



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

OFFICE OF DIGITAL HUMANITIES

NEH/AHRC NEW DIRECTIONS FOR DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP IN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This FAQ document is intended to support the joint NEH/AHRC program New Directions for Digital Scholarship in Cultural Institutions. You should read it in conjunction with NEH's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and AHRC'S Call Guidance document. If you have questions about this joint program and you are at a U.S.-based institution, please contact NEH, if you are at a U.K.-based institution, contact AHRC. All queries and questions will be shared with both agencies to ensure transparency and where necessary develop a shared response.

1. Is an AHRC Partnership Development Grant or networking award a prerequisite for applying to this funding opportunity?

No, you need not have received an AHRC Partnership Development Grant or networking award before applying. Applicants who have received funding through previous AHRC calls delivered through the wider set of activities are required to demonstrate how the proposed project is clearly distinct from and/or builds upon the previous project(s).

2. Should my organization apply for a Level I or Level II project?

It depends on the maturity of your project and the scale of activity proposed. NEH applicants should review the funding levels described in section A1 of the NOFO for examples of the types of projects that are appropriate for the two funding levels, as well as examples of the outputs or products for each funding level. AHRC applicants should consider the size and scope of their

project in relation to the two funding levels, and should review Section II of the Call Guidance document for examples of projects that are appropriate. Section IIC of the Call Guidance document provides examples of the outputs or products for each funding level.

3. How can my organization determine if it is eligible for this funding opportunity?

Your organization is eligible if it meets the eligibility requirements of the relevant funder.

U.S.-based applicants should refer to section C. Eligibility of the NOFO, which states that the following entities are eligible: U.S. nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, accredited public and 501(c)(3) institutions of higher education, state and local governmental agencies, and federally recognized Native American tribal governments.

For U.K.-based applicants, all Higher Education Institutions that receive grant funding from one of the U.K. higher education funding bodies are eligible to apply for this call. Independent Research Organizations (IRO) are also eligible to act as lead organization. Prospective applicants who are at a cultural institution but are unsure if they are eligible should consult [UKRIs list of eligible institutions](#). If your organization is not on that list, you are not eligible to serve as the lead organization, however you are eligible to be a project partner for a lead organization based in either country. If you still have questions about whether an organization is eligible to serve as lead or to serve as a project partner, please contact the relevant funder (NEH for U.S. based organizations and AHRC for U.K. based organizations).

Applications must be submitted by teams composed of at least one organization from the U.S. and one from the U.K.; teams must have at least one “cultural institution” from each country.

4. I am employed by or affiliated with a university in the U.S. and my collaborator is employed by or affiliated with a university in the U.K. May we apply to this funding opportunity?

Yes, if the team also has at least two “cultural institutions” – one from each country. Some cultural institutions are affiliated with or housed within universities or other institutions of higher education; such institutions are considered to satisfy the status of “cultural institution” as applied to this competition. Therefore, it is possible for a university in the U.S. and a university in the U.K. to lead a project where at least one cultural institution in the U.K. and one in the U.S. are involved as project partners. By contrast, a proposal would not be eligible if, for example, there was only one cultural institution involved, or multiple cultural institutions but in one country only.

As an example, a project that involves one U.S. and one U.K. cultural institution is eligible (two institutions total), but a project with one U.S. institution of higher education and one U.K. institution of higher education without any cultural institutions would not be eligible.

5. What is meant by cultural institution?

For the purpose of this funding opportunity, the term "cultural institution" is defined as any organization that collects, organizes, preserves, and makes accessible cultural heritage materials

to both the academic research community as well as the public (including museums, libraries, galleries, archives, and historical societies). Some cultural institutions are affiliated with or housed within universities or other institutions of higher education; such institutions are considered to satisfy the status of “cultural institution” as applied to this competition. If you are concerned about the eligibility of a particular institution, you should consult with the relevant funder in your country.

6. Must the cultural institution be the lead organization?

No. The project can be led by any eligible institution as set-out in 3) above. However, given the focus of the funding opportunity, cultural institutions should be central to the research and wider activities delivered through the project. As stated above, proposals must include the involvement at least one cultural institution in each country as a project partner. Projects in which the cultural institutions are merely providing access to collections or resources are not appropriate for this funding opportunity.

7. Are there any restrictions on funding?

See Section D6 of the NOFO for a full list of funding restrictions.

8. We are interested in partnering with a university or cultural institution in another country. Is this an option?

Yes, you may partner with individuals or organizations outside the U.S. or U.K. as long as you adhere to the policies of the relevant funder and maintain the primary focus on enhanced U.S.-U.K. collaboration. The addition of partners from third countries should demonstrably add value to the proposed activity.

US-based applicants should pay special attention to section C3. Other Eligibility Information of the NOFO. NEH does not provide financial assistance to foreign institutions or organizations. Nevertheless, otherwise eligible U.S. institutions may apply for collaborative projects involving U.S. and foreign organizations provided they do not use NEH funds for the purpose of issuing subawards to any foreign organization, as defined by [2 CFR §200.1](#) and [2 CFR §200.331 \(a\)](#). This limitation does not preclude U.S. institutions from obtaining the services of foreign individuals and consultants to carry out various programmatic activities on a fee-for-service basis, as specified in [2 CFR §200.459](#); it also does not preclude vendor contracts such as in-country transportation services.

U.K.-based applicants should refer to AHRC’s international [co-investigator policy](#). Costs for international Co-Investigators from other countries can be included in accordance with this policy where the applicant demonstrates that they will add value to the project. Because U.S.-based partners are eligible for NEH funding, AHRC would not expect this policy to apply to U.S. partners for this call unless an exceptional case can be made.

9. May I be involved in more than one application submitted to this funding opportunity?

Yes, you may be involved in more than one application as long as the projects are separate and distinct, and you can demonstrate that you will be able to contribute to the projects on the basis described in the application should more than one be successful. However, you can only be named as Principal Investigator (for AHRC) or Project Director or co-director (for NEH) on one application; this applies to both level I and level II projects. NEH and AHRC prohibit applications that include overlapping project costs (see section C3. Other Eligibility Information of the NOFO, and section III C Other Eligibility Information of the AHRC call).

10. Do we need to submit applications both to NEH and AHRC?

Yes. The U.S.-based applicants will submit one application to NEH using Grants.gov or system-to-system software and the U.K.-based applicants will submit one application to AHRC using Je-S in accordance with the requirements set-out in the NEH NOFO / AHRC call. The Narrative / Case for Support should be identical, as should the other attachments, with the exception of the respective budgets and budget justifications. U.S.-based applicants (submitting to NEH) will prepare a Research and Related Budget and budget justification to reflect all U.S. costs as part of the application; they will then include a copy of the U.K. budget and Justification of Resources as an attachment to the application. U.K.-based applicants (submitting to AHRC) will prepare a budget and Justification of Resources to reflect all U.K. costs as part of the application; they will then include a copy of the Research and Related Budget and budget justification submitted to NEH as an attachment to the application. Please refer to section D. Application and Submission Information of the NOFO.

11. From whom should we request letters to accompany our application?

Include letters from any U.S. and U.K. project partners. A project partner is defined here as an organization that is making a significant and specific contribution (either in cash or in kind) to the project. The letter(s) should clearly identify the contribution each partner is making to the project.

12. Will NEH and AHRC have separate review processes?

No, NEH and AHRC will have a single, joint review process. All eligible and complete applications will be reviewed by a panel of experts nominated by both NEH and AHRC staff. Applications that are recommended for funding will then be subject to final approval by the leadership of both funders, the NEH Chairman and the AHRC Executive Group. See section E2. Application Review Information of the NOFO.

13. Is there a limit to how many project partners can be included in the proposed project?

There is no limit to how many partners an applicant may include on a proposed project. The inclusion of project partners should be clearly justified and commensurate with the aims and focus of the application as well as the overarching aims of the call. Where multiple partners are involved, applicants should describe the governance structures that will achieve an appropriate balance of responsibilities across all participating bodies.

15. My university has one or more museums or libraries. If the U.S. side of the project entails a partnership between one or more academic departments at my

university with one of its museums or libraries. Does that fulfill the requirement of having a cultural institution on the project?

Yes, this would fulfill the requirement, however reviewers may find partnerships that are restricted to a single university to have a more limited impact than those that involve outside partnerships. If your project will take place at a single university, you might wish to articulate ways your project will have an impact beyond your university in your application.

16. Can our partner provide in-kind support?

Yes, your partner can provide in-kind support. If the partner is not receiving any funds, they should not appear on the budget, but you should explain the nature of their contribution to the project in the budget justification.

17. Some of the people we hope to engage on this project are employed at a governmental or quasi-governmental organization. Is this allowed?

Staff at such organizations can be involved in an intellectual or advisory capacity on your project, but cannot receive any financial compensation.