



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE  
**Humanities**

DIVISION OF **EDUCATION**

**SUMMER SEMINARS AND  
INSTITUTES**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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**What is the most important element of an application to direct an NEH Summer Seminar or Institute?**

The most important element is the specific humanities content of the project. Thus the application should address the significance of the subject; the topics, questions, and readings that form the core of the intellectual conversation; and the qualifications of the humanities faculty who lead the project.

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

No.

**Are program officers available to answer questions via phone or e-mail?**

Yes. Applicants are encouraged to discuss applications with a program officer prior to their submission. Staff will also look at drafts of proposals (which should be submitted at least four weeks before the application deadline) and share samples of previously funded projects. Call 202-606-8471 or e-mail [sem-inst@neh.gov](mailto:sem-inst@neh.gov).

**Are there types of projects that NEH does not support?**

Yes. Please review the bulleted list of examples found at the end of Section I of the program guidelines.

**What are the review criteria?**

Please see Section V of the grant guidelines.

**May I propose an NEH Summer Seminar or Institute to instruct humanities faculty in the use of Internet technology in teaching their subject?**

NEH encourages the use of technology in teaching, and NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes often include the use of such resources. However, NEH does not support projects that concentrate primarily on educational or instructional methods.

**I see that some NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes are held outside the United States. Does this mean that non-U.S. institutions may apply to conduct a seminar or institute?**

No. Only nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, state and local governments, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments are eligible applicants. Seminars or institutes may, however, be held abroad if the location enhances the study of the subject.

**I am an independent scholar. May I apply to direct an NEH Summer Seminar or Institute?**

Individuals are not eligible to apply to this program. Only nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, state and local governments, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments are eligible applicants. You would be eligible to direct a seminar or institute only if an eligible applicant agreed to sponsor the project and submit an application to NEH.

**My institution would not be an appropriate site for a seminar but the college across town would be. Would I be permitted to hold my seminar there, and if so, how would that work administratively?**

Yes, you may hold your seminar at a different institution. You may apply through your home institution and subcontract with the other institution or you could have the other institution serve as the applicant institution. Contact a program officer for further details.

**Would it be permissible to co-direct an institute with a colleague who is not on the faculty of my university, which will serve as the host institution?**

Yes. In this situation, both you and the co-director (whom we generally define as any other scholar who shares the directorial responsibilities for the full period of the project itself) would receive 60 percent of the compensation formula set forth in the guidelines. Your salary would be entered under Item 1a of the budget section, and your co-director's would be entered under Item 3.

**May a non-U.S. citizen serve as a project director or a visiting lecturer in an NEH seminar or institute?**

Yes.

**May non-U.S. citizens participate in my NEH seminar or institute?**

Only foreign nationals who have been living in the United States or its jurisdictions for at least the three years prior to the application deadline are eligible to participate in NEH seminars or institutes (that is, to be chosen to be NEH Summer Scholars). Foreign nationals teaching abroad are not eligible to be chosen as NEH Summer Scholars. However, such individuals may be

included on the staff of a seminar or institute if they bring unique and important expertise to the endeavor.

**Are home-schooling parents eligible to participate in my NEH seminar or institute for school teachers?**

Yes.

**When should NEH seminars and institutes be held?**

NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes for school teachers should begin no earlier than late June and end before the middle of August. Projects for college and university teachers typically begin no earlier than the middle of June.

**I'd like to hold a welcoming reception for the participants in my NEH seminar. May I pay for this out of grant funds?**

No. You may wish to seek funds for such events from the project director's academic department, the dean's office, or another source, but NEH grant funds may not be used for social events, entertainment, or the purchase of alcoholic beverages. However, water or light refreshments may be included in your project budget for site visits and other project-related activities.

**If I hold an institute abroad, may I include in the project budget my travel and living expenses while I am abroad?**

Yes.

**May I include an external evaluator in my project budget?**

No.

**Should I include an on-site coordinator in my project budget?**

Yes.

**I just found out that my institution is planning on submitting two applications to the NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes program this year. Will only one be funded?**

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

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

Applicants will be notified of the outcome by September 2012.

**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 regards all applications as new applications.

**Is there anything I can do to increase my chances for success next time?**

You may receive a copy of the comments provided to NEH by outside evaluators at the initial stage of review. You must request this material by sending an e-mail message to [sem-inst@neh.gov](mailto:sem-inst@neh.gov). After reading these comments, you may follow up with a telephone call to a program officer.