationals, non-US citizens, are only eligible to apply if they have resided in the US permanently for three years or more prior to the application deadline.

Question 3:

Another question says educational materials are excluded from funding. What is the definition of educational materials? And does it include materials intended for audiences of educators, not students? For example, does a reference grammar written for an audience of educators count as a reference grammar or as educational materials?

That's a tricky question really. The point is what I said earlier, that materials that are produced solely for the purpose of language revitalization and not language documentation or scholarly analysis are not funded by the program. That doesn't mean that grammars that represent the first documentation of this language are not eligible and may might well later become important tools for language revitalization and education efforts, but they cannot be the primary goal of your work.

Question 4:

In order to apply you must not be enrolled in any PhD program. Does that include programs outside of the United State?

Yes, that's correct. If you are a US citizen who is enrolled in a PhD program, either in Europe or South America [for example], you would not be eligible to apply until you have completed the program.

Question 5:

Then the next question asks about clarification of the eligibility of funding in regard to dictionaries and lexicons.

Yes, dictionaries and lexicons are supported through these fellowships.

Question 6:

How is a collaborative project where only one person is eligible to apply?

That can also be tricky, especially if your collaborators are not US or US-based scholars. You can try to make the case for your own work within a collaborative project, but these are individual fellowships to individual people, and that's how they are conceived. If you're part of the larger project that might be eligible for institutional funding, you should consider applying or having

your institution apply for a senior research grant proposal through NSF. You might get funding from NSF or NEH.

Question 7:

How does the change to NEH management of these fellowships affect the pool of peer reviewers? Will NEH use different reviewers than had previously participated in the panels?

We will. So, yes, NEH will convene its own panel peer review panel, but we will rely very much on the same or similar experts that have been used in NSF panels in the past.

Question 8:

Although a budget is not required, is it a good idea to provide details of larger or regular expenses?

No, I would not waste precious space in your narrative to provide details about your expenses. Basically, the fellowship is meant to buy you time and cover travel. So, you could say in your work plan, I will be traveling to Central America and spend two months there engaging in whatever research and documentation activities with one or more speaker communities. But you do not need to detail how much the ticket or accommodation is going to cost to get you there. The short answer is, no, you do not need it. It doesn't help to add information on what you're going to spend this money on.

Question 9:

Can expenses related to funding include those associated to documentation like transcription of data?

Yes, absolutely. But, again, you don't need to detail these expenses. You can just say that this is part of what you are going to do during your fellowship.

Question 10:

If you are planning to defend your dissertation before the end of 2020, does that still prevent you from applying?

You'll see the detailed language on that in the Notice of Funding Opportunity document. But if you have completed all the parts of your dissertation, including the defense, and you're just waiting for the conferral of the degree, you can apply. You must then include a letter from your dean or the chair of your department stating that you have completed all the necessary parts of your degree, including the defense.

If you have more specific questions, if you want to tell me more specifically about your situation, feel free to send me an e-mail.

Question 11:

The next question says, under NSF Management, DLI-DEL Fellowships could be started up to 15 months after June 1 of the award year. You stated that the latest possible start date was September 1, 2021. Can you discuss the reason for this change?

That is actually a perfect segue for me to ask my colleague from grant management, Chris Scotto, to speak up, because this was the date given to us by our Office of Grant Management. I'm going to look for Chris here and my list of attendees and unmute him.

[45:49]

Chris: Yes, as I understand, that's kind of the standard interval, during which individual awards need to be completed, that's the only--I'm not aware of any other additional justification for the September 2021 deadline for beginning the project.

Stefanie: Yes, I actually had some exchanges with Grant Management about why it wasn't extended further, but this is what's in the notice, and that's what we're going to have to stick with for, for now at least, for this round. I would say to the questioner, if this is a particular problem for you, write me an e-mail, and I will ask our grant management people how much leeway we have, but it's really what is stated in the NOFO, the Notice of Funding Opportunity document.

Thank you, Chris. Is there anything else, Chris, that you wanted to add to what I said during the presentation?

Chris: No, from the grant management side of things, I think the most important distinction to be made, and that you made very clearly, was that this is an individual program, rather than one for institutions. And so, the individual scholar would be the recipient of the award, and the person who would be expected to complete reports and whatnot. Rather than, you know, in the case of an institutional award, we will generally get in touch with, like, the Office of Sponsored Research or something like that. With these individual awards, we're corresponding primarily with the individual recipient, I think that's probably the thing I would want to highlight the most, in terms of the grant management aspect.

Stefanie: Thank you, Chris. I also want to give Jacquelyn Clements the opportunity to speak. What Chris said is a good segue to remind you that there is a grant opportunity for more extended and collaborative projects. And I'll let Jacquelyn say something about those but let me share her contact information and that of the Program Director at NSF, Joan Maling.

Slide 21:

[49:01]

Jacquelyn: Yeah. Sure. I'll just kind of chime in to say that I'm the program officer for the Division of Preservation and Access at NEH, which is working with NSF to award institutional-level senior research grants. These are up to three years, up to \$450,000, for collaborations and institutions that are applying for research. On our side, we, we make the awards, but it's actually the NSF who does the review process. So, I would recommend getting in touch with

Joan Maling if you have questions. You also can see there that you have my e-mail, too, if you'd like to e-mail me with any questions. The information [on DLI-DEL Senior Research Grants] has just gone up with a deadline of November 18th; in the future it will resort back to September 15th again. But just this year, it's November 18th, and there's more information on Preservation and Access page.

Stefanie: Thanks, Jacquelyn. Are there any other questions now from anyone attending?

Question 12:

I don't see any, oh, sorry, yes. What is the frequency of this grant?

DLI-DEL Fellowships are awarded on an annual basis, typically with the deadline of September 15th, whereas the senior research grants will be offered, or will have two deadlines per year. If you go to the NSF program page, it'll give you the details about that as well.

Slide 20:

[51:28]

If there aren't any more questions, I'm going to end this webinar now, but I will go back just briefly, so you can write down my contact information once more. Please feel free to send any questions. And I hope we'll see your application in September. Thank you very much, and goodbye.