Digital Projects at the NEH: Funding Opportunities

Below are just some of the many NEH programs that may support projects exploring technology’s applications to research, education, or public programs, as well as the history and impact of technology. See program deadlines and review current guidelines and contact information at www.neh.gov/grants.

**Office of Digital Humanities**

**Digital Humanities Start-Up Grants**
This program awards relatively small grants to support the planning stages of digital projects that promise to benefit the humanities. Projects may involve creating or enhancing experimental, computationally-based methods or techniques for humanities research, teaching, preservation, or public programming; pursuing scholarship that examines the history, criticism, and philosophy of digital culture and its impact on society, or explores the philosophical or practical implications and impact of digital humanities in specific fields or disciplines; or revitalizing and/or recovering existing digital projects that promise to contribute substantively to scholarship, teaching, or public knowledge of the humanities.

**Digital Humanities Implementation Grants**
This program awards substantial grants to support the implementation of experimental projects that have successfully completed a start-up phase and demonstrated their value to the humanities. The program can support innovative digital humanities projects that address multiple audiences, including scholars, teachers, librarians, and the public. Applications from recipients of NEH’s Digital Humanities Start-Up Grants are welcome, but start-up funding may be secured from other sources as well.

**Institutes for Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities**
This program supports major training institutes or workshops that provide the opportunity for experts in the digital humanities to share their knowledge with colleagues from around the country. Topics from previously-supported institutes include multimodal scholarship, humanities high-performance computing, strategies for developing humanities software, models of social network analysis, and geospatial scholarship. Institutes for Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities may be hosted by colleges, universities, learned societies, centers for advanced study, libraries or other repositories, and cultural or professional organizations. See www.neh.gov/divisions/odh/institutes for information on attending an institute.

**Division of Preservation and Access**

**Humanities Collections and Reference Resources**
Thousands of libraries, archives, museums, and historical organizations across the country maintain important collections of books and manuscripts, photographs, sound recordings and moving images, archaeological and ethnographic artifacts, art and material culture, and digital objects. Funding from this program strengthens efforts to extend the life of such materials and make their intellectual content widely accessible, often through the use of digital technology. Awards are also made to create various reference resources that facilitate use of cultural materials, from works that provide basic information quickly to tools that synthesize and codify
knowledge of a subject for in-depth investigation. HCRR offers two kinds of awards: 1) for implementation and 2) for planning, assessment, and pilot efforts (HCRR Foundations grants).

**Research and Development**
The program supports projects that address major challenges in preserving or providing access to humanities collections and resources. These challenges include the need to find better ways to preserve materials of critical importance to the nation’s cultural heritage—from fragile artifacts and manuscripts to analog recordings and digital assets subject to technological obsolescence—and to develop advanced modes of organizing, searching, discovering, and using such materials. All projects must demonstrate how advances in preservation and access would benefit the cultural heritage community in supporting humanities research, teaching, or public programming. The program offers Tier I grants for planning and preliminary work, and Tier II grants for advanced implementation.

**Common Heritage**
America’s cultural heritage is preserved not only in libraries, museums, archives, and other community organizations, but also in all of our homes, family histories, and life stories. Common Heritage will support both the digitization of cultural heritage materials and the organization of public programming at community events that explore these materials as a window on a community’s history and culture. The program supports day-long events organized by community cultural institutions, which members of the public will be invited to attend. At these events experienced staff will digitize the community historical materials brought in by the public. Historical photographs, artifacts, documents, family letters, art works, and audiovisual recordings are among the many items eligible for digitization and public commemoration.

**Division of Public Programs**

**Digital Projects for the Public**
Digital Projects for the Public grants support projects that significantly contribute to the public’s engagement with the humanities. Digital platforms—such as websites, mobile applications and tours, interactive touch screens and kiosks, games, and virtual environments—can reach diverse audiences and bring the humanities to life for the American people. The program offers three levels of support for digital projects: grants for Discovery projects (early-stage planning work), Prototyping projects (proof-of-concept development work), and Production projects (end-stage production and distribution work). While projects can take many forms, shapes, and sizes, your request should be for an exclusively digital project or for a digital component of a larger project.

**Division of Research Programs**

**Fellowships**
Fellowships support individuals pursuing advanced research that is of value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both. Recipients usually produce articles, monographs, books, digital materials, archaeological site reports, translations, editions, or other scholarly resources in the humanities. Projects may be at any stage of development.
Collaborative Research
Grants support interpretive humanities research undertaken by two or more collaborating scholars, for full-time or part-time activities for periods of one to three years. Support is available for various combinations of scholars, consultants, and research assistants; project-related travel; field work; applications of information technology; and technical support and services. All grantees are expected to disseminate the results of their work to the appropriate scholarly and public audiences.

Scholarly Editions and Translations
Grants support the preparation of editions and translations of pre-existing texts and documents of value to the humanities that are currently inaccessible or available in inadequate editions. Typically, the texts and documents are significant literary, philosophical, and historical materials, but other types of work, such as musical notation, are also eligible. Projects must be undertaken by at least one editor or translator and one other collaborating scholar. Editions and translations produced with NEH support contain scholarly and critical apparatus appropriate to the subject matter and format of the edition.

Division of Education Programs

Humanities Initiatives
Humanities Initiatives at Presidentially Designated Institutions (Historically Black Colleges and Universities, High Hispanic Enrollment, and Tribal Colleges and Universities) and Humanities Initiatives at Community Colleges are intended to strengthen the teaching and study of the humanities in subjects such as history, philosophy, and literature. Initiatives may create opportunities for faculty members to study together, in order to improve their capacity to teach the humanities; support new humanities programs and enhance existing ones; support humanities contributions to professional training; develop bridge programs for at-risk and nontraditional students; help institutions take advantage of humanities resources, especially in the digital humanities; and support collaborative projects in the humanities between the applicant institution and another institution.

Office of Challenge Grants

Next Generation Humanities PhD Grants
In recent years, research has revealed that humanities PhDs pursue careers in many different professions—both inside and outside academia. Yet most humanities PhD programs in the United States still prepare students primarily for tenure-track professor positions at colleges and universities. NEH therefore hopes to assist universities in implementing a new model of doctoral education, which can both transform the understanding of what it means to be a humanities scholar and promote the integration of the humanities in the public sphere. Next Generation Humanities PhD Implementation Grants support universities in instituting wide-ranging changes in humanities doctoral programs through both Planning and Implementation grants. Grantee institutions must provide funds (either their own funds or funds raised from nonfederal third parties) equal to the grant funds released by NEH.