



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE  
**Humanities**

DIVISION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMS

**BRIDGING CULTURES  
THROUGH FILM:  
INTERNATIONAL TOPICS**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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**What are the humanities?**

According to the 1965 National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, “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.”

**What is the difference between *Bridging Cultures* through Film grants and America’s Media Makers grants?**

The *Bridging Cultures* through Film grant program responds to the broader NEH *Bridging Cultures* initiative to explore cultures from around the globe and ideas that transcend national borders. *Bridging Cultures* through Film supports projects that focus on topics outside of the United States and across nations. Additionally, *Bridging Cultures* through Film, unlike America’s Media Makers, funds only documentary films and not ancillary materials, digital projects, or websites. Finally, *Bridging Cultures* through Film applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate international collaboration between US and non-US-based scholars or media personnel on their projects.

**What advice do you have for media producers in putting forth a strong application?**

The project itself must fall within the fields of the humanities and accord with [the purpose and goals of NEH](#). NEH does not give general support for media programs but seeks to fund those

programs that will best bring the issues and approaches of the humanities, and humanities research, to broad public audiences. Other critical factors are for a producer to have a well-developed story outline, to define the target audience, and to be strongly committed to the project. In addition, the costs detailed in the budget should be reasonable and appropriate for the proposed project.

### **Can I see samples of successful applications?**

Samples of successful applications funded under America's Media Makers or *Bridging Cultures* through Film can be requested. These samples will give you models that can help you compose your application. You can request samples by sending an e-mail message to [publicpgms@neh.gov](mailto:publicpgms@neh.gov). Looking at [lists of television programs](#) that NEH has recently funded can give you an idea of the types of projects that are eligible for NEH support.

### **Is international collaboration among the humanities advisers or the media team required?**

NEH strongly encourages applicants to the *Bridging Cultures* through Film program to demonstrate collaboration between the primary producer and scholars or media staff who are based outside of the United States, in order to ensure the inclusion of a variety of perspectives and a broad range of interpretations of the subject. Letters of commitment and résumés from advisers and collaborators are required.

### **Who will read my application?**

A variety of individuals will read your application, including peer reviewers, NEH staff, and members of the NEH National Council on the Humanities. You should write for a general audience that is familiar with the humanities but may have no specific knowledge of your project's relation to the humanities. Particularly in the narrative section of the application, you should make a "big picture" case for your project's contribution to the humanities.

### **I would like to send a draft proposal for NEH staff comment. How do I do that?**

While it is not mandatory to submit a draft, applicants are encouraged to do so. NEH recommends that drafts be submitted at least six weeks before the deadline, so that staff will have adequate time to respond. A response cannot be guaranteed if drafts arrive after this date. Draft proposals should be submitted via e-mail to [publicpgms@neh.gov](mailto:publicpgms@neh.gov).

### **May my institution apply for more than one grant from the Division of Public Programs at a time?**

Yes. Institutions may apply for and hold more than one grant from the Division of Public Programs, but the applications must be for different projects.

### **What is a humanities scholar?**

Someone who has an advanced degree in a discipline of the humanities is generally considered a scholar. Scholars can provide context for a project and identify relevant humanities themes and

ideas. Many humanities scholars hold university appointments and have written books and articles in their field.

**Do I have to enlist more than one scholar for a project?**

Yes, you must recruit a team of scholars. The team of humanities advisers helps producers incorporate current scholarship, develop the major humanities themes, and explore a range of interpretive possibilities for these themes.

**Should letters of commitment from the project participants be included as part of our application, or should they be sent separately?**

Letters of commitment must be included with the application.

**What distinguishes a production funds application from a development funds application?**

Production funds applications should convey a solid command of the relevant humanities scholarship, the program's narrative elements, and the visual approach. All production proposals require a script for a television or film project. Development funds applications do not need to be worked out to the same extent; nevertheless, they need to describe the intellectual themes, storyline, and visual approach in enough detail so that the evaluators can see the merits of the project.

**If I am an individual producer unaffiliated with a nonprofit organization, may I still receive a *Bridging Cultures* through Film grant?**

No. These grants are awarded only to U.S. nonprofit, IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations. But many cultural organizations, media arts centers, public television stations, and universities serve as sponsors of the projects of independent producers and may be willing to sponsor your project. Independent producers who wish to apply for NEH funding must secure an eligible organization to sponsor the project before an application can be submitted. The sponsoring organization will be considered the grantee of record and will assume all attendant responsibilities of the grantee organization.

Please contact a program officer for a list of recent grantees, which includes examples of nonprofit organizations that were awarded grants. For further information on the specific responsibilities of sponsorship organizations, please see [Requirements for Grant Recipients that Serve as Sponsors of Projects](#).

**If I receive NEH funding, may I also accept funding from other sources?**

Yes. We encourage applicants to approach a range of funders, as it is unlikely that NEH can support the full costs of a single program or series of programs.

**Can NEH funding be used to pay for international travel or the work of foreign personnel?**

Yes. NEH funds can be used to pay the salaries of non-U.S.-based scholars or media staff who are integral to the project, and the costs of foreign travel for project personnel.

**What expectations does NEH have for the distribution of a project?**

NEH-funded projects should be offered for broad distribution. Although NEH does not require applicants to have a commitment for distribution when they apply, a letter of interest from a broadcaster or other distribution partner may strengthen an application. Our goal is for scholars, educators, students, and the American public to have ready and easy access to the wide range of NEH award products. Note that NEH must approve all distribution arrangements before they are finalized.

**Must I submit my application through Grants.gov?**

Yes. Further information is available [here](#).

**How do the application deadlines work? Are they receipt or postmark?**

All deadlines are receipt deadlines. ALL supporting materials must arrive at NEH or be entered into Grants.gov by the application deadline.