



## HUMANITIES TEXAS GRANT GUIDELINES

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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.

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

#### **Who is eligible?**

Grants are awarded to not-for-profit educational, cultural, and civic organizations. Sponsors must have, or have applied for, tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. Examples of past grant recipients include (but are not limited to):

- two- and four-year colleges and universities
- libraries
- arts and humanities councils and institutes
- schools and regional service centers
- churches and religious groups
- state and local governmental entities
- museums
- historical societies
- public radio stations
- labor organizations
- civic and social service organizations
- chambers of commerce

#### **What kinds of projects does Humanities Texas fund?**

Funded projects take many different forms—lectures, panel discussions, and conferences; teacher institutes and workshops; reading and film discussion groups; site interpretations; the development and fabrication of interpretive exhibits; and the production of films, television and radio programming, and interactive media. However, all funded programs have the following characteristics in common.

- They are firmly grounded in the humanities.
- Humanities scholars play an active role in their conception, design, and execution.
- They are conducted in a spirit of open and informed inquiry.
- They are 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, community college faculty, ethnic and community groups, or professional groups are also welcome.

**What projects are not eligible for funding?**

- Projects not grounded in the humanities.
- Projects proposed by individuals rather than non-profit 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.
- Courses for academic credit.
- Capital expenditures for significant institutional expenses such as land and buildings.
- Preservation of objects or archival materials, unless directly related to a public program.
- Publications and scholarly research, unless directly related to a public program.
- Projects that advocate a single point of view, ideology, or specific program of social action.
- Projects aimed primarily at audiences outside of Texas.
- Scholarships and fellowships.
- Fundraisers and profit-making projects.

**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. Projects are evaluated on the basis of the Humanities Texas organizational mission and grants guidelines. Of particular importance are the quality of each project's conception and design, the qualifications of the participating scholars, the strength of the project's humanities component, and the extent to which the project will meet the particular intellectual, cultural, or professional needs and interests of its target audience(s) in Texas. Priority is given to applications from Texas-based sponsoring organizations.

## **II. GRANT FORMATS, DEADLINES, AND COST-SHARING**

Humanities Texas offers three grant formats: **mini-grants**, **major grants for community projects**, and **major grants for media projects**.

- **Mini-grants** fund up to \$1,500 of the costs associated with public programs. These small grants are particularly appropriate for funding a speaker and/or the rental of a traveling exhibit (including Humanities Texas exhibitions). An organization might also apply for a mini-grant to pay for the services of a humanities consultant or exhibit designer, or to develop public programming related to an unexpected local, national, or international event.
- **Major grants for community projects** fund comprehensive public programs such as lectures, seminars and conferences; book and film discussions; interpretive exhibits and materials; town forums and civic discussions; and teacher workshops.
- **Major grants for media projects** fund film, radio, or interactive programming. Applicants may request funds for any phase of the project, including scripting, development, production, post-production, and, in some cases, distribution and free public screenings.

### **Application deadlines**

<b>Mini-grants</b>	
Application deadline	Rolling
Decision date	Within 10 business days of application's arrival in HTx office.
Project start date	At least six weeks after application's arrival in HTx office.

<b>Major grants</b>	<b>Fall cycle</b>	<b>Spring cycle</b>
Letter of intent/draft application	August 15	February 15
<b>APPLICATION DEADLINE</b>	<b>September 15</b>	<b>March 15</b>
Decision date	December 1	June 1
Project start date	January 1	July 1

**NOTE:** Major grant proposals must be **POSTMARKED** no later than midnight of the application deadline. If the deadline falls on a Sunday, proposals will be accepted with the next day's postmark.

### **Cost Sharing**

Project sponsors must provide at least half of the total cost of any project. To meet this cost-share requirement, the sponsoring organization may contribute 1.) cash and/or 2.) in-kind services and goods, such as the time of volunteers, the time of employees assigned to the project, and use of meeting space.

Projects for which the sponsor has raised, or expects to raise, third-party, non-federal cash contributions (i.e., cash donations made to the project by an individual, a foundation, or a corporation not otherwise linked to the sponsoring organization) may be considered stronger candidates for funding. Humanities Texas may award such projects grants from NEH's Gifts and Matching Funds program, which must be matched at a 2-to-1 matching rate. In such cases, all additional cost-share (including cash from institutional and third-party gifts) that exceeds the amount being used to obtain the NEH matching funds should be documented in the project budget. 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.

### **III. HOW TO APPLY**

#### **The application process**

[Application forms are available for download from the Humanities Texas website.](#)

All organizations are strongly encouraged to contact [Humanities Texas grants staff](#) prior to applying for a grant.

No letter of intent or draft application is necessary for **mini-grant** applications although consultation with Humanities Texas staff is welcome.

Applicants for **major grants** must notify Humanities Texas in writing of their intent to apply at least **30 days** prior to the deadline. The **letter of intent** should briefly summarize the proposed project and its objectives, list the advisors to the project, and estimate the funds that will be requested. [Complete instructions for preparing a letter of intent are available online.](#) Applicants may also submit a draft proposal in lieu of a letter of intent. Humanities Texas staff will respond to letters of intent and draft applications 1.) indicating whether projects fall within the mission and guidelines of the Humanities Texas grants program and 2.) when appropriate, providing queries and suggestions to strengthen the application before formal submission.

Any **letters of support** submitted with an application should be substantive, commenting on the project's potential impact, as well as its value to the target audience(s). Letters that attest to the expertise and appropriateness of a project's humanities scholars are also welcome. Letters should be addressed to the Humanities Texas Grants Review Committee, Humanities Texas, 1410 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78701.

You may obtain grant applications, guidelines, and model applications from the [Humanities Texas website](#) or by contacting Humanities Texas staff at [grants@humanitiestexas.org](mailto:grants@humanitiestexas.org) or 512-440-1991. Detailed information and guidelines particular to each grant format appear on the first pages of the application forms. PLEASE READ THE APPLICATIONS INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMS THOROUGHLY BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR FINAL PROPOSAL. INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS ARE NOT COMPETITIVE.

#### **Publicity requirements**

Please plan ahead before applying. While mini-grant deadlines are rolling, applicants should apply early enough to allow sufficient time to credit Humanities Texas in all publications and announcements related to the project. "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 projects. As with mini-grants, Humanities Texas's support should be acknowledged in all publications and announcements related to the project. 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 project: "This program is supported in part by Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities." We also encourage grantees to use the Humanities Texas logo in their promotional materials. [A digitized copy of our logo is available on our website.](#)

## **IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

### **Humanities focus**

All projects 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, sponsors 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 scholar?**

A humanities scholar 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 scholars appropriate to your project**

The qualifications of a project's 1.) principal Humanities Advisor and 2.) participating 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 scholars in their proposed projects. For major grant applications in particular, it is important that organizations include guidance and perspectives from scholars outside the sponsoring 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 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 project's humanities personnel.

### **What roles may scholars play?**

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

- helping conceive of and design a project
- 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 project director, such as reviewing exhibit text, script treatments, or copy for catalogues or brochures
- serving as an outside evaluator of the project

### **Public audiences**

Projects 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, community college faculty, ethnic and community groups, and/or professional groups are also welcome. To ensure that a project is pertinent to its target audience, representatives from that audience should play a role in the project's conception and design.

### **Common reasons for rejecting proposals**

- insufficient humanities content
- inadequate involvement of humanities scholars
- inadequate involvement of humanities scholars with specialties that align with the project 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

### **What Humanities Texas cannot provide financial support for**

- Indirect costs (overhead)
- Institutional staffing (including the Project Director, Authorizing Official, the Fiscal Agent, or support staff)
- Food, other than necessary travel expenses for program personnel
- Refreshments or entertainment
- Building construction, restoration, or preservation
- Purchase of buildings or property
- Purchase of significant, expensive permanent equipment. Inexpensive program-specific equipment (e.g., digital recorders for an oral history program) is allowable.
- 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 projects
- 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 discussion of issues
- Expenses incurred or paid out before a HTx grant award is made

### **Public information**

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