DIVISION OF **RESEARCH PROGRAMS**

SUMMER STIPENDS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I. Eligibility

1. I am an independent scholar. What are my chances of receiving a Summer Stipend?

Your chances are the same as any other applicant's. All applicants must propose a significant project and must also present evidence of their qualifications, including publications, presentations, and other relevant experiences.

For information about the Summer Stipends funding ratio, see the Program Statistics section of the [program resource page](#).

2. I am a graduate student. Am I eligible to apply for a Summer Stipend?

No. However, applicants who have satisfied all the requirements for a degree and are awaiting its conferral may apply. Such applicants need a letter from the dean of the conferring school, attesting to the applicant's status as of September 26, 2018, which must be included as an appendix to the application.

3. How important is the format of the application (including appendices)?

Applications must follow the format given in the guidelines. The narrative may not exceed three single-spaced pages, and the font should not be smaller than 11 point. Applications that violate the format instructions will be declared ineligible. Appendices may be added only for applications proposing editions, translations, database projects, projects that include visual materials, or for proposals from applicants awaiting the conferral of a degree. Appendices may not exceed one single-spaced page per item.

4. Is it possible to extend the deadline?

No. Late applications will be declared ineligible and will not be reviewed.

5. Does NEH support projects whose results will be written in a language other than English?

Yes. Applicants with projects that will be written in a language other than English must explain how access and dissemination will be affected.

6. May I apply to translate a work into English if other English translations already exist?

Yes. In the proposal narrative, provide a rationale for a new translation.

7. I am involved in a collaborative project. Can collaborators split a Summer Stipend?

No. The NEH Summer Stipends program is designed for individual researchers. Awards may not be divided. If you are seeking funding for more than one participant in a collaborative project, each person seeking funding must submit a separate application specifying the individual contribution. Peer reviewers will be asked to evaluate each application on its own merits. Each application should clearly explain how the work will be divided and the extent to which each collaborator's contribution depends on that of the other(s). Applicants who are seeking funding only for themselves but who are working as part of a collaborative team are also eligible. In this case, too, the application should clearly explain how the work will be divided and the extent to which each collaborator's contribution depends on that of the other(s). Applicants proposing to work together may wish to apply instead or in addition for an NEH [Collaborative Research](#) award.

8. I plan to complete a draft of my book prior to the start of the award. May I use the award period to respond to the publisher's readers' reports?

Using a Summer Stipend to revise work is fully acceptable under program guidelines. However, work plans must not depend entirely upon factors outside an applicant's control. For instance, Summer Stipends should not be used to respond to pending or anticipated readers' reports.

II. Other Fellowship Opportunities

1. Does NEH offer additional funding opportunities for individual scholars in the humanities?

NEH [Fellowships](#), [NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication](#), and the [Public Scholar Program](#) support individual scholars for periods of six to twelve months. NEH Awards for Faculty support individual scholars for periods of two to twelve months. Fellowships, NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication, and the Public Scholar Program are open to scholars who have completed their formal education, regardless of their institutional affiliation. Awards for Faculty are open only to faculty members at [Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#), [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#), or [Tribal Colleges and Universities](#). Applicants apply directly to NEH.

2. What if I am offered more than one award?

You may hold only one NEH award for individuals at a time. When holding awards in close sequence, you may need to delay the start of the second award to comply with the prohibition against holding two awards at the same time. Note also that if you accept a Fellowship in the same fiscal year in which you apply for a Summer Stipend, the Summer Stipends application will be automatically withdrawn after you accept the Fellowship. Please contact program staff for further details.

3. Does NEH collaborate with other institutions to provide additional funding for individual scholars in the humanities?

NEH collaborates with several organizations to offer support for research:

Library of Congress (LOC) – John W. Kluge Center Fellowships
Projects that draw on the collections of the Library of Congress are eligible for support. Interested applicants should apply directly to [LOC's Kluge Center Fellowships Program](#).

Japan-United States Friendship Commission (JUSFC) – [Fellowships for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan](#)
Subjects may include modern Japanese political economy, international relations and society, and United States-Japan relations. Applicants may consult the [JUSFC website](#) for additional information.

NEH Grants for Fellowship Programs at Independent Research Institutions
Projects to be undertaken at independent centers for advanced study, libraries, and museums in the United States, and research centers overseas, are eligible for support. Individual scholars must apply directly to the institutions. A list of currently funded institutions is available [here](#).

[NEH and National Science Foundation Fellowships Program for Documenting Endangered Languages (DEL)](#)
Projects on endangered languages are eligible for support. A full description of the DEL program is available [here](#).

III. Application and References

1. What help is available for preparing the proposal?

Because of the large number of applications, NEH staff members are not able to comment on draft proposals. NEH staff will, however, answer questions about preparing your proposal and about your eligibility. Staff members may be reached at (202) 606-8200 and at stipends@neh.gov.

Applicants are encouraged to review the samples of previously funded applications, as well as the broader list of projects. You can find links to the sample narratives, and to the list of funded projects, on the [program resource page](#).

2. I applied for an award last year and my proposal was unsuccessful. Will I be at a disadvantage if I reapply?

No. NEH encourages previous applicants to reapply and does not inform peer reviewers that a proposal was unsuccessful in a previous competition. Moreover, NEH employs different peer reviewers from year to year.

3. My project is interdisciplinary. What category should I select from the drop-down menu for "Field of Project" on Form III (the NEH Supplemental Information for Individuals Form)?

NEH supports proposals that cross disciplinary boundaries (as well as proposals that are rooted in a single discipline). On the NEH Supplemental Information for Individuals Form you may select up to three disciplinary fields that characterize your project. If you select more than one, list the primary field—the field in which your project makes its most significant contribution—first. In selecting referees, you should choose two who can effectively attest to your ability to work in the disciplines that are relevant to your project.

Program staff will use this information as a means of assigning your application to an appropriate review panel.

4. What constitutes a good title for my project?

Your title should be brief (not exceeding 125 characters, including spaces and punctuation) and descriptive of the project. It should also be free of specialized language that might not be understood by the general public.

Avoid using a main title that requires clarification by the subtitle. For example, "A History of Counterfeiting in the U.S., 1776-1900" is clearer than "Fakes and Fakers: A History of Counterfeiting in the U.S., 1776-1990."

When possible, include places and dates indicating a project's scope. For example, "Faith and Belief among New York City Catholics, 1945-1970" is clearer than "Faith and Belief in the Catholic Community."

If a person is mentioned in your title, include dates and description. For example, "A Biography of German Philosopher Klaus von Guberstopper (1834-1910)" is clearer than "A Biography of Klaus von Guberstopper."

Use words and phrases that are informative and specific rather than puzzling or intriguing. For example, "A Cultural History of the Telephone and Telecommunications in America, 1950-2015" is clearer than "Ten Digits and a Party Line: A Study of a Number and a Nation."

Omit technical terms, jargon, and unfamiliar words. For example, "Time, Space, and Clocks in the 19th-Century British Novel" is clearer than "Chronotopes and Horologics in the 19th-Century British Novel."

NEH reserves the right to re-title funded projects that do not follow agency guidelines. Award recipients, however, are permitted to use their preferred title for any award products.

5. My referee is unable to submit a letter online. Is there an alternative?

NEH strongly encourages referees to submit their letters online. If this is not possible, referees may e-mail letters to stipends@neh.gov or fax them to 202-606-8204.

6. I submitted an application, but my referees haven't received requests for their letters. Why not?

If your referees haven't yet received their requests, it's probably because NEH hasn't yet sent them the requests. NEH will contact all referees approximately seven to ten days after the application deadline—not seven to ten days after you submitted your application (if you submitted it before the application deadline). You will be notified by e-mail when each of your letters of reference has been received. After you have received the Grants.gov Agency Tracking Number Assignment message, you may check the status of your letters of reference by logging in to the secure area of NEH's website. Enter your NEH application number and your Grants.gov tracking number. You will be able to see the names and e-mail addresses of your letter writers and whether their letters of reference have arrived. If necessary, you may send reminders to your letter writers (including the upload link) from this site. Do not contact your referees about the non-arrival of their letters until you know that they've received requests from NEH for their letters.

Your referees also will not receive the NEH requests if you provide incorrect or multiple e-mail addresses for them, or addresses for accounts that they don't check regularly.

7. Is it possible to change a referee after the application deadline?

Yes. To do so, please contact the program staff at stipends@neh.gov or at 202-606-8200. Indicate which referee you would like to replace and provide the contact information, including e-mail address, for the new referee.

8. Are late letters of reference accepted?

Yes. All letters will automatically be added to your file as soon as they are uploaded by the referee. But if an external reviewer has already reviewed the file, it is unlikely that he or she will take the late letter into account.

9. Does a missing letter of reference disqualify my application?

No. Your application will still be eligible for review and for an award. Evaluators may, however, find your application less persuasive if one or both letters are missing.

10. How will my application be reviewed?

All applications receive peer review. Scholars in the humanities will read and rate your application, using the review criteria listed in Section II of the application guidelines. NEH staff comments on matters of fact or on significant issues that otherwise would be missing from these reviews, then makes recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities. The National Council meets at various times during the year to advise the NEH chairman. The chairman takes into account the advice provided by the review process and, by law, makes all funding decisions. More details about NEH's review process are available [here](#).

11. Can I see the reviewers' comments after the competition?

Yes. The notification you receive about the decision made on your application will contain instructions for requesting the reviewers' comments. If your application is unsuccessful, the comments may help you revise it for resubmission.

IV. Using Grants.gov

1. How do I know if I have submitted my application successfully?

After you submit your application, Grants.gov will send you up to four e-mail messages confirming receipt of your application. These messages represent different stages in the application acceptance process. You should verify that you have received all of the following four confirmation messages. Please note that e-mail filters may send these messages to your spam or junk folder.

Message 1: After you submit your application, Grants.gov will immediately assign the application a Grants.gov tracking number (a number like GRANT11791444). Grants.gov will send you an e-mail with this number. The subject line of the message will include the words "Grants.gov Submission Receipt."

Message 2: At this point Grants.gov attempts to validate the application. If everything checks out, Grants.gov will send you a **second** e-mail confirming that it validated the application, and that it will send the application to NEH. The subject line of the message will include the words "Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt for Application." (This message—and all subsequent messages from Grants.gov—again includes the Grants.gov tracking number.) But if Grants.gov discovers a problem with the application (for example, the project description component of the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance exceeds the thousand-character limit, or a file name exceeds the character limit), then the attempt at validation fails; Grants.gov accordingly rejects the application. Grants.gov would then send you a message, indicating that the application has been "rejected with errors," and that you must resubmit. Once you correct the error and resubmit, the process starts all over again. (In other words, Grants.gov would then send you a new version of Message 1, including a new Grants.gov tracking number.) Note that NEH does not receive an application that Grants.gov rejects because it has errors. Your application must be received and validated by Grants.gov prior to the application deadline.

Message 3: After Grants.gov has validated the application, NEH uploads the application. Grants.gov then sends you a **third** e-mail to that effect. The subject line of the message will

include the words "Grants.gov Agency Retrieval Receipt for Application." (The "agency" mentioned in the subject line is NEH, which Grants.gov also calls the "grantor agency.")

Message 4: At this point, NEH assigns its own application number (different from the Grants.gov tracking number) to the application. (The NEH application number will begin with two or three capital letters, followed by a hyphen, followed by six numbers: for example, HD-123456, or HDD-123456.) NEH then informs Grants.gov of the application number that it has assigned. Grants.gov then sends you a **fourth** e-mail, providing the NEH application number (as well as, again, the Grants.gov tracking number). The subject line of the message will include the words "Grants.gov Agency Tracking Number Assignment for Application." (What Grants.gov calls the "agency tracking number" is what NEH calls the application number.)

Grants.gov normally sends these e-mail messages within twenty-four hours of the submission of an application. Delays can, however, occur when system usage is heavy or during scheduled maintenance. Each message includes your application's Grants.gov tracking number, and the fourth message also includes the NEH application number. Keep these messages for your records.

If you receive a message (ordinarily the second message) indicating that your application has been rejected, read it carefully. It should explain what was wrong with your application, and what you must do to fix the problem. Once you fix the problem, you can resubmit the application (so long as you do so before the program's application deadline).

If you submit an application and don't receive all four of the e-mail messages, check your "spam" folder, which may contain one or more of them. If you still can't find them, use the Grants.gov Track my Application tool to check the status of your application. If you're unable to check online, contact Grants.gov immediately to determine the status of your application, by calling 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726) or sending an e-mail to support@grants.gov. Include the Grants.gov tracking number in correspondence regarding the application.

It is your responsibility as an applicant to confirm that Grants.gov and subsequently NEH have received and validated/accepted your application.

2. What is the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Individual Form, and where do I find it?

The Application for Federal Domestic Assistance – Individual Form is a standard government application form. It is included in the "Mandatory Documents" field of the application package that you access through Grants.gov Workspace. To begin filling out the form, click on Application for Federal Domestic Assistance – Individual Form to open it. (In Section III of the guidelines, "Submitting your Application," see the discussion of Form I under STEP 4.)

3. What is a DUNS number? How do I find out my institution's number?

DUNS stands for "data universal numbering system." DUNS numbers are issued by Dun and Bradstreet (D & B) and consist of nine digits. If you have institutional affiliation, you should be able to get this number from your sponsored research office.

More information about DUNS numbers is available here.