



WHO WE ARE

The West Virginia Humanities Council, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, serves West Virginia through grants and direct programs in the humanities. The Council seeks proposals from nonprofit organizations that offer humanities-centered public programming for West Virginia audiences.

For grants and programming purposes, the term “humanities” encompasses the study of language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; law and jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; art history; and some aspects of the social sciences. See [About Our Grants](#) for a definition of the humanities.

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE APPLYING

Before beginning the application process, applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Grants Administrator Erin Riebe at 304.346.8500 or riebe@wvhumanities.org. Plan to talk about your project idea in detail and find out whether it is eligible for funding.

Read the guidelines below and the [How to Apply](#) page before completing an application. Additional grant information is available on our [About Our Grants](#) page.

Eligible projects must:

- Be rooted in one or more of the humanities disciplines
- Involve qualified humanities scholars or expert practitioners in the project, as direct advisors (see definitions below, under Section 8)
- Be sponsored by a nonprofit organization (NOTE: not required for Travel Assistance Program grants or Fellowships)
- Provide accurate budget requests, reflecting the actual costs of the project
- Secure dollar-per-dollar matching funds (NOTE: not required for Travel Assistance Program grants or Fellowships)
- Provide a 25% cash match (for grant requests of more than \$1,500)
- Provide a comprehensive and adequate plan for publicity and dissemination of information
- Be open to or accessible by public audiences
- Provide a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the project
- Comply with federal nondiscrimination statutes

What we fund:

Allowable expenses for humanities projects and programs include the following:

- Honoraria for scholars
- Project-specific (i.e. non-regular) staff salaries
- Travel costs including per diems, mileage and lodging
- Supplies and materials
- Publicity and printing costs
- Postage and telephone costs
- Equipment and facilities rental

Eligible project types include, but are not limited to:

- Planning grants to bring in experts for project consultation
- Conferences, lectures, and symposia
- Educational school programs
- Brochures and booklets including printing and promotional costs
- Exhibit development and implementation
- Archival projects
- Archaeological projects
- Conference travel (through Travel Assistance Program grants)
- The planning, scripting, and production of audio or video materials, websites, or a newspaper series
- Publications (Publication grants)
- Individual research (Fellowship grants)

We cannot fund:

- Projects with little or no humanities content
- Creative and performing arts (associated discussion sessions and educational programs may be eligible) *
- Fund-raising events or for-profit projects
- Expenses incurred or paid out before a grant is made
- Projects/activities that have already taken place
- Projects with high admission fees (reasonable admission fees may be allowed and should be discussed with the grants administrator)
- Projects not open or accessible to the public
- Purchase of equipment or land building renovation
- Receptions, food, alcohol or entertainment
- Fiscal agent fees (also ineligible as match)
- Academic courses for credit
- *History Alive!* presentations
- Requests that advocate partisan political or social action
- Historic Highway markers
- Permanent staffing or regular staff salaries**

** The Council may fund projects that include theatrical productions, when the project and production aim to improve our understanding of the humanities, including our understanding of*

drama as art or literature. The Council will not fund theatrical productions aimed primarily to entertain. The Council will usually fund only a portion of a project containing a theatrical production, and will usually require the proposers to secure additional support for the project.

***Humanities Council policy prohibits funding regular staff salaries. Further, regular staff salaries may only be included in the project budget as in-kind match; such salaries may not be used to meet the Council's 25% cash match requirement for major grants. The Council defines "regular staff" as anyone who will be paid regardless of whether the grant is awarded. This includes part-time and temporary staff, graduate assistants, and AmeriCorps and Vistas. The grant award can pay contractors hired specifically for the grant project, or others employed temporarily for that purpose. In all cases, it is the applicant's responsibility to adequately explain the salary expense line in the budget narrative.*

WRITING YOUR GRANT APPLICATION: INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

(for Major, Mini, Media, Publications, and Teacher Institute grants)

For Fellowship or Travel Assistance Program grants, [refer to the specific application for instructions](#). Also, see additional guidelines below.

You may browse freely through our online application forms. However, **you will not be able to enter any data until you have completed the registration process**. Once you register, the application fields will become active immediately and you may begin.

While the Council recommends bookmarking the application page once you have registered, you will also receive an email from grants@wvhumanities.org with a link to return to your application. If you do not receive an email within 5-10 minutes of registering, check your junk mail.

Before closing your browser window, always click "save for later" and confirm that you either have bookmarked your active application, or have a link to your active application in your email.

Having a problem with the online application? Look for tips in our [Troubleshooting Guide](#).

Section 1. Sponsoring Organization

The Sponsoring Organization is the nonprofit organization that will be responsible for overseeing the grant, if awarded. The sponsoring organization makes significant programmatic contributions to the project. Major grants, media grants, and minigrants must be sponsored by a nonprofit. Publication grants must be sponsored by an established nonprofit press or academic press. Teacher Institute grants must be sponsored by a college, university, or the West Virginia Department of Education. Travel Assistance Program grants and Fellowships do not require a sponsoring organization.

Section 2. Authorizing Official

The Authorizing Official is the CEO of the Sponsoring Organization, and the person who will submit the application.

Section 3. Project Director

The Project Director is responsible for the management of the project, and has the responsibility of submitting progress and final reports to the West Virginia Humanities Council. For a Teacher Institute, this is the Institute Director. **The Project Director may NOT serve as the Fiscal Officer.**

Section 4. Fiscal Officer

The Fiscal Officer is the person responsible for record-keeping and accounting for the grant funds and cost share. This person will complete and submit the required financial reports. **The Fiscal Officer may NOT serve as the Project Director.**

Section 5. Project Summary

The Project Summary section requires the project title, grant request amount, proposed start/end date, estimate of audience size, target audience, and humanities discipline. The grant request amount must match the total of the grant request column in Section 9.

The Project Summary section also requires a brief project description (150-word maximum) summarizing the grant project and providing the reviewers a snapshot of the details inside the application.

Section 6. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative should explain, in detail, the primary content and intended outcome(s) of the project outlined in the project summary (1000-word maximum for Minigrants, 2000-word maximum for Major, Media, Publication, and Teacher Institute Grants). Project Narrative guidelines vary by type of grant; please review the appropriate instructions in the application for the type of grant proposal being completed. Each item in the instructions must be addressed in the Project Narrative.

Applicants should not assume specialized knowledge by the grant reviewer. Narratives should be free of jargon; definitions of technical terms, wherever used, should be expressly provided or clear to a layperson from context.

Section 7. Schedule of Activities or Events

Insofar as possible, provide a general schedule of all work, activities, and events associated with the grant project. At least one activity is required for all grants. Dates may be estimated or projected, with confirmation to come. If you are applying for a planning grant, include details of the meeting schedule or research for the project. If the grant is awarded, you will receive instructions to complete a schedule of events with full details. You may enter up to 15 activities or events.

While the proposed start date (Section 5) and some grant-related activities/events (Section 7) might take place before the grant award, **grant recipients must allow at least 12 weeks (six weeks for minigrants) between the grant deadline and the start of any grant-funded portions of the project** (activities supported with cash cost-share must also post-date the award).

Section 8. Scholars

The project must involve at least one humanities scholar, who will directly advise, offer direction on, or otherwise provide substantive contribution to the project. The humanities scholar associated with the project is expected to provide informed oversight regarding content, historical or cultural contexts, factual information, and/or information and research relevant to the project's content.

As content-specific expertise is the quality a humanities scholar is expected to bring to any project, the appropriate credentials establishing that expertise may vary from project to project. For the purposes

of grant applications made to the West Virginia Humanities Council, “humanities scholar” may be understood to mean (1) a *credentialed academic scholar* in the appropriate content field; (2) an *expert practitioner* in a living tradition upon which the project is centered; or (3) a *community member with extensive and documented life experience* in the content area upon which the project is centered.

Required information for each scholar includes name, contact information, and role in the project. The Council *highly* recommends including any documentable evidence of the humanities scholar’s expertise in the project’s content area, e.g. current employment; any academic degrees/disciplines or credentials; and any other evidence of expertise as may be relevant. **It is the applicant’s responsibility to articulate the expertise of the project’s listed humanities scholar in such a way that an attentive grant reviewer can informally judge its merit.**

If your project includes more than eight scholars, information on additional scholars may be included in an attachment (Section 10), but must be in the same format as laid out in Section 8.

Section 9. Detailed Budget

The detailed budget must provide a clear picture of how the applicant arrived at the grant request **AND** cost share amounts. Budget requests should be reasonable and reflect the actual costs of the project.

When completing your budget, keep in mind the following:

- Grant applications must include 100% match (cost share), using in-kind or cash, equal to or more than the total grant funds requested.
- Any grant request over \$1,500 must include a CASH cost share of at least 25% of the funds requested. For example, a grant request of \$20,000 must include match of at least \$5,000, of which \$5,000 must be in cash. It is the applicant’s responsibility to correctly calculate the cash cost share. The application will not alert you of insufficient cash cost share.
- The Council may fund honoraria in amounts up to \$300 per presentation, or \$1,000 for a main or keynote speaker. In the case of honoraria or presentation fees whose totals exceed those limits, any overage funds from other providers can be counted as match.
- Travel guidelines include a maximum of \$100/night for lodging and \$50/day for meals.
- Mileage must be calculated at a maximum rate not exceeding the current state government reimbursement rate.
- Applicants having a negotiated indirect cost rate may claim indirect costs at that rate, and applicants not having a negotiated rate may claim indirect costs not to exceed 10%. Please review carefully your institution’s negotiated indirect cost rate(s) to make sure you are using the most appropriate rate in your application budget. Many institutions negotiate multiple rates—for example, “Research,” “Instruction,” and “Other Sponsored Activities.” Your institution’s “Research” rate will not be the appropriate rate for inclusion in your project budget, as the use of this rate is reserved for projects involving scientific research, not scholarly inquiry of the type most often supported by the West Virginia Humanities Council.
- Regular staff salaries may be used for in-kind cost share, but not for cash cost share. (See “We Cannot Fund” above for a definition of regular staff salaries.)
- Expenses incurred or paid out before a grant is made cannot be charged to the grant, and cannot be used as cash match. In-kind match incurred within 90 days prior to the **award date** can be included.

The budget **narrative** explains how the applicant arrived at the expenditure category amounts for the grant amount requested, as well as the cost share amounts (including in-kind and cash). The budget narrative should list each expenditure category as a separate line item, and include both a short description of each item, and an indication of how that cost has been calculated. For example, if you are requesting mileage, explain where you are coming from, where you are going, and an estimate of the number of miles multiplied by the current state government reimbursement rate.

The detailed budget section of the application should also list other sources of funds pending or secured, if applicable. These details may also be explained in the budget narrative.

Section 10. Additional Material

Publication, media, and teacher institute grants require additional material (see links below).

For those grants that do not require additional material (major and minigrants), only attachments directly related to the project may be included (e.g., a sample brochure to demonstrate previous work when you are applying for funding a brochure). We do not accept letters of support or other miscellaneous addendums such as newspaper articles or cover letters.

Any information the grant review committee should consider must be included in the grant application, budget narrative, or project narrative. Budget spreadsheets, additional narrative, resumes/CVs (except for a Teacher Institute director) that are attached, rather than included in the application, **will not be reviewed**. If your project includes more than eight scholars, information on additional scholars may be included in an attachment, but must be in the same format as laid out in Section 8.

Materials that must be mailed to the Humanities Council must be postmarked on or before the grant deadline.

Section 11. Compliance and Signature

The authorizing official must confirm compliance with Council guidelines by clicking the box. They then must “sign” and submit the application.

Some grants have additional guidelines and/or requirements. Click the links below.

[Travel Assistance grants](#)

[Fellowship grants](#)

[Media grants](#)

[Publication grants](#)

[Teacher Institute grants](#)

Technical tips!

Before submission, confirm that all email addresses are correct. All notifications, including those regarding grant receipt confirmation, eligibility, and award/rejection, are made via email.

If you copy and paste narratives into the application, confirm that the entire passage has transferred. Some sections have word limits, and word count may be calculated differently than your word processing program.

We do not recommend copy/pasting spreadsheets into the application or tabbing to create columns. Applications are automatically reformatted when they are imported to the Council's system, and your intended spacing may be lost or significantly altered during the import.

Always save a copy of the application before submitting (you can use the print function to save it to your computer as a PDF). Once the Council receives the application and confirms eligibility, the project director will receive an email with a copy of the reformatted application. We strongly suggest reviewing the application at this time and comparing it to your PDF to confirm that we received what you have submitted.

While you can share the application link, we do not recommend more than one person being in it at a time.

See our [Troubleshooting Guide](#) for additional information.

Application tips and information!

The Council gives special consideration to programs that:

- engage or involve the participation of an underserved audience. Is this program directed toward a part of West Virginia traditionally underserved by the Council because of its location, income, population size, institutional infrastructure, or demographic minority status? Examples include veterans, active-duty military, Native Americans, HBCUs, community colleges, seniors (65+), rural areas, and African Americans.
- show cooperative efforts between groups and evidence of community support
- could be models for regional or statewide projects
- link scholars and the public through community discussions in forums, seminars, and workshops (local people in active dialogue with scholars)
- indicate continuation beyond the grant period
- foster the humanities community by linking scholars and organizations
- engage in humanities education

Receiving a Humanities Council grant during one cycle does not guarantee that the project will be funded in a subsequent cycle. Each proposal is reviewed on its own merit within the grant cycle in which it is received. Successful completion of previous projects will reflect positively on an applicant, but will not necessarily assure funding. **The Council encourages applicants to diversify support for projects from other sources in second and subsequent proposals.**