



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

DIVISION OF **EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR
A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
WITH NEH TO SUPPORT
BRIDGING CULTURES AT
COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

Deadline: August 14, 2012 (for projects beginning February 2013)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 45.162

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

- Budget instructions
- Budget spreadsheet
- Grants.gov application package and instructions

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

Questions?

Contact the staff of NEH's Division of Education Programs at 202-606-8380 or ccrfp@neh.gov. Hearing-impaired applicants can contact NEH via TDD at 1-866-372-2930.

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

Over half of the students who are now enrolled in post-secondary education in the United States attend community colleges, with enrollments expected to increase and to continue to draw on populations with exceptionally varied cultural backgrounds. Students at community colleges frequently take courses and earn certificates and degrees that are tailored to their vocational needs and career advancement, as well as their personal interests. Yet the essential role of humanities instruction at these institutions is sometimes overlooked, despite the fact that many students' only serious study of the humanities takes place in the classrooms of two-year colleges. For the most part humanities instruction at community colleges receives only slender resources. Furthermore, community college humanities faculty carry very full teaching loads, often on part-time or adjunct appointments. They therefore have few opportunities for professional development. These factors combine to make it hard to create and sustain a strong, shared intellectual community within institutions and between them.

NEH invites proposals for a cooperative agreement to develop and administer a national or regional (multistate) project to advance the role of the humanities at community colleges through curriculum and faculty development focused on the theme of *Bridging Cultures*.

This agency-wide initiative encourages exploration of the ways in which cultures from around the globe, as well as the myriad subcultures within America's borders, have influenced American society. With the aim of revitalizing intellectual and civic life through the humanities, NEH welcomes proposals that enhance understanding of diverse countries, peoples, and cultural and intellectual traditions worldwide. Applications 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.

Successful applicants will work in partnership with NEH to develop and implement a curriculum and professional development project for faculty members from community colleges across the United States or in a multistate region. The project will help community college faculty and administrators create new courses on *Bridging Cultures* themes or topics; design new course sequences, concentrations, and core curricula; or conduct scholarly research that will improve faculty preparation and enrich teaching.

NEH *Bridging Cultures* at Community Colleges projects must draw on sound humanities scholarship related to the theme of *Bridging Cultures*, engage participating faculty in shared readings of important humanities texts, involve appropriate humanities scholars, result in demonstrable and measurable improvements in the quality of humanities course offerings at the

participating institutions, and serve as national models of excellence in addressing needs that are widely shared.

The application must reflect a collaborative relationship between a community college or community college system and another educational or cultural institution (such as a college or university, museum, research library, or professional association or society) in the planning and implementation of the project. The applicant of record may be a community college, community college system, or other type of educational or cultural institution.

Scope of work

Award recipients, working in consultation with NEH, will do the following:

- Recruit and select at least thirty-six community college faculty members and key academic administrators to take part in project activities.
- Plan and implement an opening conference or other forum in which faculty and key academic administrators work with lead scholars to develop new curricula and courses and/or conduct research at a major library, archive, museum, or other important cultural institution.
- Provide a sustained program of study and guidance to the faculty participants, as they implement new curricula and courses over the course of the award period.
- Create opportunities for participating faculty, key administrators, and lead scholars to exchange ideas through digital technology (such as a well-moderated Web forum, wiki, blog, listserv, or other appropriate method) during the award period and beyond.
- Plan and implement a follow-up or concluding forum in which participants would present project products, which might include course syllabi, curricular plans, or faculty research projects, and report on their effectiveness. These products must also be posted on a project website.
- Develop and implement a dissemination plan, including, among other activities, a “lessons learned” white paper to be posted on the project website and on the NEH website.
- Design and conduct a rigorous and thorough formative and summative project assessment.

NEH *Bridging Cultures* at Community Colleges cooperative agreements may not be used for

- creative or performing arts;
- empirical social scientific research;
- specific policy studies;
- educational or technical impact assessments;
- work undertaken in the pursuit of an academic degree;
- the preparation or publication of textbooks;

- projects that focus on pedagogical theory, research on educational methods, tests, or measurements;
- projects that seek to promote a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view;
or
- projects that advocate a particular program of social action.

II. Award Information

NEH expects to award two to five cooperative agreements of up to \$360,000 each in outright funds.

The award period may run between twenty-four and thirty-six months.

The award notice for each cooperative agreement will set forth the terms and conditions of the expected relationship between the awardee and NEH in greater detail. The awardee will be expected to work in close consultation with the staff of the Division of Education Programs at all times in coordinating the program.

The estimated award date is January 2013. All applicants will be notified by e-mail of the results of the competition.

Cost sharing

Cost sharing is not required in this program.

III. Eligibility

Any U.S. nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status is eligible, as are state and local governmental agencies and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. Individuals are not eligible to apply. Current *Bridging Cultures* at Community Colleges awardees are not eligible to apply.

Projects must involve a strong consultation between a community college or community college system and another educational or cultural institution (such as a college or university, museum, research library, or professional association or society) in the planning and implementation of the project. With two or more institutions or organizations working together on the project, one of them must serve as the applicant of record.

Please note: if the applicant is a community college or community college system, at least one other educational or cultural organization must be involved in conceiving and developing the project. Likewise, if the applicant is not a community college or community college system, at least one community college must be involved in conceiving and developing the project.

NEH generally does not make awards 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 award funds from, or sites and materials controlled by, other federal entities in their projects.

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

IV. Application and Submission Information

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

Applicants should begin by reviewing the evaluation criteria listed below in Section V. These are the criteria that reviewers will use in evaluating all proposals. Applicants are also encouraged to consult the sample narrative that is available on [program resource page](#).

The application should be clear, free of jargon, and accessible to nonspecialists. Applicants should refrain from proposing advocacy and other activities not supported by NEH (see the bulleted list above, preceding the Award Information section of these guidelines).

Applicants are encouraged to contact a program officer who can offer advice about preparing the proposal and review proposal drafts. Proposal drafts should be submitted to [ccrfp@neh.gov](mailto:crcfp@neh.gov) at least five weeks before the deadline. Responses to late-arriving drafts cannot be guaranteed. In responding to drafts, NEH staff may explain how the application review criteria apply to a proposal, note material that may be missing from the proposal draft, and anticipate the questions that panelists are likely to raise during the review process. These staff comments are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal, but previous applicants have found them helpful in strengthening their applications.

Once an applicant submits a formal application, NEH will not comment on its status until the review process is complete.

Your application should consist of the following five parts:

- 1. Table of contents**

Include all parts of the application, with page numbers. Pages should be numbered consecutively through all sections (beginning with the one-page summary), including the appendices.

- 2. Summary**

Provide a one-page, single-spaced summary of the narrative.

- 3. Narrative**

The narrative is an extended discussion of the project's content, activities, and intended audience. Limit the narrative to *twenty* double-spaced pages with one-inch margins and a font size no smaller than *twelve* points. Use appendices to provide concise supplementary material that directly bears on the project. Include the following sections in the narrative.

- **Intellectual rationale**

Describe the central topic of the project and how the project will strengthen the humanities at participating community colleges. Place the project in its scholarly and educational context, including its relationship to *Bridging Cultures*, and identify the intended impact on educators and their institutions. The intellectual rationale must justify in a clear and persuasive manner the specific academic content, shared readings, activities, and topics set forth in the project's plan.

- **Content and design**

Describe the project's humanities content in detail, discussing topics that will be explored, the texts to be read in common, and why these topics and texts were chosen. Describe the project structure and activities. In an appendix provide a project work plan, schedule of activities, and list of readings for the project.

- **Project personnel**

Identify project staff members, consultants, and lead scholars. Define their roles and state their qualifications for their responsibilities in the project. In an appendix provide a résumé for the project director (no longer than five pages) and brief résumés or biographies (no longer than two pages each) and up-to-date letters of commitment for other personnel.

- **Selection process**

Describe how participating faculty members (both full-time and adjunct) and key academic administrators will be selected, including a description of the selection procedures and criteria and an explanation of how faculty members (both full-time and adjunct) at participating community colleges will be recruited.

- **Institutional context**

Briefly describe the applicant institution, such as a community college or community college system, college or university, museum, research library, professional association or society, or other organization. Show how its resources and personnel will support the project and how the design and implementation will be enhanced by the involvement of another educational or cultural organization. Include in an appendix letters of commitment from all institutions. Please note: if the applicant is a community college or community college system, at least one other educational or cultural organization must be involved in conceiving and developing the project. Likewise, if the applicant is not a community college or community college system, at least one community college must be involved in conceiving and developing the project.

- **Follow-up and dissemination**

Describe follow-up activities (for example, webinars, podcasts, websites, workshops with colleagues, or presentations at conferences), including mechanisms for disseminating project benefits and resources to a wider audience of educators and institutions beyond the project participants. Indicate how the results of the project will have broad and sustained impact

after funding ends. Describe arrangements for maintaining digital materials after the end of the award period.

- **Assessment**

Include an assessment plan that is rigorous and appropriate to the project. Outline the benchmarks and timeline for formative evaluation over the course of the award period. Describe plans for a summative assessment of project outcomes, including products, impact, and the extent of dissemination efforts. Assessment must include a “lessons learned” white paper for a broad professional audience that will be posted on the NEH website. Incorporate quantitative measures when possible, such as number of revised or new courses, student enrollment data, and faculty development results.

Outside evaluation is not required for NEH *Bridging Cultures* at Community Colleges awards.

4. Budget

Using the [instructions](#) and the [budget template](#), complete the [budget spreadsheet](#) (MS Excel format) or a format of your own that includes all the required information.

Applicants should submit their budgets in a font of at least eleven points. If you wish, you may attach separate pages with notes to explain any of the budget items in more detail. Applicants are advised to retain a copy of their budget form.

The instructions below supplement the standard NEH budget instructions, providing additional information that is specific to this program.

- **Item 1: Salaries and wages**

Include all project personnel employed by the applicant institution. Calculations for compensation must conform to the policies of the institution. Commonly, the budget includes a percentage of academic year or annual salary for those personnel participating in the project. Such amounts may be used to release personnel from normal duties for a specified amount of time or, alternatively, to pay them for time that they devote to the project over and above their normal duties. In no case, however, may this award support replacement teachers or pay faculty members for performing their regular duties. Compensation for support staff may be calculated as a percentage of salary or based on an hourly rate.

- **Item 3: Consultant fees**

List individuals contributing to the project as visiting scholars or other experts. The honoraria for visiting faculty and other consultants range from \$350 to \$750 per person per day or up to \$3,000 per person per week, not including travel and subsistence costs. Travel and subsistence costs should be entered under budget Item 4.

- **Item 7: Other costs**

All community college faculty participants, both full-time and adjunct, receive a set stipend. The stipend should be commensurate with the expected time commitment. (Reminder: consultant fees are entered under budget Item 3.) Also include purchases of permanent equipment (having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more).

- **Inadmissible budget items**

The following costs are not allowable and may not appear in project budgets:

- compensation for faculty members performing their regular duties;
- the rental of recreational facilities and costs related to social events such as banquets, receptions, and entertainment; and
- tuition fees for participants.

- **Budget narrative (optional)**

If needed, include a brief supplement to the budget form, explaining any of the projected expenses or budget items in more detail.

5. Appendices

Use appendices to provide supplementary but essential materials. As appropriate, include the following:

- the work plan, schedule of activities, and list of readings for the project;
- a résumé for the project director (no longer than five pages) and brief résumés or biographies (no longer than two pages each) and up-to-date letters of commitment for other personnel; and
- letters of commitment from the leadership of each institutional partner involved in the project, including the applicant institution.

Include only relevant information concisely presented. Each appendix should be identified clearly and listed in the table of contents. Remember that pages should be numbered consecutively through all sections, including the appendices. The proposal narrative should refer to items included in the appendices.

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](#).

DEADLINES

Draft proposals: Program staff recommends that draft proposals (optional) be submitted at least five weeks before the deadline. Time constraints may prevent staff from reviewing draft proposals submitted after that date. Staff comments in response to draft proposals are not part of the formal review process and have no bearing on the final outcome of the proposal, but previous applicants have found them helpful in strengthening their applications.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov on or before August 14, 2012. Grants.gov will date- and time-stamp your application after it is fully uploaded. Applications submitted after that date will not be accepted.

V. Application Review

Proposals for NEH *Bridging Cultures* at Community Colleges awards are evaluated according to three general criteria: intellectual quality, feasibility, and potential for significant impact.

- **Intellectual quality**

- Is the rationale for the project clear and persuasive?
- Does the project draw on sound humanities scholarship?
- Does the project engage significant humanities topics and use shared readings that respond to the theme of *Bridging Cultures*?
- Does the project address issues of humanities education at community colleges in an effective and appropriate manner?
- Is the proposal free of jargon and accessible to nonspecialists?
- Does the project refrain from advocacy and other activities not supported by the NEH (see the bulleted list above, preceding the Award Information section of these guidelines), including advocacy of a particular political, religious, or ideological viewpoint or program of social action?

- **Feasibility**

- Are the activities well planned and described in adequate detail?
- Are the personnel qualified to carry out their responsibilities?
- Do the activities advance the project in thoughtful and creative ways?
- Are the plans for administering the project sound and well developed?
- Is at least one community college or community college system involved in planning and implementing the project?
- Do the organizations involved have the institutional capacity and knowledge of the community college environment to fulfill project objectives successfully?
- Do the letters of support from institutions, scholars, and other consultants demonstrate their interest in and commitment to the project?
- Do the plans include appropriate assessment?
- Are the costs of the project reasonable in view of the project design and likely results?

- **Potential for significant impact**

- Will the project advance the role of the humanities at the participating community colleges?
- Are plans for both formative and summative assessment rigorous, thorough, and appropriate to the project?
- Will the results be disseminated widely to those who could benefit?

- Does the project have the potential to serve as a national model of excellence?

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 of the decision by e-mail by January 2013. Institutional grants administrators and project directors of successful applications will receive award documents by e-mail by January 2013. Applicants may obtain the evaluations of their applications by sending an e-mail message to ccrfp@neh.gov.

The instrument that will be awarded as a result of this request for proposals is a cooperative agreement, as defined by the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Public Law 95-224. A cooperative agreement is a cost reimbursement instrument. No fee or profit (or other increment above allowable cost) is allowed.

Administrative requirements

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 [General Terms and Conditions for Awards](#), the [Addendum](#) to it, any specific terms and conditions contained in the award document, and the applicable [OMB circulars governing federal grants management](#).

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 performance reports will be required. Further details can be found in [Performance Reporting Requirements](#).

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

A white paper will be required and will be due within ninety days after the end of the grant period. This white paper should document the project, including lessons learned, so that others can benefit. This white paper will be posted on the NEH website.

VII. Points of Contact

If you have questions about the program, contact:

Bridging Cultures at Community Colleges
Division of Education Programs
National Endowment for the Humanities
Room 302
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
202-606-8380
ccrfp@neh.gov

If you need help using Grants.gov, refer to

Grants.gov: www.grants.gov
Grants.gov help desk: support@grants.gov
Grants.gov customer support tutorials and manuals:
http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp
Grant.gov support line: 1-800-518-GRANTS (4726)
Grants.gov [trouble shooting tips](#).

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; 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. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number.

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: Summary (name the file “summary.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 3: Narrative (name the file “narrative.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 4: Budget (name the file “budget.pdf”)
 - ATTACHMENT 5: Appendices (name the file “appendices.pdf”)

Your attachments must be in Portable Document Format (.pdf). We cannot accept attachments in their original word processing or spreadsheet formats. If you don’t already have software to convert your files into PDFs, many low-cost and free software packages will do so. You can learn more about converting documents into PDFs [here](#).

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.