

May 2019

Webinar: NEH Summer Stipends Program

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Division of Research Programs



Thank you for joining us for this webinar about the NEH Summer Stipends program. This is an opportunity to find out more about the program, and to ask questions. The guidelines have just been posted and applications can now be submitted. The deadline is September 25. The notifications will be made in March 2020, for projects starting May 1, 2020, or later.

A quick introduction. I am Dan Sack, a program officer in the NEH Division of Research Programs. I am a historian of American religion, and have been at the NEH for nine years. I am joined here today by Gwen Yates, a program analyst for the Summer Stipends program. If you call or write the Summer Stipends program, her friendly voice will be able to help you. She will be helping me answer questions today.

Agenda

Summer Stipends Program

- Program overview
- Eligibility
- Nomination process
- Application format
- Review Criteria
- Application submission
- Where to find more information
- Questions

Guidelines: <https://www.neh.gov/grants/research/summer-stipends>



I will talk a bit during the first part of today's presentation—here's the agenda. I'll give an overview of the Summer Stipend program, discuss eligibility and the nomination process, the contents of an application, the review criteria, and where to find more information. As I talk, feel free to type in questions. I'll answer them along the way or save them until the end.

NEH staff



—NEH



Before that, a 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 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.

Program Overview

\$6,000 for two months

- Providing small grants to individuals pursuing advanced research that is of value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both.
- Supporting projects at any stage of development, but most especially early-stage research and late-stage writing in which small grants are most effective
- Encouraging applications from under-represented and under-served individuals and institutions (including independent scholars and faculty at Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and community colleges).

DEADLINE: September 25, 2019, for awards made March 2020

NUMBERS: Five year average: Received 834 applications, made 77 awards, funding rate 9%



The Summer Stipends program supports individual scholars pursuing advanced research in the humanities. The awards are \$6,000 for two months—usually but not necessarily in the summer. Projects are eligible at any stage of development, but many of our grantees are either at the beginning of a project, just laying the foundation of their research, or at the end, finishing their writing.

Independent scholars and people at all institutions are welcome, but like all NEH programs, the Summer Stipends program welcomes applications from independent scholars and faculty at community colleges, Hispanic serving institutions, historically black colleges and universities, and tribal colleges and universities.

As you'll see here, over the last five years we received 834 applications per year and made 77 awards per year, for an average

funding rate of 9%. Do not let these numbers discourage you. You can't get a grant unless you apply. But do be aware of the level of competition in this program.

Typical project activities and products

ACTIVITIES

humanities research
travel to archives
scholarly editing
writing and revision

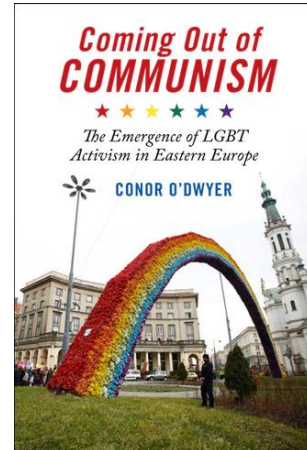
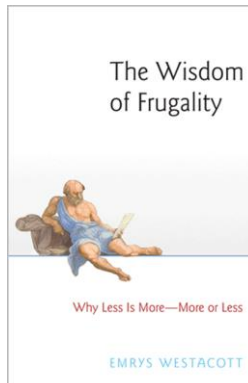
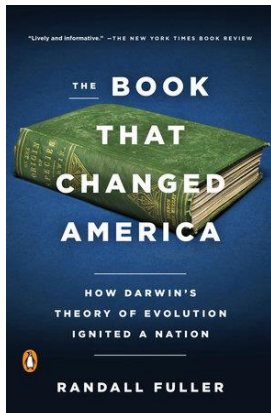
PRINT AND DIGITAL PRODUCTS

articles
monographs
translations
editions
other interpretive tools



Summer Stipends grantees use NEH support to do all the usual stuff that academics do. They travel to archives, do ethnographic work, and write. They produce articles, books, editions, and other interpretive tools.

Sample Projects and Products



Here are a few recent books supported by Summer Stipends grants. They are meant to show the variety of projects that receive grants. We welcome projects on all topics in the humanities.

Who is Eligible?

US citizen or resident of the US for at least three years

Not a degree candidate

Terminal degree not required



All individuals are eligible to apply to the Summer Stipends program, with a few exceptions: Applicants must be US citizens or resident of the US for at least three years. Degree candidates are not eligible. A terminal degree is not required.

Nomination process

Tenured and tenure-track faculty must be nominated by their institution

All institutions can nominate up to two people per year

Institutions run their own nomination process

Applications must include name of nominating official



The Summer Stipends program is unique at the NEH in requiring that all tenured and tenure-track faculty need to be nominated by their institution. Each institution can nominate up to two people per year. We do this to encourage applications from a broad range of institutions, and to encourage faculty to discuss their research with each other.

Institutions run their own nomination process and identify one person as their nominating official. Applicants include that person's name in their applications, so we can contact them to confirm the nomination.

Note that a big group of people are exempt from nomination: non-tenure-track faculty (including adjuncts), non-faculty staff, community college faculty, emeritus faculty, and independent scholars.

Exempt from nomination

- Non-tenure-track faculty (including adjuncts)
- Staff
- Community college faculty
- Emeritus faculty
- Independent scholars



Note that a big group of people are exempt from nomination: non-tenure-track faculty (including adjuncts), non-faculty staff, community college faculty, emeritus faculty, and independent scholars.

Review Criteria

Evaluators are asked to apply the following five criteria when judging the quality of applications:

1. The intellectual significance of the proposed project, including its value to scholars, students, or general audiences in the humanities.
2. The quality or promise of quality of the applicant as a humanities researcher and (for course revision projects) as a teacher.
3. The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project and the clarity of expression in the application.
4. The feasibility and appropriateness of the proposed plan of work, including, when relevant, the soundness of the dissemination and access plans for the proposed audience or audiences.
5. The likelihood that the applicant will complete the project (not necessarily during the period of performance).

Evaluators may or may not be specialists in the proposed field of study of each application. Some review panels will be disciplinary, others interdisciplinary. Thus applicants should make sure to write for a broad scholarly audience and to avoid or explain technical terms whenever possible.



All NEH applications go through a peer review process. We recruit scholars to read and evaluate applications, based on these criteria. Applicants should keep these criteria in mind as they're writing their applications. They should make a case for their projects based on these criteria. They are listed in the guidelines—another reason to read the guidelines carefully. Print them out and keep them on your desk as you prepare your application. The most important criterion is the first one, significance—why is the project important? How will it change the way scholars or other readers under the topic and do their own research? The second is about your preparation to do the project. The third is about method—is it clear what you're going to do? Will your method answer your research questions? An important factor here is the project's clarity—it's important to avoid jargon. Our reviewers are fellow scholars with some expertise in their field, but bear in mind that they may not have expertise in your specialty, so

you shouldn't assume that they know as much as you do about your topic. You should write your application for well-educated generalists, explaining terms when necessary. The fourth criterion is about what you're going to do during the grant period. Describe in as much detail as possible what you'll do and what you hope to achieve. And describe how your work will reach the audience or audiences for your research. The fifth criterion is about the likelihood that you will complete the project—not necessarily during the grant period.

What you'll need to prepare

- Three page narrative
- One page bibliography
- Two page C.V.
- Any necessary appendices
- Names/contact info for two references

Please see the program guidelines for complete details.

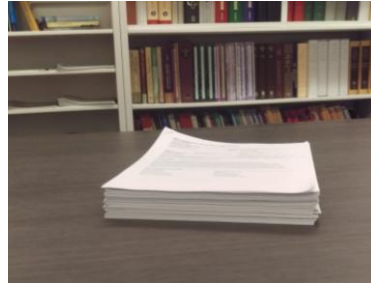


The application is actually a pretty short document. It involves a three page narrative, one page bibliography, two page CV, and the names of two references.

These documents should work together. Think of them as separate chapters of the same book.

What the narrative should include

- Research and contribution
- Methodology and work plan
- Competencies, skills, and access
- Final product and dissemination



In three pages!

Look at the guidelines and samples

Details on all this are in the guidelines, but the narrative should include:

A discussion of the project's contribution to the scholarly discussion. This is crucial. Scholarly context. What work has already been done on the topic—state of research? How will your work contribute? Will it build on, disagree with, or provide a new interpretation? You might discuss the audience for your project, and explain how it will benefit from your work. What are your research questions?

Talk about the method—how will you answer your research questions? What is the current stage of the project: How much have you done on the project? What will you do during the grant period? It's what we call the work plan. Give us as much detail as you can.

Tell us why you are the right person to do this project. Discuss

your previous research and publication record, language skills, access to the necessary archives, etc.

Tell us how you will disseminate the results of your research. Book or article? If a book, maybe a brief outline. Have you talked with a publisher? Not necessary, but helpful if you have. This is only a two month grant, but it would be helpful to know how these two months fit in the larger trajectory of your project.

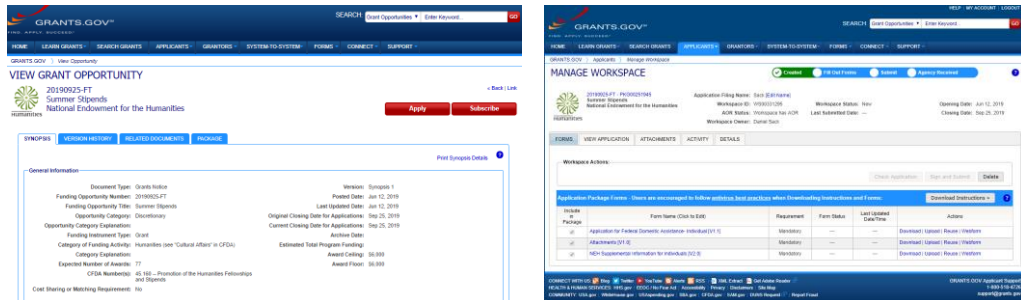
You need to do all this in three pages!

Look at the guidelines—they give you a helpful outline of what the narrative should include. Our website also offers some samples of previously successful applications, to give you a sense of how someone else made a case for their project.

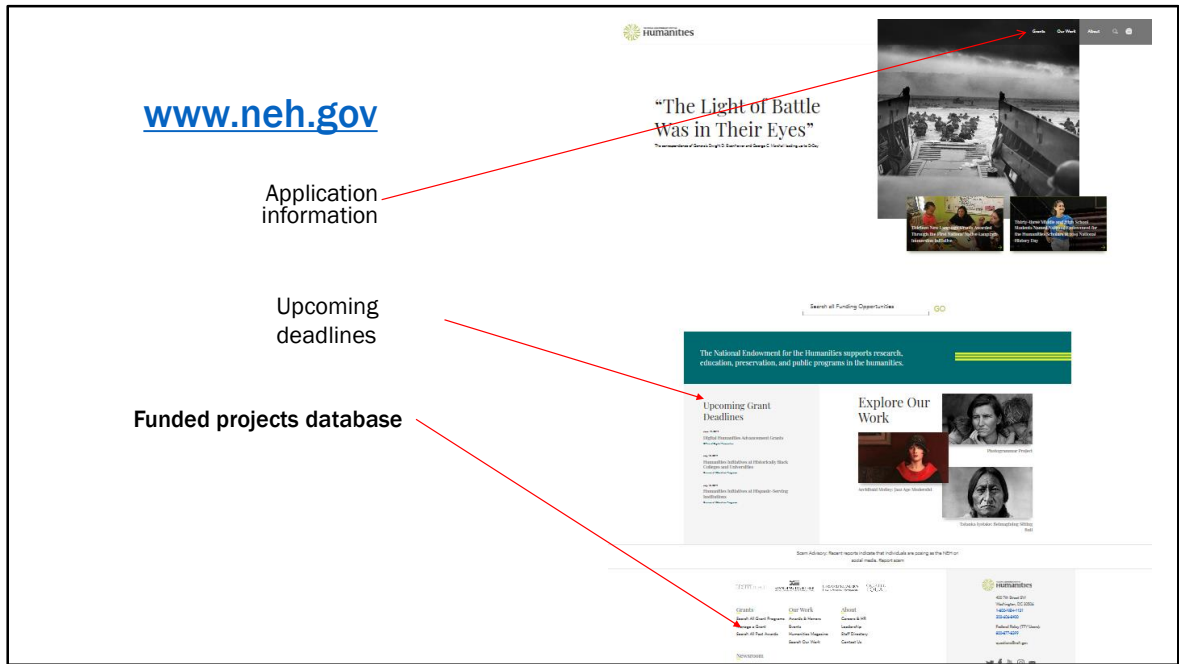
Submitting your application

Register with <http://grants.gov> two weeks before the deadline

Use the [program guidelines](#) to guide you through the submission process (pp. 9-17)



Applications for NEH grants, like many federal grants, are submitted through a web portal called grants.gov. It is a fairly smooth system, but it would be good for you to spend some time getting familiar with it before you submit your application. You need to register a week or so before applying. We strongly urge that you apply early, as it gets pretty overwhelmed in the five minutes before the midnight deadline. Your grants office can help—they do this a lot. But each applicant will submit their own application as individuals, instead of using their institution's account. In that system there are three forms to fill out. One of them asks you to attach the various elements of your application. The guidelines give you fairly clear instructions on how to navigate the system.



The best source for information about the Endowment’s work is our web site. It has all of our grant programs, all of our deadlines, and a wealth of other information, at neh.gov. On our site you will find information about how to apply for a grant. You can see the link there at the top of the page. At the bottom of the page you’ll find an online database for all of our previous grants.

< Grants

Clear facets/filters

Filter by Output

Output ▼

Individual or Organization

Individual

Organization

Filter by Division/Office

Division/Office ▼

Currently accepting applications

All Grant Program Opportunities

NEH offers a variety of grant programs to individuals and organizations that do the highest quality work to promote the humanities.

summer stipends

GO

2 Result(s)

Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshops

Due Date:
2/13/20

Organizations

Output: Faculty Development, Teaching Resources

Summer Stipends

Due Date:
9/25/19

Individuals

Output: Book, Article, Digital Material & Publications, Archaeological Report, Translation, Edition, Other Scholarly Resource

www.neh.gov/grants

Scam Advisory: Recent reports indicate that individuals are posing as the NEH on social media. [Report scam](#)

When you click on the Grants tab you will go to a list of all of our grant programs. Search for Summer Stipends.

Grant Program Information Page

Deadline

Contact information

Each program page include the same kind of information, although the actual information varies from program to program. It will tell you the application deadline, the funding statistics for that program in recent years, and who to contact if you have questions.

The image shows a screenshot of a website page titled "Grant Program Information Page". The page is divided into two main sections. The left section, titled "Review your application package", contains several paragraphs of text and lists of links. The right section is a grey sidebar with the title "Grant Program Information Page" and four main categories: "Guidelines", "Application package", "FAQs", and "Recent awards". Red arrows point from the sidebar categories to the corresponding links in the left section. The "Sample Narratives" category in the sidebar points to a list of sample application PDFs at the bottom of the left section.

Review your application package

To apply for this grant, you will be need to be registered for a D-U-N-S® number, with the System for Awards Management (SAM), and with Grants.gov. If you have registered with these systems previously, confirm that your registrations are current and up to date. If you fail to allow ample time to complete registration with SAM or Grants.gov, you will not be eligible for a deadline extension or waiver of the online electronic submission requirement.

Begin by reading the Notice of Funding Opportunity below to ensure you understand the expectations and restrictions for projects delivered under this grant and are prepared to write the most effective application.

Download Application Materials

- [Summer Stipends Notice of Funding Opportunity, September 2019 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Grants.gov application package for Summer Stipends](#)

Program Resources

- [Summer Stipends Frequently Asked Questions, September \(PDF\)](#)
- [Summer Stipends awards, 2017-2019](#)
- [DUNS Number Requirement](#)

Sample Application Narratives

- [American History Summer Stipends Sample Application \(PDF\)](#)
- [American Literature Summer Stipends Sample Application \(PDF\)](#)
- [Art History Summer Stipends Sample Application \(PDF\)](#)
- [Latin American Studies Summer Stipends Sample Application \(PDF\)](#)
- [Philosophy Summer Stipends Sample Application \(PDF\)](#)

Grant Program Information Page

- [Guidelines](#)
- [Application package](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Recent awards](#)
- [Sample Narratives](#)

The most important are the guidelines These guidelines are long and a bit bureaucratic, but grant applicants should spend some time reading them. They'll tell you who can and who cannot apply for a grant, what grants can and cannot support, what an application should include, and how applications will be evaluated. Also on this page is a link to the application package on grants.gov, a link to a list of recently funded applications, to get a sense of the kinds of things that a program can support, and a link to sample applications—previously successful applications (names removed) that you can use as inspiration and suggestion—though not necessarily as a model—for your application.

Questions?

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The most important resources in this project are NEH staff people. As I said at the beginning, remember this: We are here to answer your questions. Please do drop us a line or give us a call. We will be as helpful as we can. If we can't answer a question, we'll get you to a person who can. And now we have a good chunk of time to answer your questions.