



# **NEH Application Tips Workshop**

**February 4, 2022**

**NEH Division of Research Programs  
Claudia Kinkela and Madison Hendren**



## **AGENDA**

**1. Overview of Programs**

**2. Strategies for Application Writing**

**3. Discussion of Sample Narratives**

**4. Questions**

# Disclaimer

The following slides were used to supplement a public oral presentation at the University of Oregon on February 4, 2022 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](https://www.neh.gov).



# What are the Humanities?



FIRST FILM TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE



THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW



SHAKESPEARE LIVES ON



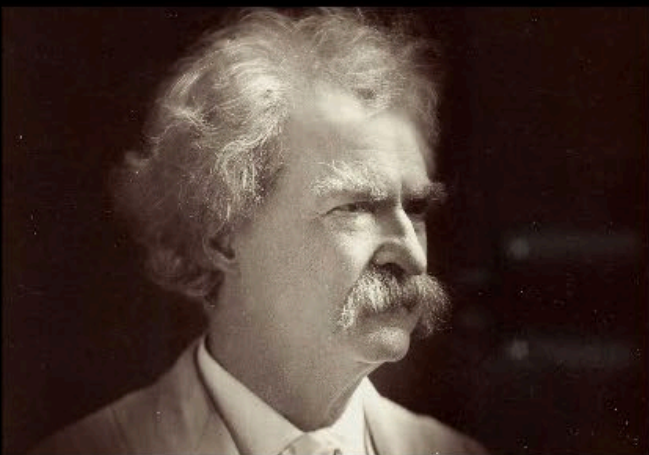
FREEDOM RIDERS



RESCUING AN ENDANGERED LANGUAGE



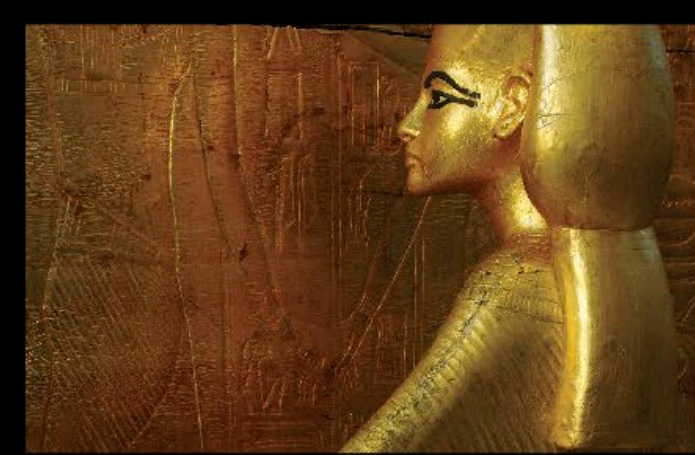
DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN REGIONAL ENGLISH



MARK TWAIN



ARC OF JUSTICE



KING TUT COMES TO AMERICA



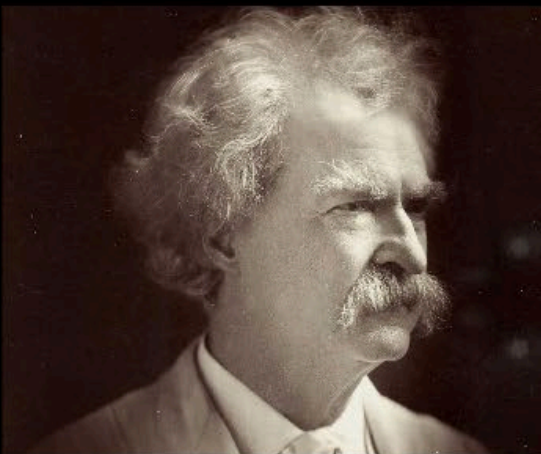
# What is the Humanities?



FIRST FILM TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE



FREEDOM RIDERS



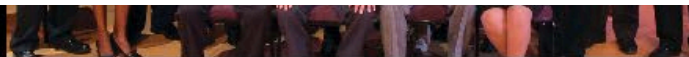
MARK TWAIN



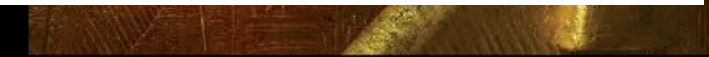
## THE HUMANITIES

The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study 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 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 of 1965



ARC OF JUSTICE



KING TUT COMES TO AMERICA



## **Grant Program Divisions & Offices**

Challenge Grants

Digital Humanities

Education Programs

Federal/State Partnership

Preservation and Access

Public Programs

Research Programs



# AN INTRODUCTION TO Fellowships and Summer Stipends Programs

# DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS

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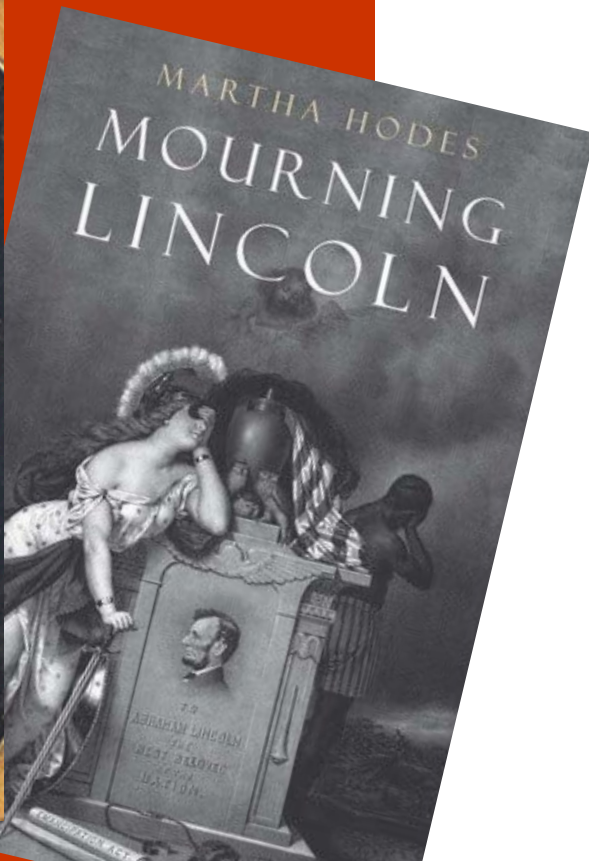
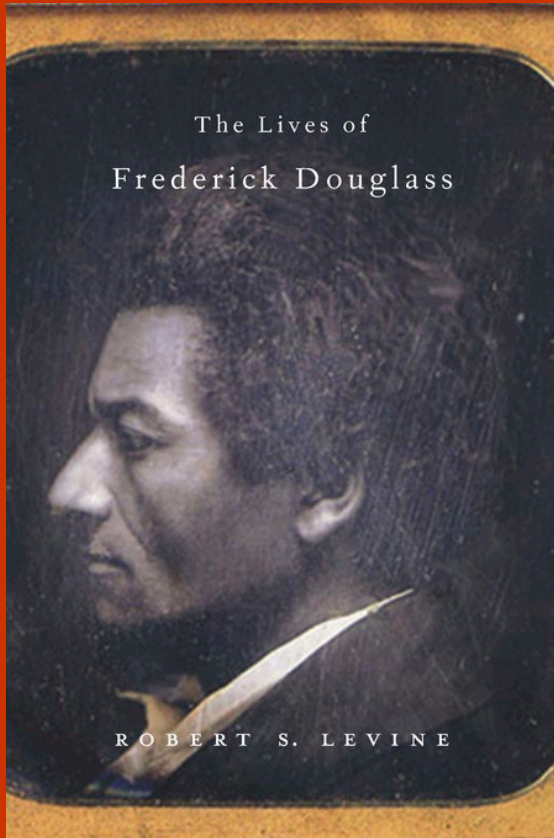
**Director: Christopher Thornton**

Supports scholars—individuals and collaborative teams—working on research projects that advance knowledge and understanding of the humanities.



# Division of Research Programs

## FELLOWSHIPS



Supports individual scholars pursuing projects that embody exceptional research, rigorous analysis, and clear writing.

Awards are made for periods from 6 to 12 months.

Awards are \$5,000/month. The minimum award is \$30,000; the maximum is \$60,000.

Award periods must be continuous and full-time.

**Deadline:** April 13, 2022

## Division of Research Programs

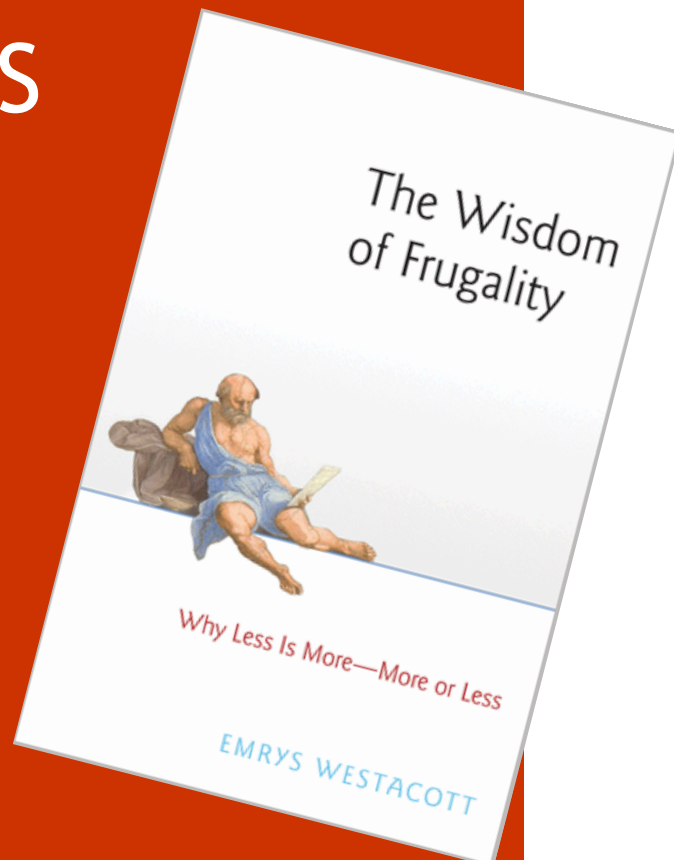
## NEW THIS YEAR: FELLOWSHIPS

- Separate work plan attachment (1 page)
- No writing sample

Fellowships NOFO webinar:  
12:30 PM Eastern  
Wednesday, Feb. 16 (visit  
[neh.gov/grants/research/fellowships](http://neh.gov/grants/research/fellowships))

## Division of Research Programs

# SUMMER STIPENDS



**Supports continuous full-time work on a humanities project for a period of two consecutive months.**

**Requires institutional nomination, with some exceptions.**

Awards are \$6,000.

Award periods (2 months) must be continuous and full-time.

NEH funds may support recipients' compensation, travel, and other costs related to the proposed scholarly research.

**Deadline: September 21, 2022**



www.neh.gov



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE HUMANITIES

Application  
information

**Notice:** Information on NEH and COVID-19: [Read updates for NEH applicants and awardees.](#)

# New NEH Grant Awards Announced

\$24.7 million will support 208 humanities projects across the country, from the creation of new digital and educational resources to infrastructure projects at cultural institutions.



# NEH.gov/grants

## Grants

**Divisions and Offices**

**Grants Search**

**Manage Your Award**

**NEH's Application Review  
Process**

**Professional Development**

**Grantee Communications**

**Toolkit**

## Grants

Since its creation in 1965, NEH has awarded more than \$5.6 billion for humanities projects through more than 64,000 grants.


SEARCH ALL GRANT PROGRAMS

SEARCH ALL PAST AWARDS

Search all programs by name or division

Search funded projects by keyword, discipline, etc.

# Grant Program Information Page



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE HUMANITIES

GrantsNewsOur WorkAbout

Search iconMenu icon

Notice: Information on NEH and COVID-19: [Read updates for NEH applicants and awardees.](#)

## Fellowships

Division of Research Programs

NEH Fellowships are competitive awards granted to individual scholars pursuing projects that embody exceptional research, rigorous analysis, and clear writing. Applications must clearly articulate a project's value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both.

Fellowships provide recipients time to conduct research or to produce books, monographs, peer-reviewed articles, e-books, digital materials, translations with

### Grant Snapshot

Maximum award amount: \$60,000 (\$5,000 per month)  
Open to: Individuals  
Expected output: Book; Critical Edition; Digital Material and Publication; Other Scholarly Resource; Peer-reviewed Article; Translation with annotations or critical apparatus  
Period of performance: Six to twelve months

**Application available: December 20, 2021**

**Application due: April 13, 2022**

**Expected notification date: December 17, 2022**

**Project start date: January 1, 2023 – September 1, 2024**

Contact the Division of Research Programs Team  
202-606-8200

Deadline

Contact information



# Grant Program Information Page

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Link to Grants.gov package

FAQs

Sample Narratives

**Notice:** Information on NEH and COVID-19: [Read updates for NEH applicants and awardees.](#)

## Step 1

### Review your application package

Read the notice of funding opportunity to ensure you understand all the expectations and restrictions for projects delivered under this program and are prepared to write the most effective application.

#### Application Materials

[Fellowships Notice of Funding Opportunity, 2022 and 2023 \(PDF\)](#)

[Fellowships Grants.gov application package](#)

#### Program Resources

[Fellowships Frequently Asked Questions, 2022 and 2023 \(PDF\)](#)

[List of recently funded Fellowships](#)

#### Sample Application Narratives

The narrative samples below are not intended to serve as models, but to give applicants a sense of how a successful application might be crafted. Note that the format might have been changed since these applications were submitted. Follow the guidelines in the currently posted Notice of Funding

Open to: individuals

Expected output: Book; Critical Edition; Digital Material and Publication; Other Scholarly Resource; Peer-reviewed Article; Translation with annotations or critical apparatus

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Contact the Division of Research Programs Team  
202-606-8200  
[fellowships@neh.gov](mailto:fellowships@neh.gov)

Applicants who are deaf or hard of hearing can contact NEH via Federal Relay (TTY users) at 800-877-8399



grants.gov



GRANTS.GOV™

FIND. APPLY. SUCCEED.®

HELP

MANAGE SUBSCRIPTIONS

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SEARCH: 

Grant Opportunities

Enter Keyword...

GO

HOME

LEARN GRANTS

SEARCH GRANTS

APPLICANTS

GRANTORS

SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM

FORMS

OUTREACH

SUPPORT

GRANTS.GOV > Applicants > Apply For Grants

APPLY FOR GRANTS

APPLICANT ACTIONS

» Apply for Grants

» Track My Application

APPLICANT RESOURCES

» Applicant Eligibility

» Individual Registration

» Organization Applicant Registration

» Workspace Overview


» Applicant Tools & Tips

» Applicant FAQs

» Adobe Software Compatibility

» Submitting UTF-8 Special Characters

» Encountering Error Messages



Apply for Grants

Applying for a grant is an exciting but resource-intensive process. Below is an overview of the application process in Grants.gov. For more specific instructions on applying in Grants.gov, click on one of the steps below. If you are interested in more context and information about the grants lifecycle, visit [Grants 101](#).

Before you apply, make sure you found a funding opportunity [you are eligible for](#) and registered to apply through Grants.gov as [an individual](#) or [an organization](#). If you would like more time to plan before applying, search for [forecasts of grant opportunities](#) in Search Grants.

If a funding opportunity is compatible, you may choose to create a workspace in order to collaborate and apply with colleagues [using Workspace](#).

Get Application Package

If you know the specific CFDA Number, Funding Opportunity Number, or Funding Opportunity Competition ID, quickly search for the package:

Get Application Package »

Grants.gov Online User Guide

Find registration, login, and search instructions for all users in the [Grants.gov Online User Guide](#).

For detailed applicant information, review the Applicants section of the online user guide.

Reach Out and Get Help

Contact the Grants.gov Support Center to get help from a Contact Center Representative.

Email us at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or visit [our Support page](#).

FIND

Search Grants

APPLY

STEP 1:  
Download  
Application  
Package

STEP 2:  
Complete  
Application  
Package

STEP 3:  
Submit  
Application  
Package

OR

STEP 1:  
Create  
Workspace  
Package

STEP 2:  
Complete  
Workspace  
Package

STEP 3:  
Submit  
Workspace  
Package

SUCCEED

STEP 4:  
Track Application  
Package Submission



# APPLICATION WRITING TIPS



## Division of Research Programs

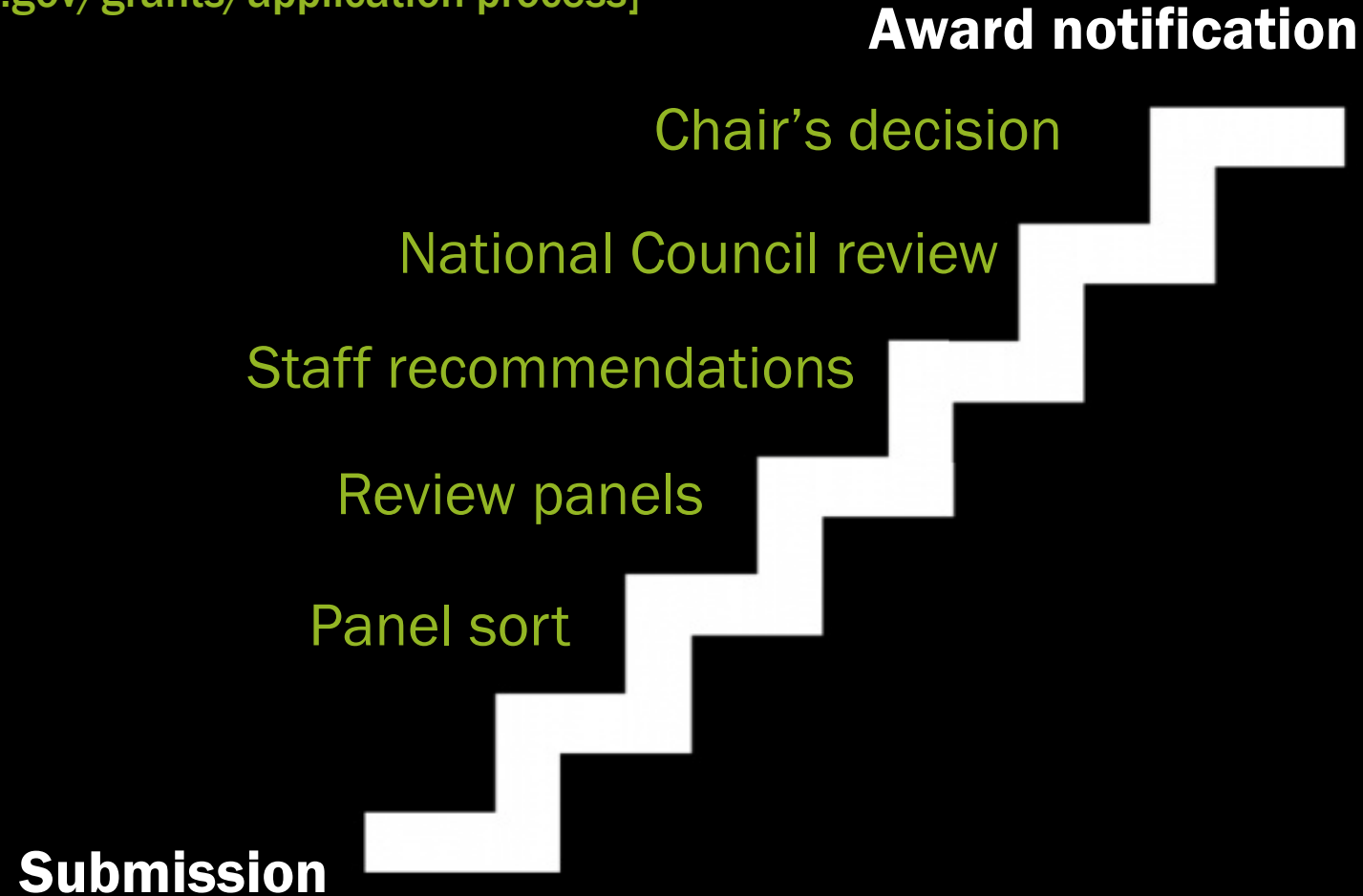
# REVIEW CRITERIA: FELLOWSHIPS



1. The intellectual significance of the proposed project, including its value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both.
2. The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project and the applicant's clarity of expression.
3. The feasibility and appropriateness of the proposed work plan.
4. The quality or promise of quality of the applicant as an interpreter of the humanities.
5. The likelihood that the applicant will complete the project (not necessarily during the period of performance), including, when relevant, the soundness of the dissemination and access plans.

# The life of your application

[<https://www.neh.gov/grants/application-process>]



# Peer Review Panels (Fellowships)

- Applications are grouped by field
- Each set is assigned to 3 reviewers (tier 1)
- Each set is assigned to a 4-member panel (tier 2)
- Panelists are experts and generalists
- Panelists are recruited for regional and institutional diversity
- Panelists rate 25-35 applications
- We change panels each year. Panelists are not allowed to serve on panels in consecutive years.



# Tips for Writing

Think of all the parts  
of the application as  
a unified argument  
for funding you



Make the narrative clear, convincing, and somehow intriguing



Your work plan, bibliography, and CV are important



For a dissertation revision, take special care with the work plans



Remember the time constraints of the panelists

# Tips for Writing

Be strategic



Start early



Discuss the application with  
your letter writers



Read applications for your  
institutions

# Tips for Writing

Pay attention to  
details



Proofread!



Have a colleague read your  
application



Check your bibliography



Include required supporting  
materials

# Tips for Writing

Improve your  
chances of  
success



Serve as an NEH panelist



Get your reviewers' comments



Panelists will only know you're applying again  
if you tell them





# SAMPLE NARRATIVES

# Samples

1. Islamic Literacy in Early America: Muslim Sources of U.S. Authorship
2. The Memory of al-Andalus and Spanish Colonialism in Morocco (1859-1956)
3. Nietzsche and the Ancient Skeptical Tradition

# Sample 1

- The details reinforce and complement the broader claims and interventions
- Parts of the narrative work together
- Subheadings make it easy for panelists to find information

# Sample 1: Synopsis

- 1<sup>st</sup> sentence includes brief description of the proposed book (“Uncovering Islam’s formative impact on the nation’s literature, *Islamic Literacy in Early America*...**traces covert genealogies of Arabic and Persian influence extending from Revolutionary beginnings to the Civil War.**”)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence clearly states the contribution of the proposed work (“...this monograph excavates the multi-lingual and cross-religious foundations of literary America, **revising the received portraits of our most iconic authors, while also giving voice to unknown Muslim writings penned in the young republic.**” )

# Sample 1: Research and Contribution

Builds on the description in the synopsis without repeating by:

1. Situating the project in existing work (While Orientalism has long been recognized as vital to the nation's origins, *Islamic Literacy in Early America* **redirects our attention inward, revealing the private investments which underlie U.S. public interests.**)
2. Clearly stating the argument and connecting it to the project's intervention ("Amplifying the Arabic and Persian undertones hushed underneath U.S. literary life, I **argue that Islamic traditions catalyze emergent American identities, serving as vehicles of liberation in artistry, religion, and politics.**")
3. Highlighting how approach to the sources contributes to overall significance (**Merging academic fields and literary figures, *Islamic Literacy in Early America* re-centers the Muslim margins of U.S. authorial origins, discovering the reading and rendering of Arabic and Persian sources at the literary heart of discrete American lives.**



- In addition to clearly describing the organization of the book, the chapter outline identifies the central figures in terms of their importance for American literary history, the sources that attest to their Islamic literacy, and the main argument the author will make based on those sources in each chapter.
- Outcomes of the grant period are clearly stated and application gives an indication of how time will be divided.
- The dissemination plan mentions a potential press, which reinforces the outcomes proposed in the work plan
- Applicant indicates relationship of current project to previous research

# Sample 2

- Also strikes a balance between details and broad claims, but spends more time “setting the stage” before introducing the argument
- Defines specialized terms (al-Andalus, *convivencia*), gives dates for wars, lifespans, publications, etc.
- Gives representative examples to support claims and illustrate arguments (cites 2011 Moroccan constitution to support claim that Morocco and Spain have “cast themselves as direct descendants of al-Andalus.”)
- Explains how the current project moves beyond the dissertation in terms of content and intellectual contribution
- Not overly reliant on “gap-filling”

# Sample 3

- Detailed workplan
- Breaks down award period into 6-8 week chunks

# *Help and available resources*

1. An NEH program is always available by telephone or email.
2. We read draft applications in many, but not all, programs.
3. We provide sample applications on our website.
4. We hold webinars and post how-to videos.
5. NEH blog highlights funded projects.
6. We provide all applicants with reviewer comments.



# NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

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