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Humanities Texas Grant Guidelines

I. OVERVIEW

Humanities Texas

Humanities Texas is a nonprofit, tax-exempt, educational organization incorporated by the State of Texas in 1972. The state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Humanities Texas receives its primary funding through federal appropriations to the NEH and additional support from foundations, corporations, and individuals. Since 2009, Humanities Texas has received an appropriation from the State of Texas exclusively for the administration of our professional development programs for Texas teachers.

The Humanities Texas grants program

Working in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Humanities Texas provides financial support to nonprofit organizations and institutions for humanities programs that serve public audiences.

What are the humanities?

The humanities include but are not limited to the study of history, literature, modern and classical languages; linguistics; jurisprudence; philosophy; comparative religion; ethics; and the history, criticism, and theory of the arts. Social sciences that employ qualitative approaches such as cultural anthropology, archaeology, and political science are considered part of the humanities, as are interdisciplinary areas such as women's studies, American studies, and the study of folklore and folklife. In elementary and secondary education, the humanities are found in social studies and English language-arts courses, as well as in advanced courses in history, literature, foreign languages, art or music history, and related subjects.

Programs may also apply humanities perspectives to current political, social, or economic concerns and issues.

Who is eligible?

Grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations and institutions based in Texas for the purposes of developing public humanities programs. Examples of eligible organizations include (but are not limited to): museums, libraries, state and local governmental entities, community colleges, universities, public radio stations, school districts, historical societies, and arts/cultural centers.

Organizations 1) must have tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service, and 2) must be actively registered on [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov), have an assigned unique entity ID (UEI), and have the account set to public.

The applicant organization must contribute substantively to the success of the program and will assume programmatic, financial, and legal responsibilities. Entities acting principally as fiscal sponsors are not eligible to receive Humanities Texas funding.

Previous grant recipients must fully close any open grants before submitting a proposal for a grant. Large entities with multiple sub-units (e.g., universities, cities, counties), are exempt from this rule. However, Humanities Texas reserves the right to limit the number of open grants at any given time to ensure that our grant funding is distributed in communities statewide.

What kinds of programs does Humanities Texas fund?

Humanities Texas grants can support many program formats, including but not limited to: lectures, panel discussions, and conferences; teacher institutes and workshops; reading and film discussion groups; site interpretations; the development and fabrication of interpretive humanities exhibitions; the production of films, television and radio programming, and interactive media; and web-based or digital humanities content.

Grant-funded programs should have the following characteristics:

- They are firmly grounded in the humanities.
- Humanities experts play an active role in their conception, design, and/or execution.
- They are conducted in a spirit of open and informed inquiry.
- They are directed primarily at the general public, both adults and young people, outside of the regular school or college classroom. Programs targeting special audiences such as K-12 teachers, humanities practitioners, ethnic and community groups, or seniors are also welcome.
- They are a single program (or single series of programs) for which there is a clear, coherent, and reportable outcome.

What programs are not eligible for funding?

- Programs not grounded in the humanities.
- Programs proposed by individuals rather than nonprofit organizations.
- Theatrical performances, art exhibitions, or other presentations in the arts or media, unless their primary purpose is to provide a focus for humanistic inquiry.
- STEM programs, unless their primary purpose is to provide a focus for humanistic inquiry.
- Courses for academic credit.
- Programs for K-12 students that take place during school hours.
- Capital expenditures for significant institutional expenses such as land and buildings.
- Preservation of objects or archival materials, or digitization, unless directly related to a public program.
- Publications and scholarly research, unless directly related to a public program.
- Programs that advocate a single point of view, ideology, or specific program of social action.
- Programs aimed primarily at audiences outside of Texas.
- Scholarships and fellowships.
- Fundraisers or programs with the primary goal of raising the organization's profile.
- Profit-making programs.

How are funding decisions made?

The Humanities Texas Board of Directors reviews major grant applications; the Executive Director and staff, with the authorization of the Board, review mini-grants, exhibition grants, and rural grants. Programs are evaluated on the basis of the Humanities Texas organizational mission and grants guidelines. Of particular importance are the quality of each program's conception and design, the qualifications of the participating experts, the strength of the program's humanities component, and the extent to which the program will meet the particular intellectual or cultural needs and interests of its target audience(s) in Texas. Priority is given to: organizations based in counties that Humanities Texas staff consider to be underserved at the time of evaluation and organizations that have not received funding in the past ten years.

II. GRANTS, DEADLINES, AND COST-SHARING

Grants

Humanities Texas offers four grants: mini-grants, major grants, exhibition grants, and rural grants.

- Mini-grants are available throughout the year. They cover up to \$2,500 in humanities program costs. They require one-to-one cost-share.
- Major grants are available twice a year, spring and fall. They cover up to \$20,000 in humanities programs costs. Given Humanities Texas’s limited grant funds and the significant need for support statewide, major grant awards typically range from \$5,000 to \$15,000, and partial awards are possible. All major grants require one-to-one cost-share. The major grant can cover three types of proposals:
 - Community program: a public program that will serve the community, region, or a statewide audience. May be in-person or online.
 - Media project: a media product that will serve your community, region, or a statewide Texas audience. May include documentary films, online series, radio shows, podcasts, and web and digital media projects and exhibitions. May include planning and research.
 - Planning: funding for community and media programs that are in an initial planning/development stage. The application must include both planning details and expected outcomes.
- Exhibition grants are available throughout the year. They cover up to \$2,500 of the costs of the rental of a Humanities Texas traveling exhibition and associated humanities-based programming. They require one-to-one cost-share.
- Rural grants are available throughout the year for organizations based in counties of 60,000 residents or fewer. They cover up to \$2,500 in humanities program costs. They do not require cost-share.

Application Deadlines

Mini-grants, exhibition grants, and rural grants

Application deadline	Rolling, application must be received at least six weeks before grant period start date.
Decision date	Within ten business days of application's submission.
Program start date	At least six weeks after application's submission.

Major grants	Fall cycle	Spring cycle
Letter of intent (LOI)	August 15*	February 15*
Application deadline	September 15*	March 15*
Decision date	December 1	June 1
Program start date	January 1	July 1

* If this date falls on the weekend, the deadline will be the following Monday.

Grant Period

The grant period should encompass all aspects of the program. The grant period must range from two to twelve months. If your organization is seeking funding for multiple programs, it must fully close an open grant before submitting another application.

Cost-sharing

For mini-grants, exhibition grants, and major grants, organizations must cost-share an amount equal to or greater than the grant request. This 1:1 cost-share requirement can be demonstrated in the approved budget with 1.) cash and/or 2.) in-kind services and goods, such as the time of volunteers, the time of employees assigned to the program, and use of meeting space.

For major grants, programs for which the organization has raised, or expects to raise, third-party, non-federal cash contributions (i.e., cash donations made to the program by an individual, a foundation, or a corporation not otherwise linked to the organization) may be considered stronger candidates for funding. Humanities Texas may award such programs grants from NEH's Gifts and Matching Funds program, which must be matched at a one-to-one matching rate. Such grants are awarded at the discretion of Humanities Texas and do not require a separate application process. Humanities Texas staff will communicate with applicants regarding their eligibility for such awards.

Rural grants do not require cost-share.

III. HOW TO APPLY

Application process

The application is available on the Humanities Texas grants portal. All applicant organizations must be actively registered on www.SAM.gov and be assigned a UEI number. The SAM account must be set to public.

All organizations are strongly encouraged to contact Humanities Texas grants staff prior to applying for a grant. No letter of intent is necessary for mini-grants, exhibition grants, or rural grants applications although consultation with Humanities Texas staff is welcome.

Applicants for major grants must submit a letter of intent (LOI) online at least a month prior to the final application deadline. Staff will invite major grant applicants on the basis of a submitted and eligible LOI. Staff are authorized to reject LOIs on the following bases: 1) the proposed program and/or funding request is not eligible, 2) the LOI lacks critical program information, and 3) the proposed program timeline does not align with the major grant calendar.

Any letters of support submitted with an application should be substantive, commenting on the program's potential impact, as well as its value to the target audience(s). Letters that attest to the expertise and appropriateness of a program's humanities scholars are also welcome.

You may obtain more information from the Humanities Texas website or by contacting Humanities Texas staff at grants@humanitiestexas.org or 512-440-1991. Detailed information and guidelines particular to each grant format appear on the application forms. Please read the applications instructions and forms thoroughly before submitting your final proposal. Incomplete applications are not competitive and will not be considered.

Publicity requirements

Please plan ahead before applying. While mini-grants, exhibition grants, and rural grants deadlines are rolling, applicants should apply early enough to allow sufficient time to credit Humanities Texas in all publications and announcements related to the program. "Publications and announcements" include all press releases, advertisements, invitations, posters and flyers, brochures and catalogues, public service announcements, and broadcast and website coverage. If you apply when there is not enough time to credit Humanities Texas support, your application will not be considered.

Major grant applicants should choose a grant deadline that allows them ample time to plan and promote their programs. Humanities Texas's support should be acknowledged in all publications and announcements related to the program. Applications submitted without sufficient time for appropriate promotion will not be considered.

Humanities Texas must be credited in the following way in all publications and announcements related to the program: “This program is supported by Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.” Any acknowledgment must also include the following statement: “Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this {article, book, exhibition, film, program, database, report, Web resource}, do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.”

We encourage grantees to use the Humanities Texas logo in their promotional materials. Our approved logos are [available on our website](#).

Award process and responsibilities

Once awarded, applicants must complete a pre-award form to confirm organization principals. Staff will issue a grant agreement (contract) detailing grantee responsibilities after receipt of the pre-award form. Grantees have fifteen days to sign and submit the grant agreement.

A narrative final report and final expenditure form will be due within ninety days of the end of the grant period.

Changes to the project scope, personnel, budget, or grant period must be approved by Humanities Texas grants staff.

IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Humanities focus

All programs funded by Humanities Texas must be grounded in the humanities and incorporate critical reflection, interpretation, and open discussion. In the case of contemporary public issues, organizations should draw upon the disciplines of the humanities to understand and interpret the specific political, social, cultural, or economic topics under consideration. For example, a program addressing environmental issues might draw from history, literature, ethics, and jurisprudence. Programs dealing with public policy questions and controversial contemporary issues must provide a balance of viewpoints to avoid advocacy and bias.

Who qualifies as a humanities expert?

A humanities expert is an individual with particular training or experience in one or more of the academic disciplines in the humanities. The typical qualifications are an advanced degree (M.A. or Ph.D.) in a humanities field of study. However, individuals without an advanced degree may qualify as humanities scholars because of their accomplishments and/or methods of research, inquiry, and teaching.

Selecting experts appropriate to your program

The qualifications of a program’s 1.) principal humanities expert and 2.) participating experts/ scholars significantly determine an application’s competitiveness. For example, it is unlikely that Humanities Texas would fund a lecture series on Texas in the twentieth century that does not include any credentialed historians who specialize in twentieth-century Texas.

Humanities Texas encourages applicants to involve a broad and diverse group of experts and scholars in their proposed programs. For major grant applications in particular, it is important that organizations include guidance and perspectives from scholars outside the organization. For example, a museum or academic institution seeking a Humanities Texas major grant for a year-long lecture series or major exhibit should include outside experts, scholars, and advisors. Major grant applications that draw exclusively on in-house humanities expertise are typically not competitive. Humanities Texas strongly recommends that you speak with our grants program staff early in your planning process, to ensure the strength and credibility of your program’s humanities personnel.

What roles may experts play?

The mission of the Humanities Texas grants program is to support strong humanities programs aimed at nonacademic audiences. Hence, humanities experts/scholars play essential roles in the programs that we fund, providing broad humanistic perspectives as well as in-depth knowledge. These experts play many roles, including but not limited to:

- helping conceive of and design a program
- helping shape the content of an exhibit or other program
- making public presentations or participating in panel discussions
- writing critical and interpretive materials for brochures, script treatments, catalogues, etc.
- performing specific services for the program director, such as reviewing exhibit text, script treatments, or copy for catalogues or brochures
- serving as an outside evaluator of the program

Public audiences

Programs should be directed primarily to the general public, both adults and young people, outside of the regular school or college classroom. Programs targeting special audiences such as K-12 teachers, humanities practitioners, ethnic and community groups, or seniors are also welcome. To ensure that a program is pertinent to its target audience, representatives from that audience should play a role in the program's conception and design.

Rules for applicant organizations with multiple sub-units

Entities with multiple sub-units (e.g., universities, cities, counties), may submit multiple grant proposals at any given time. However, they are encouraged to contact grants staff before submitting. HTx reserves the right to limit the number of open grants to large entities at any given time to ensure that our grant funding is distributed in communities statewide.

University applicants must include an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) during the registration and application stage. Humanities Texas cannot consider proposals from individual scholars and departments without the inclusion and participation of a university AOR.

Common reasons for rejecting proposals

- insufficient humanities content
- inadequate involvement of humanities scholars
- inadequate involvement of humanities scholars with specialties that align with the program focus
- involvement of only "in-house" scholars and experts, particularly in large-scale programs
- program not suited to the particular needs of its target audience
- program lacks balance in its presentation of contemporary public issues
- inadequate publicity or promotion plans
- budget not justified or not reasonable
- application incomplete or lacking crucial programmatic details
- application lists activities and participants yet to be confirmed
- proposed activities scheduled to occur prior to when grant period can begin

Ineligible costs

The following costs cannot form part of the budget, either from the funds requested from Humanities Texas or the funds demonstrated as cost-share. The following list includes many items deemed unallowable by the [Code of Federal Regulations, 2 CFR 200 Subpart E](#).

- Construction, renovation, repairs, or restoration of real property
- Purchase of buildings or property
- Purchase of equipment (defined as an item with a value of \$10,000 and over). Inexpensive program-specific equipment (e.g., digital recorders for an oral history program) is allowable.
- Alcoholic beverages or food
- Fiscal agent or fiscal sponsorship fees
- Airfare outside of North America
- Museum acquisitions
- Library acquisitions (except for books and film or print resources used in conjunction with funded programs)
- Books or publications unrelated to Humanities Texas grant programs
- Individual research or writing unless these are integral to programs having a direct public audience
- Creative or performing arts, unless they are used in a supporting role to enhance humanities discussions
- Expenses incurred or paid out before a HTx grant award is made

Budget requirements

- Ineligible costs cannot be included as either grant requests or cost-share.
- General administrative or financial personnel costs are not allowed. All personnel costs must be related to the approved humanities program.
- No more than \$1,500 per speaker per presentation may be paid with HTx funds. Speakers who charge more than \$1,500 per presentation may be paid in cash cost-share.

Public information

Information on programs funded by Humanities Texas, excluding salary and detailed budget information, may be reviewed upon written request. Information on programs not funded may only be released with the written consent of the organization.