



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE  
**Humanities**

OFFICE OF **CHALLENGE GRANTS**

# **CHALLENGE GRANTS FOR TWO-YEAR COLLEGES**

**Deadline: February 2, 2012**

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 45.130

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## **Items referred to in this document needed to complete your application:**

- Grants.gov application package and instructions

Also see the **application checklist** at the end of this document.

## **Letters of intent to apply**

Program staff recommends that prospective applicants submit—six weeks before the application deadline—one- to two-page letters of intent to apply.

## **Draft proposals**

Program staff recommends that draft proposals be submitted at least four to six weeks before the application deadline. Time constraints may prevent staff from reviewing draft proposals submitted closer to the deadline.

## **Questions?**

Contact the staff of NEH's Office of Challenge Grants at 202-606-8309 or at [challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov). Hearing-impaired applicants can contact NEH via TDD at 1-866-372-2930.

### Type of award

Successful applicants will be offered a matching grant. Recipients must raise two times the amount of federal funds offered.

### Submission via Grants.gov

**All applications to this program must be submitted via Grants.gov.** We strongly recommend that you complete or verify your registration at least two weeks before the application deadline, as it takes time for your registration to be processed.

## I. Program Description

The National Endowment for the Humanities invites two-year colleges to apply in a special Challenge Grant competition to strengthen their long-term humanities programs and resources. Two-year colleges are major educational assets that have too often been overlooked, even though over half of students in post-secondary education attend two-year institutions. The humanities can and should play a vital role in community colleges.<sup>1</sup> The perspectives of history, philosophy, and literature can enrich the educational experience of students attending two-year colleges, deepening their understanding of questions related to differences among cultures, as manifested in diverse understandings of citizenship, politics, and ethics. NEH seeks to encourage two-year colleges to develop models of excellence that enhance the role of the humanities on their campuses. The goals of this initiative are

- to enable two-year colleges to strengthen programs in the humanities, especially the study of the world's many cultures and civilizations;
- to support model humanities curricula at two-year colleges that may be replicated at other institutions; and
- to encourage two-year colleges to broaden the base of financial support for the humanities.

Challenge Grants for Two-year Colleges are capacity-building grants intended to help eligible institutions secure long-term improvements in and support for their humanities programs and resources. Grants may be used to establish or enhance endowments or spend-down funds (that is, funds that are invested, with both the income and the principal being expended over a defined period of years) that generate expendable earnings to support ongoing program activities. Funds may also be used for one-time capital expenditures (such as construction and

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<sup>1</sup> The terms "two-year college" and "community college" are used interchangeably for the purposes of this special initiative.

renovation, purchase of equipment, and acquisitions) that bring long-term benefits to the institution and to the humanities more broadly. NEH is especially interested in applications for programs that respond to the Endowment-wide [Bridging Cultures](#) initiative.

Because of the matching requirement, challenge grants also strengthen the humanities by encouraging nonfederal sources of support. The required match is two-to-one: every dollar offered by NEH must be matched with two dollars in new nonfederal donations. Eligible institutions have six years in which to raise the required match.

Samples of successful proposals can be found on the [program resource page](#).

### **Activities supported**

Challenge grant funds (federal plus nonfederal funds combined) must provide **long-term** benefits to the humanities. Challenge grant funds should not merely replace funds already being expended on the humanities, but instead should reflect careful strategic planning to strengthen the institution's activities in and commitment to the advancement of knowledge and understanding of the humanities.

Institutions may use challenge grants to meet both ongoing and one-time humanities-related costs, provided that the long-term benefit of the expenditure can be demonstrated. Federal challenge grant funds, as well as the nonfederal donations raised for matching, might be used for purposes such as the following. (Please note that the lists below are not exhaustive. Instead they merely provide examples of suitable endeavors. An application should demonstrate that the project's planned expenditures are appropriate means for reaching the project's overall goals.)

Through *endowments or spend-down funds*, challenge grants can be used to support costs associated with long-term, sustainable programs. Such costs typically include items such as these:

- faculty and staff salaries and benefits;
- acquisitions for collections;
- research fellowships;
- curriculum development;
- lecture or exhibition series; and
- stipends for visiting scholars or consultants.

Through *direct expenditure*, challenge grants can be used to support one-time capital costs. Such costs typically include items such as these:

- the purchase, construction, or renovation of facilities;

- acquisitions for collections;
- the purchase of equipment and software;
- fundraising costs (totaling no more than 10 percent of challenge grant funds); and
- “bridge” funds to begin an endowed activity while the endowment is being established.

Note that “bridge funds” are limited in amount to the equivalent of the expected annual income to be created by the challenge grant’s endowment over no more than four years. Bridge funds may be requested only if the proposal includes the establishment of a new endowment fund or the enhancement of an existing endowment to permanently support the costs of the humanities activities proposed in the challenge grant application. For example, a grant that provides a salary for an individual filling a new, permanent position in the digital humanities might request bridge funds to allow the institution to begin paying the new staff member’s salary immediately—as opposed to waiting until the endowment becomes large enough to provide annual income sufficient to pay the salary. To continue the example, if endowment support for this position is not proposed, bridge funds to support it could not be requested.

NEH welcomes plans to strengthen the technological infrastructure of two-year colleges, thereby enhancing their ability to make use of new technologies in research, education, preservation, and public programming in the humanities. Challenge grant funds may be used, for example, to purchase equipment and software, to renovate computing centers devoted to the humanities, and to purchase databases. Endowments created by challenge grants can be used to support maintenance and upgrades of equipment, software, and data; licensing fees; salaries of technical staff; and faculty and staff training in uses of digital technology. Virtually any ongoing expense associated with uses of digital technology in the humanities can be supported by a challenge grant.

### ***Bridging Cultures***

Activities in programs that respond to NEH’s [\*Bridging Cultures\*](#) initiative are especially welcome. Such programs could focus on cultures internationally or within the United States. International programs might seek to enlarge Americans’ understanding of other places and times, as well as other perspectives and intellectual traditions. American programs might explore the great variety of cultural influences on, and myriad subcultures within, American society. These programs might also investigate how Americans have approached and attempted to surmount seemingly unbridgeable cultural divides, or examine the ideals of civility and civic discourse that have informed this quest.

NEH is especially interested in new programs that would serve as models of excellence for peer institutions. Such programs could include model curricular offerings, educational workshops, and other learning opportunities in response to the *Bridging Cultures* initiative in particular. Proposals might, for example, seek support for activities and topics such as these:

- model curricula that focus on other peoples and nations, including their history, literature, and culture;

- model faculty development workshops exploring issues in comparative government;
- courses exploring one or more of the world's many and varied religious traditions;
- collaborative research by students, examining ethnic, racial, and religious diversity in the two-year college's own region or in the students' home towns;
- library acquisitions (both print and digital) that focus on particular cultures or nationalities represented in the college's student population;
- renovations to establish and maintain study rooms or honors houses that provide a venue for intensive and collaborative study of a particular nation's language and history;
- stipends for visiting lecturers who would discuss foreign cultures; or
- model programs that help Americans understand their rich cultural heritage while fostering mutual respect for others, both here and abroad.

### **Expenditures not eligible for support**

Challenge grant funds, federal or nonfederal, may not be used for

- one-time or operating expenditures with minimal long-term impact;
- recovery of indirect costs;
- support for projects eligible for grants from other NEH programs;
- scholarships or stipends for students below the graduate level; or
- programs or facilities designed for activities outside the scope of the humanities, such as the performing arts, science education, non-humanistic aspects of the social sciences, or public policy advocacy. A proposal for a "Center for the Arts," for example, must clearly demonstrate how the facility serves the humanities. Components of projects that deal with the visual or performing arts are eligible for NEH challenge grant funding only if they enhance the interpretation or analysis of the artistic form in question, using critical, historical, theoretical, or other humanities-oriented perspectives.

### **Mode of expenditure**

The financial arrangement by which challenge grant funds are expended should be appropriate to the nature of the humanities-related costs and the long-term impact of the expenditure. Funds may be

- invested in permanent endowments, the income from which supports ongoing and recurring costs such as salaries, honoraria for visiting scholars, fellowships, and maintenance;
- spent directly on one-time capital costs for items that have inherent longevity, such as facilities (new construction or renovation), equipment, and acquisitions; or
- combined in “spend-down” funds that are invested, with both the income and the principal to be expended over a defined period of years (no less than five years, no more than twenty-five years). Spend-down funds are particularly appropriate for programs that are long-term but not permanent.

Up to 10 percent of challenge grant funds may be spent directly on fundraising costs. NEH strongly encourages two-year colleges to take full advantage of this provision.

As stated earlier, grant funds may also be used directly for “bridging” support, where the challenge grant provides for endowment income to meet the expenses for a given purpose in the future; bridging funds up to the equivalent amount of the projected endowment’s annual income may be used in up to four years of the grant period to cover expenses for that purpose while the endowment or spend-down fund is being established. (Applicants are cautioned, however, to be careful not to weaken the endowment significantly by using too much of the grant for bridging.)

## II. Award Information

Successful applicants will be offered a matching grant. The requested grant amount should be appropriate to the humanities needs and the fundraising capacity of the institution. The maximum amount an applicant may request is \$500,000. Smaller grants for sharply defined purposes are encouraged. Potential applicants are urged to consult with NEH staff about the size of their requests.

### **Fundraising**

NEH challenge grants assist institutions in developing sources of support for humanities programs, and fundraising is an integral part of the long-term planning required by the program. Grant recipients must raise, from nonfederal donors, two times the amount of federal funds offered. Persons charged with raising the nonfederal gifts and those who will be directly responsible for the humanities programs should both be fully involved in the planning from the outset.

### **Release of federal funds**

All federal challenge grant funds are matching funds that cannot be released unless matched by nonfederal donations. The federal portion of a challenge grant is typically offered over four years, but the grantee may take up to eighty months to raise funds for matching. NEH releases federal funds according to a pattern that allows donations from as early as five months prior to the application deadline and can include donations from as late as two years beyond the last-released federal funds. Funds are released in the first three years when completely matched

according to the required two-to-one ratio. In the fourth year federal funds may be released when matched one-to-one, with the remaining parts of the match to be raised in the final two years, so as to allow time at the end of the grant period to finish the match and collect outstanding pledges. The following chart illustrates a typical match and release schedule:

**Sample match and release schedule for a challenge grant to a two-year college**

NEH Challenge offer of \$300,000, with a two-to-one matching ratio

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
NEH funds (federal) offered	\$60,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$90,000	n/a	n/a	\$300,000
Nonfederal funds to be raised	\$120,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$90,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$600,000
Total grant funds (federal + nonfederal)	\$180,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$180,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$900,000

The grant period for challenge grants to two-year colleges begins five months before the application deadline, and the grant period ends seventy-eight months after the application deadline. Thus the grant period for applications submitted at the February 2012 deadline begins September 1, 2011, and it ends July 31, 2018. The beginning and ending dates of the grant period are crucial because donations, to be eligible for matching, must be given within those dates.

Subject to the availability of funds in the Challenge Grants program, NEH anticipates conducting this special competition for two-year colleges for three or more years. Applicants who, unsuccessful at one deadline, revise and resubmit their applications one year later may use the same starting date in the resubmission as in the original submission. In this way applicants can keep faith with donors whose gifts have been solicited in anticipation of a challenge grant. If the resubmitted application is not successful, however, such an extension is unavailable for subsequent submissions.

**Eligibility of gifts**

To be eligible for matching, gifts may not derive from the grantee institution itself, and it is inappropriate for an institution to shift internal budgets or reallocate internal funds for matching purposes. All matching pledges and gifts must be new, that is, given (and pledges fulfilled) during the challenge grant period. The majority of gifts eligible for matching must be restricted gifts donated explicitly in response to or in anticipation of the challenge grant. Donors of restricted gifts must be aware that their gifts will be used to match an NEH challenge grant or that their gifts will be used to support the same purposes outlined in the approved challenge grant application. Unrestricted gifts—that is, gifts donated without limitations on their use—

may be eligible for matching, but the gifts must have been given within the grant period, and the total of such unrestricted gifts may not exceed the federal portion of the challenge grant. Some types of gifts, such as real estate, earned income, planned giving, and in-kind gifts, are subject to special limitations. Discounts on contracted goods and services, and contributions from federal sources, are not eligible for matching.

**NOTE:** More detailed information on eligible gifts and the mechanics of challenge grant administration is offered in the booklet [Administration of NEH Challenge Grants](#), which may be obtained from the NEH website or the Office of Challenge Grants. Applicants should consult this booklet if they plan to solicit and collect eligible matching gifts in the five-month period before the application deadline or before notification of an award in August.

### III. Eligibility

Institutions eligible to apply in this competition are accredited U.S. two-year colleges and community colleges that predominantly award associate degrees that can be earned in two years of study. Both private, independent colleges and government-supported colleges are eligible. Community-college districts and two-year-college consortia may also apply, in collaboration with at least one two-year college. Institutions granting associate degrees are encouraged to partner with other institutions to carry out grant-oriented activities, but one two-year college must serve as the applicant of record.

NEH generally does not award grants to other federal entities or to applicants whose projects are so closely intertwined with a federal entity that the project takes on characteristics of the federal entity's own authorized activities. This does not preclude applicants from using grant funds from, or sites and materials controlled by, other federal entities in their projects.

Institutions may apply for only one NEH challenge grant in a calendar year and may have only one application pending in any NEH challenge grant competition at a time. An institution is eligible to apply for a subsequent challenge grant beginning in the third year after the closing date of its most recent NEH challenge grant. For example, if a grant closes in 2017, the institution that received the grant could not apply for a subsequent challenge grant until 2020.

Late, incomplete, or ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

### IV. Application and Submission Information

#### **Application advice, letters of intent, and draft proposals**

Prior to submitting a proposal, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact program officers who can offer advice about preparing the proposal, supply samples of funded applications, and review draft proposals. Although these staff comments are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal, previous applicants have found them helpful in strengthening their applications.



Whether or not applicants submit draft proposals, we urge each applicant to submit a letter of intent to apply for a challenge grant. Ideally the letter should be sent six weeks in advance of the application deadline. The letter should not exceed two pages. It should briefly describe the proposed project, especially its humanities content, and the humanities credentials of the faculty members who would be involved in planning and implementing the project. NEH staff will review these letters and will contact applicants, offering recommendations for strengthening their proposals. Letters of intent should be e-mailed to [challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov), faxed to 202-606-8579, or sent via overnight mail to the Office of Challenge Grants, NEH, Room 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, 202-606-8309.

Program staff recommends that draft proposals be submitted at least four to six weeks before the application deadline. Time constraints may prevent staff from reviewing draft proposals submitted closer to the deadline. Draft proposals, consisting of the narrative, the budget, and a list of persons who will be writing letters of support, should be submitted directly to the Office of Challenge Grants (**not** through Grants.gov) by e-mail attachment ([challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov)), fax (202-606-8579), or overnight mail (Office of Challenge Grants, NEH, Room 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, 202-606-8309).

College development staff wishing to submit an NEH Challenge Grant request should consider collaborating on the application with at least one humanities scholar. 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 to Prepare your Application

You will prepare your application for submission via Grants.gov just as you would a paper application. Your application should consist of the following parts.

### 1. **Table of contents**

Include all the parts of the application with page numbers. Please use one set of page numbers for the entire document, including the appendices.

### 2. **Abstract**

Summarize the proposal, including the activities to be supported and the plans for raising funds for matching. Applicants should describe the significance to the humanities of what they are proposing. This summary may be single-spaced but should not exceed one page.

### 3. **Challenge grant budget**

Do **not** use the standard NEH budget form. Instead, provide an itemized one- or two-page budget describing all challenge grant funds and indicate

- the portions of the total NEH funds being requested in years 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the grant period; and
- how all challenge grant funds—federal and nonfederal combined—will be expended.

For purposes of expenditure, no distinction is made between federal funds and nonfederal donations. Even if the challenge grant is part of a larger campaign, the budget should be limited to the requested NEH funds plus the minimum required nonfederal funds. Planned annual expenditures from endowment or spend-down yield should be broken down into specific cost categories. Challenge grants do not include indirect-cost recovery.

Direct funds are those not invested in endowments or spend-down funds. Instead they are used only for capital expenditures, fundraising costs (up to 10 percent of grant funds), and bridge funding (while an endowment fund is being established). Operating and program expenses should be paid for with income from endowment and/or spend-down funds.

The budget should clearly indicate what the expenditures are for, and the proposal narrative should provide detailed information about these expenditures and should justify the amounts allotted to the various items in terms of the plans for the humanities. Explain the appropriateness of the chosen mode(s) of expenditure to the activities being supported and the long-term plans for the humanities.

In the following **sample** budget, all three modes of expenditure are included for purposes of illustration; applicants should propose only the mode(s) of expenditure appropriate to the planned humanities activities. All figures and categories of expenditure below are for illustrative purpose only.

### **Sample challenge grant budget**

Total NEH funds requested:		\$300,000
Year 1:	\$25,000	
Year 2:	\$100,000	
Year 3:	\$100,000	
Year 4:	\$75,000	
Non-federal funds to be raised		\$600,000
Total grant funds (NEH plus match)		\$900,000

### **Planned Expenditures:**

#### **Direct**

Renovation of the house/office of the humanities center	\$200,000
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**Endowed**

Principal	\$550,000
Rate of return to be expended	5%
Projected annual expendable income	\$27,500

Uses of annual endowment  
income (list all)

Staff salaries	\$15,000
Stipends for visiting scholars	\$9,500
Lecture series expenses	\$3,000

**Combined (spend-down  
fund)**

Principal	\$150,000
Rate of return to be expended	5%
Number of years	10
Annual expenditure (income + principal)	\$18,494

Uses of spend-down funds (list  
all)

Training in digital humanities	\$12,000
Software and equipment	\$6,494

**Endowment policy**

Endowments created with NEH challenge grants are permanent and should be reported as permanent on [IRS Form 990, Schedule D](#), Part V. Endowments created with NEH challenge grants are restricted to the uses defined in the challenge grant application and summarized in the budget as approved. Changes in the purpose of the endowment may be made only in consultation with NEH. NEH is guided by Section 6 of the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) in assessing proposed changes in purpose. The text of Section 6 of UPMIFA can be found in [Administration of NEH Challenge Grants](#).

**Calculating a “spend-down” fund**

The amount needed for a spend-down fund is based on the rate of return on investment, the length of the fund’s projected existence, and the amount to be spent each year. The amount needed to produce the desired annual income can be calculated using a tool, such as the PV financial function in Microsoft Excel, that calculates the “present value” of funds needed to allow the desired expenditure over the specified number of future years.

To calculate the expendable annual income over the life of the fund, use Excel's PMT financial function or its equivalent.

**NOTE:** If the challenge grant includes support for any part of a construction or renovation project, the entire project is subject to Davis-Bacon requirements, and applicants must take into account the effect of the Davis-Bacon Act on costs. For purposes of compliance with the [Davis-Bacon Act](#), there is no distinction between federal funds and nonfederal donations raised for matching.

#### 4. **Institutional fact summary**

For applications involving multiple institutional partners, only the applicant of record must provide an institutional fact summary. Partner institutions, however, may also submit fact summaries to document their institutional character and humanities capacities.

Provide the following in an outline limited to one page:

- Relevant facts and statistics about the institution or organization, such as its
  - history;
  - mission;
  - governance and administration;
  - physical facilities;
  - humanities staff size and composition (including the percentage of all staff who are in the humanities);
  - humanities collections (including the percentage of all collections that are in the humanities);
  - accreditation;
  - enrollment and nature of the student population served; and
  - tuition costs.
- Data on recent humanities activities, such as the
  - types and numbers of enrollments, courses, programs, and degrees awarded in the past two years; and

- percentage of total offerings that are in the humanities;

## 5. Financial summary

Include a one- or two-page summary of the college's finances. Please refer to the [Challenge Grants Sample Financial Summary Form](#) for a suggested format. Where the application concerns a sub-unit of a larger whole (e.g., a college library or museum), include summaries for both the larger and smaller units. The purpose of the summary is to give a clear picture of the financial status of the college during the most recent three-year period. Information should be provided about annual operating budgets, exclusive of capital campaigns or other special income and exclusive of capital project expenditures. Significant operating surpluses or deficits should be explained.

## 6. Narrative

The narrative portion of the proposal is limited to **twenty-five double-spaced pages**. The font size should be no smaller than eleven-point. All pages should have one-inch margins, be collated, and numbered consecutively throughout. Statistical and other supporting materials may be relegated to appendices. The narrative should provide a clear, logical, and concise description of the activities that the challenge grant will support, and it should be carefully proofread.

In the narrative, the applicant should do the following:

- Describe the **significance and intellectual quality** of the humanities activities, programs, and holdings that the challenge grant would support. Explain why these activities are important, and to whom.
- Describe the college's **long-range plans** for advancing and/or disseminating humanistic knowledge. Explain how the college, through its mission, personnel, governance, facilities, and resources, is capable of sustaining outstanding humanities activities. Identify any collaborators or partners and provide evidence, such as letters of support, of institutional commitment to the long-range plans and the challenge grant.
- Discuss the **impact** of the challenge grant. Explain how grant funds will strengthen and improve knowledge and understanding of the humanities. Explain how the NEH challenge grant will sustain and enhance significant humanities activities over the long term. Delineate clearly and in detail the planned challenge grant expenditures (federal and nonfederal combined). Provide a plan for assessing, in both qualitative and quantitative terms as appropriate, the impact of the grant. Explain how the program would serve as a model of excellence for other two-year colleges.
- Describe the **plans for raising funds** to meet the NEH matching requirement. Offer evidence of long-term financial stability at the institution, and explain how the college's resources, leadership, staff, and experience will enable it to conduct

a successful campaign. Give details of the fundraising strategy; explain its feasibility and how it will broaden the base of institutional support.

- Applicants should also briefly describe, when relevant, any recent NEH or state humanities council grants received by the institution, as well as any pending NEH applications related to the activities that the challenge grant would support. If the applicant holds or is currently applying for any NEH grants that include a matching component, these must be described (including the amount of the match) in the section of the narrative that discusses the feasibility of fundraising.

## **7. Lists of trustees and staff**

Provide a list of the institution's board of governors or trustees with their professional affiliations and a list of staff and faculty members principally involved with the challenge grant, indicating their professional qualifications.

## **8. Résumés**

The project director is the person primarily responsible for implementing the humanities activities described in the narrative proposal. Attach a two-page version of this person's résumé as an appendix to the application. Résumés or job descriptions for any position being supported by the challenge grant should also be attached.

## **9. Letters of commitment and support**

Include in an appendix letters of commitment or support from appropriate institutional officials, confirming the institution's commitment to the humanities activities and to meeting the NEH challenge. Other letters of support, such as from partners, scholars in the field, staff involved in carrying out the humanities activities, and participants in or beneficiaries of the humanities activities, may be included as appropriate.

## **10. Optional appendices**

Copies of printed brochures, flyers, or other descriptive materials may be included and referred to in the text of the narrative. References or links to online materials are encouraged.

Single copies of bulky ancillary materials, such as catalogs, journals, or books, may also be submitted but are neither required nor encouraged. See "How to Submit Supplementary Materials."

## **Special requirements for renovation and construction projects**

### ***Section 106 review process and letter from the State Historic Preservation Office***

Applicants requesting support for the construction of a free-standing structure, for building renovations, or for additions to buildings of any age are required to consult with their State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to determine if a property or site is listed, or is eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. The SHPO's eligibility determination should be included in an appendix to the application. If a property is eligible for or listed in the National Register, the applicant should, if possible, also include in an appendix to the application the SHPO's written comments as to the effect of the project on the building or site, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Secretary of the Interior's [Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties](#).

Additionally, applicants who receive NEH challenge grant funds for renovation and construction projects on property or sites listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places must provide NEH with assistance in carrying out its responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. Section 470f, as amended. For all funded renovation or construction projects, Section 106 requires NEH to conduct a review to determine whether historic properties will be affected. If historic properties will be adversely affected by a project, Section 106 requires that NEH consult with the SHPO and the applicant to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effect.

The Section 106 review process is initiated once NEH makes a decision to fund an application for renovation and construction projects on property or sites listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. If such an application is selected for funding, the NEH Office of Grant Management will contact the applicant with a request for any additional information about the project that might be needed for Section 106 review. Once this information is received, NEH will conduct a review and determine whether further action is needed in order to comply with Section 106. The length of the Section 106 review process varies for each project. However, applicants can minimize the length of the review process by familiarizing themselves with Section 106 and by submitting required documentation with the Challenge Grant application. NEH is not permitted to release any grant funds until the Section 106 process has concluded.

For more information on the Section 106 review process, the required documentation, and the responsibilities of an applicant prior to and during the Section 106 review, please read the [Section 106 FAQs](#), or contact the NEH Federal Preservation Officer by e-mail at [FPO@neh.gov](mailto:FPO@neh.gov), by phone at 202-606-8309, or by mail sent to Federal Preservation Officer, Office of Challenge Grants, Room 420, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20506.

### ***Wage rates for renovation and construction***

Institutions using NEH challenge grant funds, federal or nonfederal, for renovation and construction projects must comply with the [Davis-Bacon Act](#).

Applicants should indicate in the narrative their awareness of and plans to meet the special requirements for renovation and construction projects.

### **How to Submit your Application**

The application must be submitted to Grants.gov. Links to the Grants.gov application package and instructions for preparing and submitting the package can be found on the program resource page.

### How to Submit Supplementary Materials

If you are sending supplementary materials, please include in your Grants.gov submission a list of the materials to be sent separately. Send the materials to:

Office of Challenge Grants  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
Room 420  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20506  
202-606-8309

Supplementary materials should be sent by a commercial delivery service to ensure that they arrive by the receipt deadline. NEH continues to experience lengthy delays in the delivery of mail by the U.S. Postal Service.

### Deadlines

**Letters of intent to apply (optional):** The staff recommends that one- to two-page letters of intent to apply be submitted six weeks before the application deadline. Letters of intent may be submitted by e-mail attachment ([challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov)), fax (202-606-8579), or overnight mail (Office of Challenge Grants, NEH, Room 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, 202-606-8309).

**Draft proposals (optional):** The staff recommends that draft proposals be submitted at least four to six weeks before the application deadline. Staff may not be able to review drafts submitted closer to the deadline. Draft proposals may be submitted by e-mail attachment ([challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov)), fax (202-606-8579), or overnight mail (Office of Challenge Grants, NEH, Room 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, 202-606-8309).

**Applications must be received by Grants.gov by February 2, 2012.** Grants.gov will date- and time-stamp your application after it is fully uploaded. Applications submitted after that date will not be accepted. **Supplementary materials must also arrive at NEH by February 2, 2012, to be considered as part of the application.**

#### Challenge grants timetable

*September 1, 2011*

Date prior to the February deadline after which advance fundraising may count toward the matching requirement.



<i>Six weeks before deadline</i>	Target date for submission of letters of intent.
<i>Four to six weeks before deadline</i>	Target date for submission of draft proposals for comment by NEH staff.
<i>February 2, 2012</i>	Receipt deadline for applications.
<i>August 2012</i>	Notification of awards.
<i>July 31</i>	Annual date after notification by which the grantee must submit certification of the gifts required to claim each year's installment of federal funds.

## V. Application Review

Applications are evaluated according to the four criteria listed below.

### 1. **The significance of humanities activities**

What is the evidence that the current and planned activities—particularly those that will be affected by the challenge grant—are significant and that their intellectual quality is high? Why are these activities important, and to whom, and how would they serve as models of excellence?

### 2. **The appropriateness of resources and plans**

What evidence is there of realistic long-range institutional planning to advance and/or disseminate humanistic knowledge? Is the institution, through its mission, personnel, governance, facilities, and resources, capable of sustaining outstanding activities in the humanities? What evidence (such as letters of support) is there of sufficient institutional and community commitment to the long-range plans?

### 3. **The impact of challenge grant funds**

What impact will grant funds have on strengthening and improving the understanding of the humanities? How will the NEH challenge grant sustain and enhance significant humanities activities over the long term? Is the mode of expenditure (endowment, direct, combined) appropriate to the humanities-related costs and to the nature of the activities to be supported? Are the planned challenge grant expenditures (federal and nonfederal combined) described clearly and in detail? How will the college assess the impact of the challenge grant?

#### 4. **The feasibility of fundraising**

Does the institution provide evidence or promise of long-term financial stability? Do the applicant's resources, leadership, staff, and experience indicate that it will conduct a successful campaign to meet the NEH matching requirement? What evidence is offered that the fundraising plan is feasible? Will the fundraising strategy broaden the base of institutional support?

#### **Review and selection process**

Knowledgeable persons outside NEH will read each application and advise the agency about its merits. NEH staff comments on matters of fact or on significant issues that otherwise would be missing from these reviews, then makes recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities. The National Council meets at various times during the year to advise the NEH chairman on grants. The chairman takes into account the advice provided by the review process and, by law, makes all funding decisions.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **Award notices**

Applicants will be notified by e-mail in August, approximately six months after the application deadline. Applicants may obtain the evaluations of their applications by sending a letter to the Office of Challenge Grants, Room 420, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506, or an e-mail message to [challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov).

### **Administrative requirements**

More detailed information on eligible gifts and the mechanics of challenge grant administration can be found in the booklet [Administration of NEH Challenge Grants](#), which may be obtained from the NEH website or the Office of Challenge Grants. Applicants should obtain this document if they plan to solicit and collect eligible matching gifts in anticipation of receiving an NEH challenge grant.

Before submitting an application, applicants should review their [responsibilities as an award recipient](#) and the [lobbying certification requirement](#).

### **Award conditions**

The requirements for awards are contained in the [Administration of NEH Challenge Grants](#), the [General Terms and Conditions for Awards](#) (see exclusions in Appendix 4 of the Administration of NEH Challenge Grants), the [Addendum](#) to it, the applicable [OMB circulars governing federal grants management](#), the [Challenge Grant Audit Guidelines](#), and in any specific terms and conditions contained in the offer letter.

### **Reporting requirements**

A schedule of report due dates will be included with the award document. Reports must be submitted electronically via [eGMS](#), NEH's online grant management system.

Interim and final gift certification and performance reports will be required. Further details can be found in the [Administration of NEH Challenge Grants](#). Reports must be submitted electronically via [eGMS](#), NEH's online grant management system.

A final [Federal Financial Report \(SF-425\)](#) will be due within ninety days after the end of the award period. For further details, please see the [Financial Reporting Requirements](#).

## VII. Points of Contact

*If you have questions about the program, contact:*

Office of Challenge Grants  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
Room 420  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20506  
202-606-8309  
[challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov)

*If you need help using Grants.gov, contact:*

Grants.gov: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)  
Grants.gov help desk: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)  
Grants.gov customer support tutorials and manuals:  
[www.grants.gov/applicants/app\\_help\\_reso.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp)  
Grants.gov support line: 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726)

## VIII. Other Information

### Privacy policy

Information in these guidelines is solicited under the authority of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. 956. The principal purpose for which the information will be used is to process the grant application. The information may also be used for statistical research, analysis of trends, and Congressional oversight. Failure to provide the information may result in the delay or rejection of the application.

### Application completion time

The Office of Management and Budget requires federal agencies to supply information on the time needed to complete forms and also to invite comments on the paperwork burden. NEH estimates that the average time to complete this application is fifteen hours per response. This estimate includes time for reviewing instructions, researching, gathering, and maintaining the information needed, and completing and reviewing the application.

Please send any comments regarding the estimated completion time or any other aspect of this application, including suggestions for reducing the completion time, to the Chief Guidelines Officer, at [guidelines@neh.gov](mailto:guidelines@neh.gov); the Office of Publications, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3136-0134), Washington, D.C. 20503.

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- **Verify your institution’s registration or register your institution with Grants.gov.** Complete at least two weeks before deadline.
- **Download the application package from Grants.gov.** The program resource page on NEH’s website has a direct link to the package or you can search Grants.gov for this program.
- **Complete the following forms contained in the Grants.gov application package.**
  1. Application for Federal Domestic Assistance - Short Organizational
  2. Supplementary Cover Sheet for NEH Grant Programs
  3. Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form
  4. Attachments Form—Using this form, attach the parts of your application as described in the guidelines:
    - ATTACHMENT 1: Table of contents (name the file “contents.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 2: One-page abstract (name the file “abstract.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 3: Budget (name the file “budget.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 4: One-page institutional fact summary (name the file “institutionalsummary.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 5: Financial summary (name the file financialsummary.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 6: Narrative (name the file “narrative.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 7: Lists of trustees and staff (name the file “trusteesstaff.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 8: Project director’s résumé, and the job descriptions or résumés for any positions being supported (name the file “resume.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 9: Letters of commitment and support (name the file “letters.pdf”)
    - ATTACHMENT 9: Optional appendices (name the file “appendices.pdf”)

**Upload your application to Grants.gov.** NEH **strongly** suggests that you submit your application no later than 5:00p.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](mailto:support@grants.gov).