DIVISION OF **EDUCATION**

HUMANITIES INITIATIVES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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."

How do I know whether my project is more appropriate for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) or the National Endowment for the Humanities?

If your project involves the creation of musical compositions, dance, painting, poetry, short stories, novels, or arts performance or training, then NEA would be the more appropriate choice for your application. NEH supports projects that provide scholarly, analytical, or historical perspectives on the arts.

What first steps should I take in developing an NEH Humanities Initiatives grant proposal?

First, read the program guidelines carefully, including the eligibility requirements. Be sure to read the evaluation criteria by which your application will be judged (Section V of the guidelines). 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 proposal drafts (to be submitted at least four weeks before the deadline). Call 202-606-8471 or e-mail hi@neh.gov to reach NEH staff or submit a proposal draft.

Does my institution need a grant writer to prepare an application?

No. NEH staff members are available to answer your questions and assist you in preparing your proposal.

When should I start consulting with scholars about a project?

As a rule, the earlier that scholars are involved in a project, the better. Usually projects that receive grants have benefited from a dialogue among faculty at the applicant institution and with consulting scholars from other institutions.

May I apply for more than one NEH grant at the same time?

Yes, but there are certain restrictions. For example, individuals may not simultaneously hold an NEH fellowship and serve as a project director of another grant. Applicants interested in applying for more than one grant should consult with a program officer.

I just found out that my institution will submit an application for another Humanities Initiatives project. Will NEH fund only one?

Each application is evaluated on its own merits. NEH might fund both applications, one, or neither.

My institution applied for a grant last year and was unsuccessful. Will this be held against us if we apply again this year?

No. NEH evaluates all applications as new applications.

My application for an NEH Humanities Initiatives grant was unsuccessful. Is there anything I may do to increase my chances for success next time?

If you are revising a previous submission, you may find it helpful to request the evaluators' comments on that application and to consult with an NEH program officer. To see the evaluators' comments, send an e-mail message to hi@neh.gov.

May a currently funded project be continued with a subsequent NEH Humanities Initiatives grant?

It is possible, but no NEH grant program, including NEH Humanities Initiatives, guarantees funding beyond the current grant. If a grantee submits a new application to continue the work of a previous grant, successful completion of the earlier project must be documented in the new application.

If my institution receives NEH funding, may we also accept money from other sources?

Yes. NEH encourages applicants to seek support from diverse sources. Submitting proposals to other funders has no bearing on how NEH reviews proposals. We do ask that you tell us about those applications, so that we can better understand the project's funding situation.

May I use an NEH Humanities Initiatives grant for the acquisition of equipment, materials, and supplies?

The acquisition of equipment, materials, and supplies is allowable when it supports the primary purpose of an NEH Humanities Initiatives project. For example, work on a new website developed in the course of a series of faculty workshops may be facilitated by the purchase of a computer. NEH Humanities Initiatives grants may also support the purchase of texts for participants for in-depth study of a topic in the humanities. The acquisition of closely related titles for a college library may sustain further research by faculty and students.

May I use an NEH Humanities Initiatives grant for the pursuit of independent research?

No. NEH does, however, support independent research in the humanities through its Fellowships and Summer Stipends programs, as well as the Awards for Faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, at Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and at Tribal Colleges and Universities.

What is the deadline for submitting the application?

Applications for NEH Humanities Initiatives grants must be received by Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on June 27, 2012. Grants.gov will date- and time-stamp your application after it is fully uploaded. Applications submitted after that date will not be accepted.

NEH suggests that you submit your application no later than 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on the day of the deadline. Doing so will leave you time to contact the Grants.gov help desk for support, should you encounter a technical problem of some kind. The Grants.gov help desk is now available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day (except on federal holidays), at 1-800-518-4726. You can also send an e-mail message to support@grants.gov.

How do I know if I have submitted my application successfully?

After you sign and submit the application, a confirmation page appears. This page includes the Grants.gov tracking number and other important information. Note the Grants.gov tracking number and save or print the confirmation page for your records.

You will then receive the following e-mail messages:

"Grants.gov Submission Receipt";
"Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt"; and
"Grants.gov Grantor Agency Retrieval Receipt."

These messages are normally sent within twenty-four hours of the submission, but minor delays could occur in the event of heavy system usage.

If you do not receive these messages, or if the messages indicate that the application has been rejected, contact Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) at 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726) or

support@grants.gov. Include the Grants.gov tracking number in correspondence regarding the application.

How will my application be reviewed?

All applications will receive peer review. Using the evaluation criteria listed in Section V of the application guidelines, teachers and scholars in the humanities will convene in panels to read and rate your application. NEH staff will compile a slate of recommended applications based on the panelists' comments and ratings. The National Council on the Humanities will review the recommendations and provide additional insights. All advice—from the panelists, staff, and National Council—will be sent to the NEH Chairman. By law, only the Chairman is empowered to make an award.

How long must I wait to learn the outcome of my application?

Applicants will be notified of the decision by e-mail in December 2012.