Disclaimer

The following slides are used to supplement a public oral presentation for potential NEH applicants. They are not intended to provide complete information about the NEH's programs and they do not constitute an official statement of NEH policy. For current information about NEH programs, including eligibility requirements and the dates of deadlines, please consult the guidelines posted on the NEH website at NEH.Gov.

Funding Digital Projects at the NEH

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Hi! I'm Meaghan Brown. I joined the NEH in 2019, where I am a program officer in the Division of Research Programs. I am currently the Team Lead for the NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication. Today I'm going to tell you a bit about the NEH, opportunities for funding digital projects, and the application process.

What is the NEH?

First, What is the NEH?

Defining the humanities

"The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study and interpretation of the following: **language**, both modern and classical; **linguistics**; **literature**; **history**; **jurisprudence**; **philosophy**; **archaeology**; **comparative religion**; **ethics**; **the history, criticism and theory of the arts**; those aspects of the **social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods**; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

--National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965, as amended

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent federal agency created in 1965. It is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United states. The term "humanities" encompasses a large number of disciplines, from literature and history to archaeology, ethics, art history, and the humanistic social sciences.
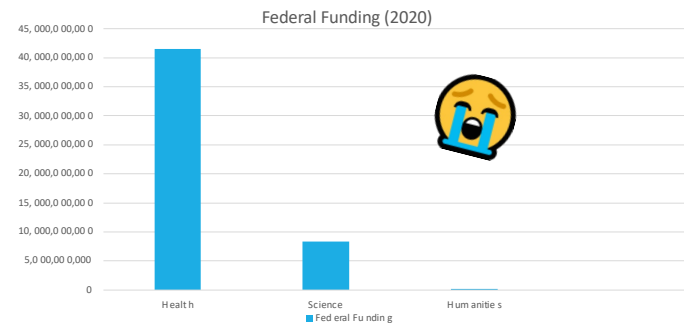
We're part of a diverse funding ecosystem, which includes other federal funders

And private foundations.

Federal funding across agencies

Federal Funding (2020)

We are not, however, among the top destinations for federal funding dollars. Unfortunately, this means we often get far larger numbers of excellent applications than we can fund in a given year. Many of our applicants apply several times before receiving funding.

Today's Agenda

1. Opportunities for funding digital projects

2. Questions! Answers!

3. The application process and tips

4. Questions! Answers!

So in this webinar, I'm going to tell you about the many different programs that fund digital projects, and then we'll tackle the application process with some tips for applying.

What types of digital projects do we fund?

Just as the humanities vary widely, so does our funding for digital projects

Collections and Access

Digital Research and Publication

Digital Public Engagement

Curricula and Pedagogy

Methods and Software

We fund a wide range of activities that result in digital projects. These can vary from digitization and the preservation of born-digital materials, to digital scholarship in a range of forms, to digital outreach to the general public, and digital projects aimed at students. We fund both digital publications and the development of innovative software and platforms for supporting such publications. The key is that these activities are funded through different programs, and those different programs allow different types of activities: some fund equipment and some don't; some fund certain research activities but not others; some fund single researchers and some are institutional grants for collaboration. The majority of these programs are NOT in our Office of Digital Humanities. So the first step is to find the best fit for your goals.

If your goal is to digitize and preserve collections materials, without an interpretive argument, the best fit is often our Humanities Collections and Reference Resources program in the Division of Preservation and Access. This program has two levels: a Foundations project can be up to $50,000 (with an extra $10K for inter-institutional projects), while the Implementation level can be up to $350,000. This grant is an Institutional grant and is expected to be collaborative. Someone asked in the pre-submitted questions whether the NEH would fund equipment for a new digital archiving technique such as 3D photogrammetry: this program might be a good option for that if you're using established techniques to image a collection at your institution. This program can pay for equipment and training. This program does *not* support funding for documenting endangered languages, because that work is supported by:
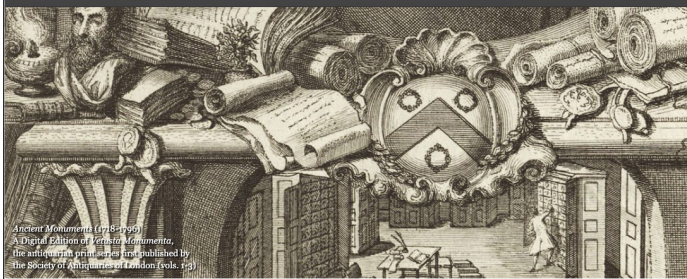
Collections and Access

A **Documenting Endangered Languages Preservation grant** was awarded to the Salem-based Living Tongues Institute for the documentation and analysis of seven Munda languages and the development of the Munda Virtual Archive. PD-281083-21

A joint program between the NEH and the NSF. The Documenting Endangered Languages Senior Research grants (also Division of Preservation and Access) offer awards up to $450,000 for digital resources and publications that advance our knowledge of endangered human languages. These awards also go to organizations and the award period can run up to 3 years. Conversely, there's also a Documenting Endangered Languages Fellowship for individuals (administered out of the Research Division) which can provide $5,000 a month for six to twelve months for individuals to work on digital grammars, dictionaries, language resources or other digital language tools.

If your primary goal is the translation or scholarly edition of an important humanities text, the best program would be the Research Division's Scholarly Editions and Scholarly Translations grant. This institutional grant can award up to $300,000 for up to 3 years; up to $450,000 is available if you raise at least $150,000 in matching funds. While not limited to digital editions, the vast majority of products for this grant are digital these days.

RavenSpace

K̲AN'S HIȽILE (MAKING IT RIGHT)

A Collaborative Reframing of Kwakiutl Film and Audio Recordings with Franz Boas, 1930

Edited by Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse, with essays and contributions by Coreen Child, Kaleb Child, and Tommy Child of the Kwakiutl (Kwagu'ł) First Nation

On his last trip to the Northwest coast in 1930, noted anthropologist Franz Boas and his Tlingit/English colleague George Hunt created audio and film recordings of crafts, games, and dancing in the Kwagu'ł village of Tsaxis (Fort Rupert), British Columbia. Boas was deeply interested in the expressive forms of Kwakwa̠ka̠'wakw culture and worked with Hunt and other members of the extended Hunt, Knox, and Wilson families to make 51 minutes of short films showing technology, games, speeches, and a variety of hereditary dance privileges, most of which are still danced today.

Available Soon

Digital Research

An **NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication grant** provided 12 months of research time to Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse at the University of Washington for work on "A Collaborative Reframing of Franz Boas's Documentation of the Kwakiutl First Nation in 1930." FEL-257485-18

If you are seeking funding for *individual* work towards a digital research project, such as a digital monograph, website, or interactive resource, you have several options. While digital projects are eligible for our main Fellowships program and in our popular Summer Stipends program, the NEH-Mellon Fellowships for Digital Publication is a special opportunity for **individuals** whose research is best expressed in digital forms. This can mean projects that have a high level of multimedia content, including 3D content, interactive elements, flexible navigation, or other digital features not available in print. These awards pay $5,000 per month for 6 to 12 months.

Digital Research 2

A **Collaborative Research grant** supports Texas Christian University's creation of a digital oral history collection and a multi-authored book on civil rights in Texas.

RZ-230434-15

If your digital research project is better suited to a team effort and you need funding for multiple contributors, our Collaborative Grants have a special Scholarly Digital Project track. These projects require an interpretive argument. This grant is paid to **organizations** and can be up to $250,000 and up to three years.

Someone asked if we funded transdisciplinary collaborations. The answer is yes, all the time. For example, in 2020, we funded a collaborative digital project based at the University of Mississippi Medical center that investigates the Mississippi Lunatic Asylum as a site of history and memory. Scholars involved bring expertise in history, bioethics, law, philosophy, comparative literature, English, Anthropology, and public history.

Digital Research NEW GRANT PROGRAM!

First Deadline: February 2, 2023

Funding: Up to $75,000 (individuals) or $150,000 (teams)

DANGERS & OPPORTUNITIES OF TECHNOLOGY: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE HUMANITIES

We have a brand-new program this year called the Dangers and Opportunities of Technology program, which supports research into technology and its role in social and cultural issues. If you are interested in the ethics of technology, this is the program for you. The very first deadline was yesterday, which gives you a year to plan for the next one. Applications to this award must be made by organizations, but the two levels are determined by how many researchers it supports: Up to $75,000 for one researcher or $150,000 for a team. The projects can be 24 months long.

Public Engagement

A **Digital Projects for the Public Discovery Grant** is allowing the High Desert Museum in Bend, Oregon to develop a digital map showing the dynamic relationships between people, wildlife, and landscapes of the High Desert.

MD-277043-21
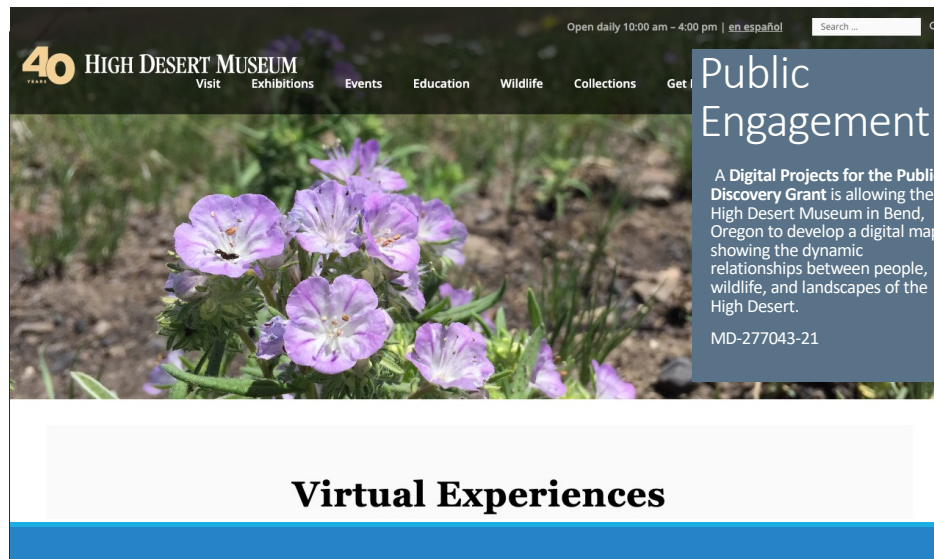
If your goal is to interpret and analyze humanities topics for the general public, the Digital Projects for the Public in our Public Programs division may be the best fit. This grant has three levels: Discovery grants award up to $30,000; Prototyping grants award up to $100,000 dollars, and Production grants award up to $400,000. The award period can be from one to three years. Products can include websites, mobile apps, interactive touch screens and kiosks, games, and VR.

Digital Pedagogy

A **Humanities Connections Planning Grant** to the University of Portland is facilitating the planning of new interdisciplinary Core "engaged humanities" courses and the creation of a humanities hub to serve the new curriculum.

AKA-285707-22
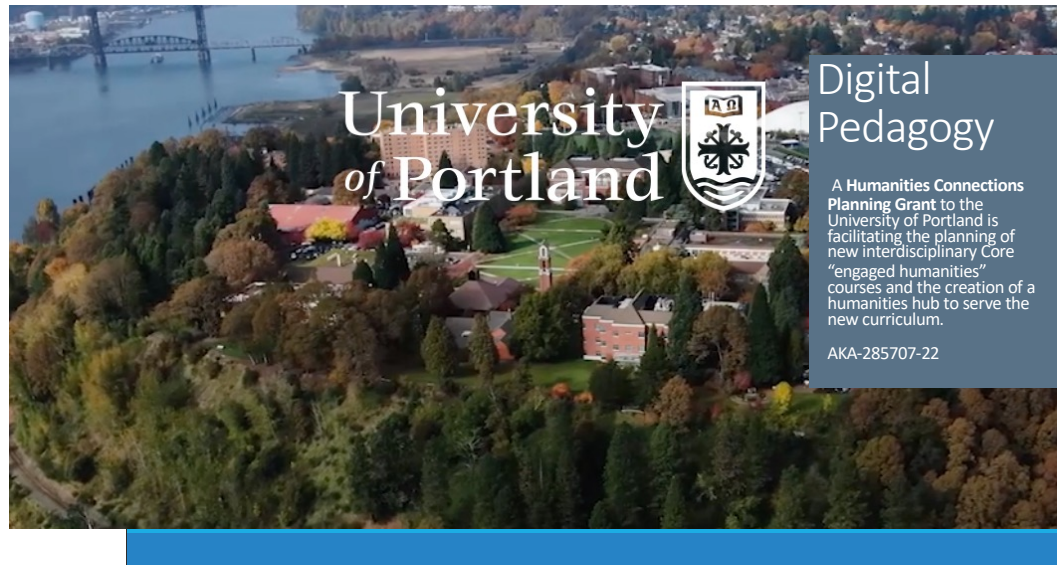
Perhaps your goal is to develop pedagogy that uses digital methods to teach humanities topics. Designed to support innovative curricular approaches that employ partnerships among humanities faculty and their counterparts in the social and natural sciences, **Humanities Connections grants** have been used to develop curricula in data science, digital humanities, and public humanities courses with a strong digital component. This would be a good program if you're considering collaborating with biology or pre-med faculty on a medical humanities course, for example. This award has two levels: up to $35,000 for Planning, or up to $150,000 for Implementation.

Digital Pedagogy 2

An **Institutes for Advanced Topics in Digital Humanities** grant supported an institute for Community College Digital Humanists, "Beyond pockets of innovation, toward a community of practice" put on by Lane Community College in Eugene.

HT-50085-14
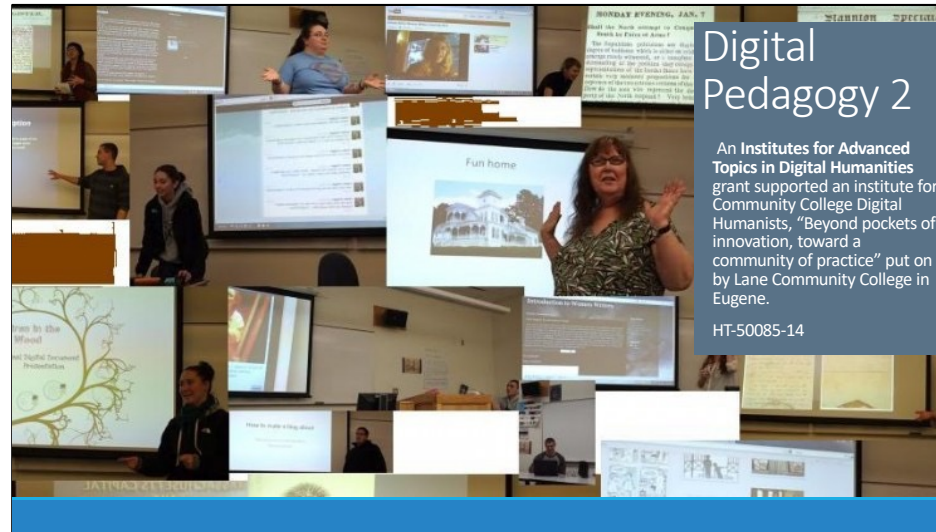
Institutes for Advanced Topics in Digital Humanities, on the other hand, provides the opportunity to craft training for **scholars** in digital skills. Applicants to this program run workshops and institutes on topics that in the past have ranged from spatial Archaeology to advanced digital editing, and public digital humanities to cultural analytics. The maximum award is $250,000 for 36 months.

Experimental Methods

A **Digital Humanities Advancement Grant** is supporting the creation of new interactive timeline visualizations for Time Online II: The Time Charts of Joseph Priestly at the University of Oregon.

HAA-271794-20
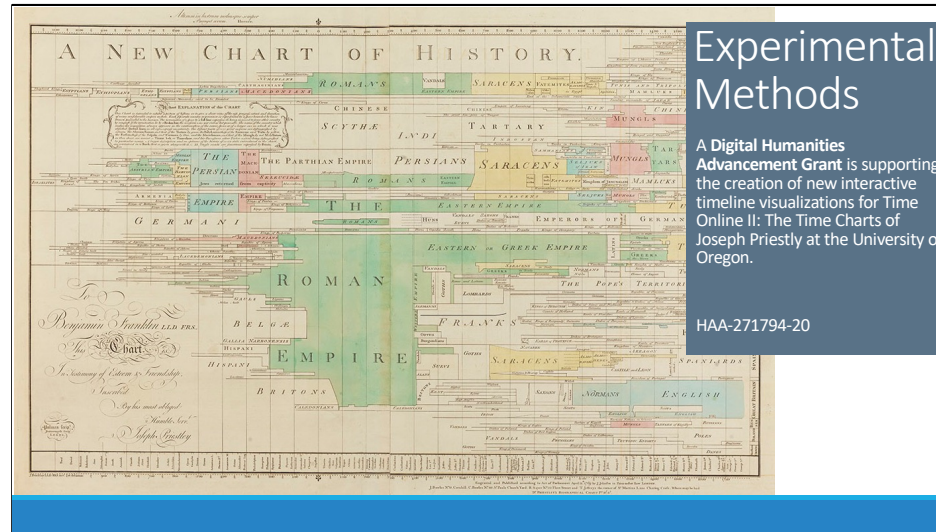
Finally, when people think of "Digital projects" at the NEH, they often think of the Digital Humanities Advancement Grants program, which funds innovative software and platform development. This is the program you want if you're creating a tool, method, teaching resources, or platform that will be usable by multiple projects. This award has three levels: Level 1 is $75,000, level II is $150,000 and level III can be $350,000, with a potential additional $50,000 in matching funds. This is an institutional award. Although this has "Digital Humanities" in the name, it's designed for the innovative and experimental, or computationally very challenging projects – if you're doing research using well-established tools and methods, or creating a curriculum to teach students to do digital humanities, or any of the other tasks we've talked about, other programs at the NEH may well be a better fit.

Today' Agenda

1. Opportunities for funding digital projects

2. Pause for Questions about Opportunities

3. The application process and tips

4. Questions! Answers!

Before I move on to the application process, does anyone have a question about the programs I just mentioned?

The Application Process

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Choose a          Read the Notice        Talk with
program      →    of Funding       →     program staff
                  Opportunity
                        ↓
Submit a draft →  Submit a         →     Review panels
                  proposal
                        ↓
National     →    Chair's decision →     Award
Council                                  announcements
```

The application process for an NEH grant can take from nine months to a year, depending on the program. Your first step is to find the right program for your project and carefully read the Notice of Funding Opportunity, which lays out all the necessary information about what is allowed in that grant program and how to apply. We encourage you to reach out to program staff for any questions you might have about fit, eligibility, or the application process itself. Many of our programs accept drafts. You should check the program website to find out if the program you are interested in does so. It often takes between two weeks and a month for a draft to be returned with comments. Submitting a draft is completely voluntary and does not factor into the decision-making process. Once you've submitted the application, we sort them into peer review panels of between 3 and 5 scholars. They make recommendations, which are then considered by the National Council on the Humanities three times a year. The National Council makes their own recommendations, and by law, the Chair of the Endowment makes the final funding decision.

Grant Snapshot

Maximum award amount: $5,000 per month

Open to: Individuals

Expected output: Digital Resource or Publication

Period of performance: Six to twelve months

Application available: December 21, 2022

Optional draft due: February 28, 2023

Deadline: April 19, 2023

Expected notification date: December 15, 2023

Project start date: January 1, 2024 – September 1, 2024

Contact the Division of Research Programs Team
202-606-8200
fellowships@neh.gov

The Grant Website

On each grant website, there is a brief summary of important dates. This will tell you if a program accepts drafts (as the NEH-Mellon Fellowships do here), the deadline, the expected notification date, and the potential start dates. Note that projects in this program can be notified in mid-December and start January 1. That's a tight turn around! We do allow awardees to revise that start date if needed.

Funding page continued, with a look at the application package section

If you scroll down on the grant website, the Notice of Funding Opportunity (or NOFO, because we love acronyms) can be found under "Step 1: Review your Application package." You'll also find an FAQ here, as well as sample narratives to show you how successful projects have tackled the format in the past.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

**Funding Opportunity Title:
Digital Humanities Advancement Grants**

Funding Opportunity Number: 20220114-HAA

Funding Opportunity Type: New

Federal Assistance Listing Number: 45.169

**Application Deadline:
January 14, 2022
June 24, 2022**

The NOFO is a long and bureaucratic document, but it contains valuable information. Even if you applied before, you should review the NOFO as we adjust requirements each year in our attempt to make the process clearer, easier, and more fair.

The Application Package (section D2)

Attachments			
1: List of personnel	personnel.pdf	Required	
2: Narrative	narrative.pdf	Required	Level I: 4 pages Level II: 6 pages Level III: 8 pages (Mandatory)
3: Work plan	workplan.pdf	Required	3 pages (Mandatory)
4: Biographies	biographies.pdf	Required	1 paragraph per team member (Mandatory)
5: Data management plan	datamanagement.pdf	Required	2 pages (Mandatory)
6: Sustainability plan	sustainability.pdf	Required for Level III	3 pages (Mandatory)
7: Appendices	appendices.pdf	Recommended	10 pages (Suggested)
8: Letters of commitment	letters.pdf	Recommended	
9: Subrecipient budget(s)	subrecipient.pdf	Conditionally required	
10: Federally negotiated indirect costs rate agreement	agreement.pdf	Conditionally required	
11: Explanation of delinquent federal debt	delinquentdebt.pdf	Conditionally required	

The NOFO will include detailed information about each part of the application package. It will indicate what each attachment should be called, any page limits, and whether the attachment is required, conditionally required, or optional. So for example, in the Digital Humanities Advancement Grants, in addition to the standard grants.gov forms, you are required at all levels to include the list of personnel, the narrative (with different page limits depending on the level you're aiming for), a 3-page work plan, biographies of your personnel, budget documents, a 2-page data management plan, and Level 3 applicants are required to have a 3-page sustainability plan. Letters of commitment from your collaborators are optional. The NOFO will include detailed descriptions of what should go in each of these documents. DO NOT include anything in your application package that we do not ask for. Do NOT go over page limits. Do NOT use file formats other than PDF (the grants.gov system will, to use the technical term, barf). This includes for things like samples of visual materials, tables and charts. If you want to use a gantt chart for your work plan, the output must still be PDF. Your application will be ruled ineligible if you go outside these formatting requirements.

The Narrative

Narrative Alignment

Each section of the narrative aligns with corresponding review criteria. Use the crosswalk to ensure you address all criteria.

Narrative Section	**Review Criteria**
Overview of the project	1 and 2
Enhancing the humanities	1
Environmental scan	2
History of the project	2
Activities and project team	3, 4, and 5
Final products and dissemination	1 and 3

The narrative is where you make the case for funding your project. The NOFO describes how the narrative should be arranged and how each section corresponds to one of the review criteria. We **strongly** advise using the subheadings provided in the nofo so that your evaluators can easily see how your project meets the review criteria.

The Review Criteria (section E1)

1. Review Criteria

Peer reviewers will use the following criteria to review applications in the DHAG program:

Criterion 1: The intellectual significance and impact of the project for the humanities

(corresponds to narrative sections Enhancing the humanities and Final product and dissemination)
- **For projects developing new technology, infrastructure scholarly methods, or evaluative studies**, what is the potential to enhance scholarly research, teaching, and learning in the humanities?
- **For projects making use of existing technology or methods**, how will a new application or collaboration advance humanities scholarship, teaching, and learning?
- **For all projects**,
  - Are the intended audiences or users well defined and are the dissemination and outreach plans appropriate for reaching these communities?
  - Are goals and outcomes clearly described and appropriate?
  - What is the potential impact of this project's proposed outcomes?

Criterion 2: The quality of the overall conception, organization, and description of how the proposed work sits within a broader context, and quality of the argument for new (or further) work in this area

(corresponds with the narrative sections Environmental scan and History of the project)
- Is there similar work already underway in this area? If so, how does this project differ and how might it complement existing work and advance the field? If not, is there a demonstrated need or interest for additional work in this area?

Criterion 3: The feasibility and appropriateness of the activities, work plan, methodology, and use of technology, and the project's plans for mitigating risk and addressing accessibility for its intended audiences

(corresponds to narrative sections Activities and project team and Final product and dissemination and Attachment 3. Work plan)
- Is there a clear plan for implementing the proposed activities and outcomes?
- Are activities described with adequate detail?
- Are the timeline and proposed activities realistic?
- Are the proposed methodologies and/or technologies appropriate for the project goals?
- Are appropriate project personnel associated with specific tasks? Is the project team devoting time to evaluating activities and the project's impact?

Carefully read the Review Criteria for each program and address the questions and concerns it raises in your application. For the majority of our programs, Criterion 1, "Intellectual Significance" (or some variation on it) is viewed as the most important point of evaluation. The criteria are different for each program, and may help you determine which program is the best fit for your goals.

6. Funding Restrictions

You may not use awards made under this notice for the following purposes:

- projects that mainly involve digitization, unless you propose an innovative method for digitization (see Related funding opportunities)
- projects that primarily develop humanities content for websites, mobile applications, games, and virtual environments, unless you propose innovative methods or are developing new technologies (see Related funding opportunities)
- undergraduate or graduate course development (see Related funding opportunities)
- the creation or conversion of a scholarly journal to a digital format (unless you develop new modes or platforms in scholarly publishing)
- recurring maintenance costs that support only the day-to-day operations of existing projects rather than substantive changes or upgrades
- attendance at recurring or established conferences or professional meetings, unless to disseminate project-related findings
- projects in which more than 2/3 of direct costs are for equipment, materials, and supplies(such as to outfit a digital humanities lab or makerspace)
- promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view
- advocacy of a particular program of social or political action
- support of specific public policies or legislation
- lobbying
- projects that fall outside of the humanities; the creation or performance of art; creative writing, autobiographies, memoirs, and creative nonfiction; policy studies; and social science research that does not address humanistic questions and/or utilize humanistic methods

See 2 CFR 200 Subpart E - Cost Principles for other unallowable costs.

Funding Restrictions (section D6)

As you consider which grant is most appropriate for your project, carefully check the list of Funding Restrictions in section D6. This section will list the activities and products that we cannot fund. Some of these are program-specific, so for example the Digital Humanities Advancement Grant pictured here cannot fund digitization or undergraduate curricular development, but that is funded in other programs. Some restrictions aim to support the goals of the program, such as not supporting day-to-day operations of existing projects or the cost of attending regularly occurring professional meetings. Some restrictions are universal: no program at the NEH can fund the promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view; advocacy, lobbying; or the Arts (that's so we don't step on the territory of our sister organization, the NEA).
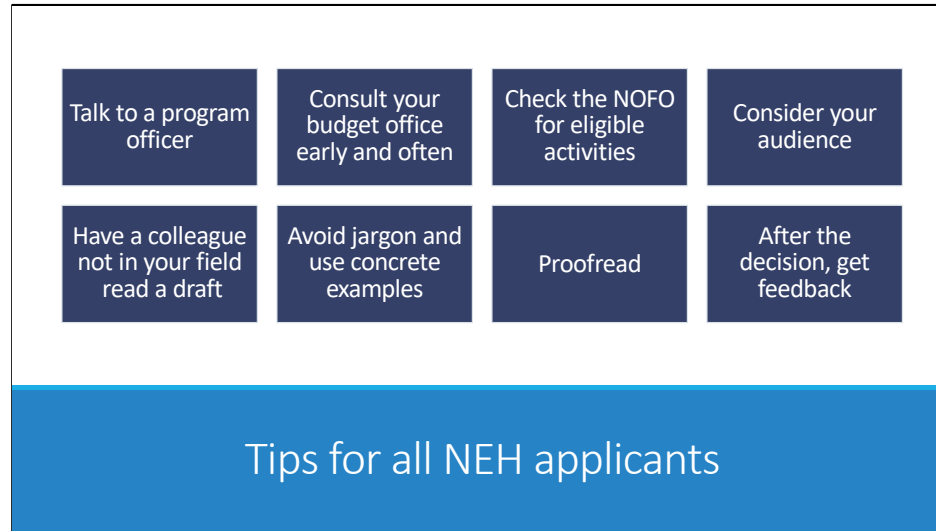
C. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to apply, you must be established in the United States or its jurisdictions as one of the following organization types:

- a nonprofit organization recognized as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
- an accredited institution of higher education (public or nonprofit)
- a state or local government or one of their agencies
- a federally recognized Native American Tribal government

If you are an eligible applicant, you may apply on behalf of a consortium of collaborating organizations. If NEH selects your proposal for funding, you will be programmatically, legally, and fiscally responsible for the award.

To be eligible, you must make substantive contributions to the success of the project and you must not function solely as a fiscal agent for another entity.

Individuals and other organizations, including foreign and for-profit entities, are ineligible.

3. Other Eligibility Information

You may submit multiple applications for separate and distinct projects under this notice. Individuals may serve as a project director or co-director on one DHAG application per deadline but may serve as personnel (not in a leadership role) on more than one DHAG application per deadline.

Degree candidates may not be project directors or co-directors, but may serve in other project roles.

You may revise and resubmit previously rejected applications. Submissions are subject to the application requirements and review criteria of this competition.

If NEH has previously made an award in support of your project, you may submit an application for a new or subsequent stage of the project, which NEH will assess using the same criteria as other applications in this competition.

Per 2 CFR § 200.403(f), you must not include the same project costs in more than one application for federal funding and/or approved federal award budget. However, you may submit multiple proposals for **complementary** aspects of the same overall project. NEH may disallow costs or reject applications with overlapping project costs. An individual's level of effort cannot exceed 100% across multiple active federally funded awards.

Eligibility (section C)

Section C of each NOFO contains important eligibility information. This details who can apply (in the case of the Digital Humanities Advancement Grants, non-profit organizations, accredited institutions of higher education, state or local governments, and federally recognized tribes). I was asked ahead of time about the rules around one institution submitting and receiving multiple awards. There are 3 things to consider: Each NOFO will indicate whether you can apply to multiple NEH programs simultaneously. If you ignore this information, which is in section C3, you will be disqualified from both competitions. 2) If you are applying for the **same project** to separate programs and are hoping for both (AND THEIR NOFOS ALLOW THIS), you must apply with clearly separate scopes of work. Either wholly different and concurrent or the same work over consecutive periods of performance. You cannot double dip. 3) If the same *person* is being funded under two programs, you must make sure their dates and activities don't overlap. Different activities can be concurrent, but not full time. So for example, a scholar cannot hold a Fellowship and be a PI on a Collaborative grant at the same time, as a Fellowships is defined as 100% of the time. We do not mess with the space time continuum at the NEH. Note that this means an institution *can* apply for more than one Institutional grant simultaneously as long as they are distinct projects. For example, the University of Oregon has at least 5 active grants when I checked, including: "Getting the Latest

Scoop: A New Tool to Expand Access to Online Newspaper Collections" from Preservation and Access, "Developing a Global Public Humanities Undergraduate Major Track" from the Division of Education Programs, and "Powering Digital Humanities Teaching and Learning with Static Web Approaches" from the Office of Digital Humanities.

Start early	Choose your grant program	Find your level
Build your team	Compensate adequately	Think sustainably

Tips for successful digital project proposals

So you've started planning early, you've read your NOFOs and chosen your program. Your next step is to determine what the best level is, if the funding opportunity offers multiple levels. Lower levels, sometimes called discovery or planning levels, offer a smaller amount of money for projects just starting out. These let you build a proof of concept, test out ideas, and experiment. Larger grants in the same program may require additional documentation or even a proof of concept for your project, whether funded by us or otherwise. As you plan our project, we strongly recommend that you budget for enough people to achieve your goals and that you plan to adequately compensate them for their time and effort. Where appropriate, peer reviewers want to see that librarians and archives professionals, support staff such as project managers, and technologists are properly involved in decision-making and adequately compensated for their work. Finally, the NEH does not require you to sustain digital projects in perpetuity, but we do ask that you think about maintenance, sustainability, and preservation. Some programs require formal sustainability plans at certain levels; others ask about them as part of the narrative. As always, read the NOFO carefully for requirements specific to that program.

Talk to a program officer	Consult your budget office early and often	Check the NOFO for eligible activities	Consider your audience
Have a colleague not in your field read a draft	Avoid jargon and use concrete examples	Proofread	After the decision, get feedback

Tips for all NEH applicants

Finally, I'm going to end with some more general advice that applies to all applications to the NEH, whether you're hoping to produce a digital or analog product. The first is to talk to program officers about your ideas. Each grant opportunity has a phone number and email address listed on the website, and I can assure you they reach human beings! We're here to help. Second, as you write your application, consider your audience. Our peer review panels are made up of scholars from across the humanities. Your application will likely be read by several people outside your field. You want to avoid jargon and specialized terms, and it helps to provide concrete examples so that someone unfamiliar with the subject can understand why it's exciting. We recommend having a colleague who is not in your field read a draft to help catch places you're being obscure or confusing. We also recommend proofreading. Clarity of expression is a criterion in most of the programs, and peer reviewers tend to see sloppiness in the application as a sign that the project is not well-thought through. If you are applying for an institutional grant, consult your Office of Sponsored Research EARLY for help with the budget. Finally, after the decision is sent out, request your peer review feedback. We provide that feedback whether you are successful or unsuccessful, but you must request it.

Ask me more questions

Those are the basic tips. What didn't I address? What would you still like to know?