



DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

HUMANITIES INITIATIVES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated January 16, 2025

1. My organization is eligible to apply to more than one Humanities Initiatives program. Which one is right for our institution?

There are five Humanities Initiatives (HI) programs.

Any U.S. accredited public or 501(c)(3) private institution of higher education can apply to Humanities Initiatives at Colleges and Universities. NEH limits each of the other four programs to certain eligible institutions: Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and community colleges.

If they are eligible to do so, institutions should submit their proposals to Humanities Initiatives at Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Humanities Initiatives at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Humanities Initiatives at Tribal Colleges and Universities, or Humanities Initiatives at Community Colleges. The peer review panel for each program is composed of experts in the relevant field. Therefore, if a community college applies to the Humanities Initiatives at Colleges and Universities program, its application will go before a panel of experts on the humanities at colleges and universities in general. If the community college instead applies to the Humanities Initiatives at Community Colleges program, its application will go before a panel of experts on the humanities at community colleges in particular.

Eligible institutions may submit multiple applications for separate and distinct projects under this announcement but may not submit multiple applications for essentially the same project.

See C. Eligibility Information in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for details.

2. Our institution plans to submit multiple Humanities Initiatives proposals. Will NEH fund only one?

It depends. NEH evaluates each application on its own merits. NEH might fund all applications, some, or none. As a reminder, you may not include overlapping project costs in two or more

applications for federal funding. In addition, an individual's level of effort cannot exceed 100% across multiple active federally funded awards.

3. May our institution apply for more than one NEH award at the same time?

Yes. However, you may not propose as your project director someone who will hold a full-time NEH individual award during the period of performance or if their level of effort would be more than 100% across multiple federal awards. Applicants interested in applying for more than one award should consult with an NEH program officer.

4. What first steps should we take in developing an NEH Humanities Initiatives grant proposal?

Read the NOFO carefully, including the eligibility requirements in C. Eligibility Information and the review criteria for your application in E1. Review Criteria. You may wish to discuss your proposal with colleagues or consult with a grants officer at your institution, if one is available. After this preparation, contact an NEH program officer for answers to questions, advice on the proposal, and review of draft proposals. The submission of a draft is optional. If you wish to submit a draft, consult D4. Submission Dates and Times in the NOFO for the deadline. Email hi@neh.gov to reach NEH program staff.

Your organization must also register with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) and [Grants.gov](#); this process is described in D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management.

5. Are sample narratives available?

Yes. Sample narratives are available on the program resource pages for the five Humanities Initiatives programs: [Humanities Initiatives at Colleges and Universities](#), [Humanities Initiatives at Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#), [Humanities Initiatives at Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#), [Humanities Initiatives at Tribal Colleges and Universities](#), and [Humanities Initiatives at Community Colleges](#).

6. Does our institution need a grant writer to prepare an application?

No. NEH staff members are available to answer your questions and assist you as you prepare your proposal. Contact program staff at hi@neh.gov.

7. Our institution applied for an award last year and was unsuccessful. Will NEH hold this against us if we apply again this year?

No. NEH evaluates all applications as new applications. If you are revising a previous submission, you may find it helpful to request the reviewers' comments on that application and to consult with an NEH program officer. To request the reviewers' comments or to get in touch with an NEH program officer, email hi@neh.gov.

8. May we continue the work of a currently funded project with a subsequent NEH Humanities Initiatives award?

An institution whose project is currently receiving NEH support may apply for support for a new or subsequent stage of that project. NEH will not give these proposals special consideration and will judge them by the same criteria as others in the current competition. In addition, you must have substantially updated your new proposal and must include a description of new activities and a new budget justification.

9. May we use an NEH Humanities Initiatives award to pursue independent research?

No. NEH does, however, support independent research in the humanities through its [Public Scholar](#), [NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication](#), [Fellowships](#), [Fellowships for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan](#), and [Summer Stipends](#) programs, as well as the Awards for Faculty [at Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#), [at Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#), and [at Tribal Colleges and Universities](#). NEH also supports independent research indirectly through the [Fellowship Programs at Independent Research Institutions](#) program.

10. May the project director also serve as the institutional grant administrator?

No. The project director may not serve as the institutional grant administrator. The role of the project director is distinct from that of the institutional grant administrator, who functions as the representative of the recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the administration of the award. The institutional grant administrator must sign or countersign all financial reports and prior approval requests such as budget revisions, extensions of the period of performance, and changes in key personnel. Similarly, NEH will address all official correspondence (for example, an offer letter, the award document, an extension, a supplement, or amendment) to the institutional grant administrator and copy the project director. The project director is the person directly in charge of the conduct of the funded project. Because the project director's involvement in the project is critical to its success, the replacement of the project director or the co-director or a substantial reduction in the level of their effort (for example, an unanticipated absence for more than three months, or a 25% reduction in the time devoted to the project) requires prior written approval from NEH.

11. How will we know if we have submitted our application successfully?

Please see: [Confirm that you successfully submitted your application](#). It is your responsibility as an applicant to confirm that Grants.gov and subsequently NEH have received your application.

12. When will NEH notify us of the outcome of our application?

NEH will notify applicants of funding decisions by email by the date specified in E4. in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. See sections E4 and F1 of the NOFO for additional information.