



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS

# FELLOWSHIPS FOR ADVANCED SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ON JAPAN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated February 15, 2024

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## A. Program Description

### **1. Can I apply for an award lasting less than six months or more than twelve months?**

No. The period of performance ranges from six to twelve months. NEH will not consider applications requesting a period of performance shorter than six months or longer than twelve months.

### **2. Can I work part time or break up my period of performance?**

No. The period of performance must be *full-time* and *continuous*.

### **3. Can I change the period of performance of my fellowship if I receive an award?**

Yes. If NEH offers you an award, you will have the opportunity to change the start date of your fellowship. The new period of performance must still fall within the dates specified in Section B2. of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). You cannot lengthen your period of performance, but you can shorten it to no fewer than six months. NEH will not delay the period of performance beyond the stated timelines of the NOFO to accommodate overlapping individual awards.

### **4. I don't have advanced Japanese language skills, and I would like to conduct my research with the assistance of a translator. Can I still apply?**

Yes, but the program is intended to support researchers who have advanced Japanese language skills and who will interpret materials or sources in Japanese as part of their research. Peer reviewers tend to find proposals that will make use of translators less competitive.

**5. My project is a [database, edition, memoir, etc.]. Is it eligible for this program?**

Section D6. of the NOFO includes a list of funding restrictions. They can change from year to year, so you should check the current list to ensure your project is allowed. Contact the program staff at [fellowships@neh.gov](mailto:fellowships@neh.gov) if you have questions about this list.

**6. The Notice of Funding Opportunity states that awards must result in a product. Does the product have to be finished by the end of the award period?**

No. You may finish your product (or products) after the award period has ended. Your work plan must indicate what you expect to accomplish during the award period and when you expect to finish the project as a whole. Please see the instructions for the work plan attachment in section D2. of the NOFO.

**B. Application and Submission Information**

**1. How important is the format of the application (including page limits)?**

Applications must follow the format prescribed in the NOFO. NEH will not consider applications that violate the formatting instructions, including page limits.

**2. What are the rules about appendices?**

Appendices are required for editions, translations, and database projects. You may include an appendix if your project involves visual materials, but it is not required. There is a one-page limit for each item. Please see the instructions in Section D2. for Attachments 5-7 in the NOFO. NEH will not review applications including extraneous material.

**3. What help is available for preparing the application?**

NEH staff can answer questions about preparing your application and your eligibility. You can reach staff at (202) 606-8200 and at [fellowships@neh.gov](mailto:fellowships@neh.gov). Because of the large number of applications received in the NEH's fellowships programs, staff members are not able to comment on draft applications.

We encourage you to review the samples of previously funded applications, which are available on the [program resource page](#). A list of recent awards is also available there.

Staff holds an online information session before each application deadline. Information about participating or watching a recording appears on the [program resource page](#).

**4. How should I title my application? Does NEH change project titles?**

Your title should be descriptive of the project, substantive, and free of specialized language. It should be easily understood by the general public. Omit technical terms, jargon, and unfamiliar

words. The title may not exceed 125 characters (including spaces and punctuation). Your NEH project title does not necessarily have to be the same as the title of your proposed publication.

Avoid using a main title that requires clarification by the subtitle.

When possible, include places and dates indicating a project's scope. For example, "Disaster Recovery and Resilience in Fukushima, Japan, 2012-2022" is clearer than "Japanese Disaster Recovery and Resilience."

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. I cannot submit my application because the "Apply" button on the Grants.gov website is grayed out. What should I do?**

You must create an "individual applicant" profile, or you will not be able to submit your application. See Section D3. of the NOFO (Grants.gov Registration Process) for instructions.

**6. What technical support is available if I have trouble using Grants.gov or submitting the application?**

Grants.gov operates a help desk. You can request technical support by sending email to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or calling 1-800-518-4726. Please do not contact NEH with technical questions about using Grants.gov.

**7. Is it possible to extend the deadline?**

No. NEH will not review late applications, except in the rare cases covered by NEH's [policy on late submissions](#).

**C. Letters of Reference**

**1. Will NEH notify me when my letter writers have submitted their letters?**

Yes. NEH will notify you by email when each of your letters of reference has arrived. After Grants.gov notifies you that NEH has received your application, you may also check the status of your letters of reference by logging in to the secure area of NEH's website. For more information, see Section D7. of the Notice of Funding Opportunity ("Other Submission Requirements").

**2. One of my letter writers did not receive the email from NEH requesting the letter. What should I do?**

NEH will not send out requests for letters until approximately two weeks after the deadline. If, even allowing for this, one of your letter writers has not received the request, it is usually because a junk email filter captured the request or because you provided an incorrect email address. (The NEH system uses the address exactly as you entered it.) You may resend the link to your letter writers by logging in to the [secure area of the NEH website](#). If you need to correct an error in an email address, please contact the program staff at [fellowships@neh.gov](mailto:fellowships@neh.gov).

**3. Is it possible to change a letter writer after the application deadline?**

Yes. Contact the program staff at [fellowships@neh.gov](mailto:fellowships@neh.gov). Indicate which letter writer you would like to replace and provide the contact information, including email address, for the new person.

**4. Will NEH accept letters of reference after the stated deadline?**

Yes. NEH will automatically add all letters to your file when your references upload them. However, if one or more external reviewers have already reviewed your application, it is possible that they will not take the late letter into account.

**5. Does a missing letter of reference disqualify my application?**

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

**D. Application Review Information**

**1. How will my application be reviewed?**

All applications receive peer review. More details about NEH's review process are available in section E2. of the NOFO and [here](#).

**2. Can I see the evaluators' comments after the competition?**

Yes. The notification you receive about the decision made on your application will contain instructions for requesting the evaluators' comments. If your application is unsuccessful, the comments may help you revise it for resubmission. Even if your application is successful, we encourage you to request evaluator comments as they may help inform the project.

**3. I applied for a fellowship last year and my application was unsuccessful. Will I be at a disadvantage if I reapply?**

No. NEH encourages previous applicants to revise their applications and reapply. NEH recruits different reviewers from year to year and does not inform reviewers that a particular application was previously unsuccessful.