



Humanities Tennessee

Grant Guidelines

Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan General

Operating Support Grants

and

Humanities Project Support Grants

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Introduction

Humanities Tennessee Mission

To foster community and civility in Tennessee through public programs that examine and reflect upon ideas, stories, history, arts, and culture

Humanities Tennessee Vision

Humanities Tennessee is a non-profit organization that fosters community and civility in Tennessee through engaging programs that examine and reflect upon ideas, stories, history, arts and culture. In addition to our own programming, we partner with a variety of organizations across the state who are similarly encouraging community dialogue and activities that push us to think deeper and develop mutual respect and understanding for each other.

Humanities Tennessee, formerly the Tennessee Humanities Council, is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Founded in 1973, We continue to develop ways to connect, learn, and grow as a community.

SHARP Grant Special Note

The funds used for Humanities Tennessee Supporting Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) Grant program are provided by the National

Endowment for the Humanities and United States Congress through the federal American Rescue Plan Act in the following two categories:

- SHARP General Operating Support (GOS) Grants
- SHARP Humanities Project Support (HPS) Grants

Organizations may only apply for one of the above grant types so please consider carefully which option is the best fit for your organization. Please contact our staff if you have any questions.

This Grant Guidelines document is ONLY applicable to Humanities Tennessee SHARP Grant programs. For information on Humanities Tennessee standing standard grant programs please see our website, www.humanitiestennessee.org or contact Steven Fox, Community Engagement Officer, at steven@humtn.org.

Submission Instructions

- Request Application: To request access to our online application system, submit this Request for Application.
- Submit Application: All applications MUST be submitted using our online application system by 11:59 PM on the day of the deadline. Submission of an application does not guarantee approval.
- Submission Deadline: November 30, 2021.
 - We anticipate that demand for these grant programs will be high, however, if grant dollars remain at the end of the initial round, we will distribute the remaining funds among GOS applicants.
 - Need assistance? Our staff is here to support you! Please contact Steven Fox at steven@humtn.org or (615) 779-0006 x8021, with any questions.

What You Need to Know Before Applying

What are the humanities?

"The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study and interpretation of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; Jurisprudence (law); philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of the social sciences which have Humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

--National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965, as amended

Our mission is to support the humanities in Tennessee. The humanities are a set of disciplines that help us respond to the fundamental human questions of “who we are and how ought we to live” by encouraging reflection about values and ideas.

Humanities Tennessee supports projects that engage the audience’s skills of inquiry, analysis, and reflection, and provide the historical contexts with which to do so. Humanities Tennessee does not support activities which fall outside the scope of the humanities.

A Point Of Clarification About The Arts

Humanities Tennessee cannot solely fund activities (operating support or project/program support) for the creation/display of visual art (drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.), literary (creative writing, autobiographies, memories, and creative nonfiction) or the performance of art (drama, dance, music, etc.). In general, we do not award grants for creative literary programs or writing workshops unless they include considerable opportunity for public reflection, and discussion. As noted about, projects that focus on art/history/criticism/theory (e.g.: a lecture discussion program in which a qualified humanities scholar explores artistic themes and helps but work in a larger

social/historical context is eligible. If your project includes arts components, we encourage you to reach out to our staff for further guidance.

Applicant Eligibility

- Organization must be located in Tennessee.
- Organizations must demonstrate hardship due to the pandemic.
- Organization must have a DUNs number.
- Organization must not be presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from receiving federal grants.
- Organization must have an EIN and be either a non-profit or tax-exempt government entity with a humanities mission or a significant humanities focus.
 - Please note the differences in eligibility between the SHARP GOS Grants (operating support for humanities organizations) and SHARP HPS Grants (project support for non-humanities organizations).
- Although all Tennessee humanities organizations are welcomed to apply, those with operating budgets, less than \$1,000,000, will be prioritized for this SHARP Grant opportunity.

ELIGIBILITY: General Operating Support (GOS) Grant

Organizations with a humanities mission and track record of humanities programming – including, but not limited to, archives, cultural centers, community or cultural heritage organizations, historic sites, historical societies, literature organizations that provide public humanities programming, museums, humanities media/film organizations.

INELIGIBILITY: General Operating Support (GOS) Grant

For-profits, foreign entities, individuals, chapters of national organizations, universities/colleges/academic departments, K-12 schools, libraries, municipal or government agencies (**exception: humanities-based entities such as historical societies and/or museums may apply through their support group, e.g.: friends of the museums, etc.**), visual/performance/literary arts organizations, political or advocacy organizations, social science research or policy study organizations, organizations that do not have a stated commitment to humanities programming, or organizations which provide programs or services limited solely to the members of a particular religious group.

→ **Note:** Organizations whose core mission falls outside of the humanities and the humanistic social sciences (including the creation or performance of art; creative writing, autobiographies, memoirs, and creative nonfiction; and quantitative social science research or policy studies) are not eligible to receive funding for operating support but may be eligible for a project support grant.

ELIGIBILITY: Humanities Project Support (HPS) Grant

Nonprofit organizations without the public humanities as their mission – including, but not limited to, social services, nature conservancies, neighborhood associations, archives, environmental preservation organizations, food banks, PTOs, library/park friends groups, civic clubs - that wish to provide public humanities programming.

INELIGIBILITY: Humanities Project Support (HPS) Grant

For-profits, foreign entities, individuals, political or advocacy organizations, social science research or policy study organizations, universities/colleges/academic departments, municipal or government agencies (**exception: entities such as**

libraries, parks or K-12 schools may apply through their support group, e.g.: public library foundations), or organizations which provide programs or services limited solely to the members of a particular religious group.

- Overlapping project costs with any other pending or approved application(s) for federal funding and/or approved federal awards
- Funds for activities supported by other non-NEH federal funds
- Competitive re-granting
- Cancellation costs
- Pre-award costs dating to before March 15, 2021
- Equipment costs in excess of 20% of total project costs, or \$5,000.00.
Equipment is defined as tangible, nonexpendable property having a useful life of more than a year.
- Travel (both foreign and domestic)

Note: a religiously affiliated organization may be granted funds, but only if the humanities program is not religion-based and grant funds are clearly not used for religious activities.

Demonstrated Disaster Need or Hardship

SHARP General Operating Support and SHARP Humanities Project Support Grants will provide priority funding to support under-resourced, underserved and BIPOC-led and/or BIPOC-serving organizations that have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Demonstration of need is a key focus of the grant application. In order to be eligible to receive funds you must show that as a result of COVID-19, your organization has suffered a hardship. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Loss of significant revenue (from admissions, investments, donations)
- Loss/or risk of loss of staff (through layoff, furlough, etc.) or reduction of staff salaries
- Difficulty paying organizational rent/mortgage
- Risk of closure
- Inability to continue to provide critical humanities programming
- **Note:** Although all Tennessee humanities organizations are welcomed to apply, those with operating budgets, less than \$1M, will be prioritized for this SHARP Grant opportunity.

Funding Levels

Applicants may request between \$5,000 and \$20,000 for either an SHARP Humanities Operating Support (GOS) grant OR an SHARP Humanities Project Support (HPS) grant. Please note, applicants CANNOT apply for both grants.

This grant funding is available via the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as part of the Federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act to **prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from** the coronavirus. Recovery can be defined in multiple ways. For example: reengaging with audiences; developing new public humanities programs, relaunching pre-pandemic programs, etc. Although all Tennessee humanities organizations are welcomed to apply, those with operating budgets, less than \$1M, will be prioritized for this SHARP Grant opportunity.

Please see the below links:

- [General Operating Support \(GOS\) Descriptions](#)
- [Humanities Project Support \(HPS\) Descriptions](#)

Activities That Are NOT Eligible

- Projects characterized by political or religious advocacy or bias (e.g. political campaigning, advocacy events, activities that promote a single point of view, or benefit members of a particular religious group).
- Lobbying
- Client services in the following areas: social, psychological, legal, health, housing, training or counseling programs.
- Academic or professional conferences for a non-public audience

- College courses and seminars
- Building, restoration, and preservation capital projects
- Creative or performing arts activities (theater, dance, music, visual arts, or creative writing) without significant humanistic examination of their social, historical, or aesthetic context.

Additional frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).

Restrictions Governing the Use of Humanities Tennessee Funds

Proposal consultation phone calls are great opportunities to discuss your specific budget requests and how organizations or projects wish to use grant funds. If you have concerns regarding allowed costs please don't hesitate to contact us.

ELIGIBLE expenses for Humanities Tennessee SHARP Grant funds are available in two categories:

- **Humanities General Operating Support (GOS)**
 - **ELIGIBLE HUMANITIES OPERATING SUPPORT GRANT EXPENSES**
(can include but are not limited to):
 - Staff salaries
 - Contract and temporary positions
 - Mortgage/Rent
 - Utilities
 - Support for pandemic-related professional development for staff and volunteers
 - Securing and protecting property and collections
 - Basic institutional and operational costs such as purchasing equipment or systems ([equipment costs](#) cannot exceed 20% or have an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit of a grant request).
 - Strategic planning and capacity building efforts related to preparing, responding to, and recovering from the coronavirus.
 - Technical/consultant needs related to a digital transition or in support of preservation and access programs ([equipment costs](#) cannot exceed 20% of a grant request).
 - Expansion, due to the effects of the coronavirus, of outdoor and virtual humanities programming and activities, from traditional

- environments to those that are more accessible.
 - Equity assessments and planning related to coronavirus an the economic crisis.
 - Other general operating costs which support humanities programming
- **Humanities Project Support (HPS)**
 - **ELIGIBLE HUMANITIES PROJECT SUPPORT GRANT EXPENSES** (to innovate, adapt, and strengthen access to humanities)
 - programming/services during the COVID-19 pandemic) include but are not limited to:
 - Staff salaries directly tied to a humanities program/project.
 - Costs directly associated with a digital or virtual humanities programming
 - Costs directly associated with expansion, due to the effects of the coronavirus, of outdoor and virtual humanities programming and activities, from traditional environments to those that are more accessible and support COVID-19 public safety practices (i.e. social distancing, sanitization).
 - Costs directly associated with humanities programs/projects which make visible the experiences of Tennesseans during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlight stories of community resiliency throughout the state of Tennessee.
 - Activities funded by Humanities Tennessee grants should be accessible to the public and free or low cost.
 - **INELIGIBLE GRANT EXPENSES CANNOT include:**
 - Activities that fall outside of the humanities and the humanistic social sciences including the creation or performance of art (theater, dance, music, or visual arts); creative writing, autobiographies, memoirs, and creative nonfiction; and quantitative social science research or policy studies.
 - Activities that center on health and social services.
 - Self-help or problem-solving endeavors.
 - Development of dramatic adaptations of literary works.
 - **Humanities Tennessee DOES NOT support organizations/projects that seek to persuade the public, including:**
 - Promotion of a particular political, religious, or Ideological

- point of view (including promotion of a particular position, candidate, or political party).
- Advocacy of a particular program of social or political action
- Support of specific public policies or legislation
- Lobbying
- **Humanities Tennessee DOES NOT support academic publishing/research activities, including:**
 - Projects primarily devoted to research rather than interpretation for the general public including the preservation, organization, or description of materials that are not regularly accessible for research, education, or public programming.
- **Additionally, Humanities Tennessee DOES NOT support the following:**
 - **Overlapping project costs with any other pending or approved application(s) for federal funding.**
 - Federal/state/local taxes (not sales tax).
 - Unallowable expenses as defined in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E - Cost Principles.
 - Indirect costs on general operating support subawards.
 - Pre-award costs **prior to March 15, 2021.**
 - Purchase of real property (land or facilities), construction, major alteration or renovation.
 - Collections acquisitions.
 - Obscene, libelous, indecent, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment). I. Popular entertainment for diversion, including liquor, or social activities.
 - Foreign or domestic travel.
 - Purchases of equipment which **exceed 20%** of a grant request amount or have an acquisition cost of **\$5,000 or more per unit.**
 - Equipment is defined as tangible, nonexpendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year.
 - Regranting (granting award money out to another organization).
 - Cancellation costs.
 - Humanities Tennessee CANNOT provide retroactive funding for activities that took place before 3/15/21, when the SHARP Act was signed into law.

Funding Criteria, Priorities and Review

The SHARP Grant program seeks to benefit Tennesseans experiencing

pandemic-related hardship through the organizations that serve them, in particular those disproportionately affected by issues arising from the public health crisis, including ***underserved, under-resourced, rural and BIPOC communities***.

Proposals will be reviewed by an outside panel according to the following criteria, and grants are made by the Humanities Tennessee Board based on the panel's recommendations:

- Does the applicant demonstrate hardship due to the pandemic and the related social, economic and structural effects that impede its service to the community?
- Does the grant contribute to diversity and inclusion in humanities programming by reaching under resourced, rural or BIPOC organizations and their audiences?
- Will the grant address the applicant's needs to respond to and/or recover from the pandemic?
- Is the applicant responding to the needs of its audience and community?
- Overall, does the applicant contribute to inclusive and robust public humanities offerings in TN?
- Further funding priorities include:
 - The application is open to any organization that fits the program's eligibility requirements.
 - The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) encourages us to design grant programs that distribute these funds to closely align with the Endowments' **shared values around diversity, equity, inclusion and access**, and to support organizations whose budgets are small to mid-sized. As such, ***priority will be given to organizations that meet the following considerations: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-centered organizations:***
 - A BIPOC-centered organization is an organization with a mission and programming that is explicitly reflective of a community or communities of color, and where the board, staff, artists, and collaborators, include a significant representation of that community.
 - A BIPOC-centered organization is defined by the following organizational characteristics:
 - Primary mission, intentions, and practices are BY,

FOR, and ABOUT art, heritages, histories, cultures and communities of color.

- Intention of the organization is to perpetuate, promote, and present art, heritage, histories, or cultural practices that are representative of a culture, a people, and/or is given form by those cultural practitioners.
- Organizations with annual budgets under \$1,000,000.
- Organizations demonstrating robust diversity, equity, inclusion, and access efforts.
- Organizations demonstrating substantial adverse and ongoing impact from the pandemic.
- Organizations in underserved, rural geographic locations.

Humanities Tennessee will grant awards based on eligibility in relation to the funds available and the established criteria and priorities. To advise this decision making process, we will convene a panel or panels of diverse Tennesseans with relationships to the arts, culture, and humanities community and with consideration of age, gender identity or expression, geography, subdiscipline of arts, culture or humanities experience, and other factors when curating this grant program's panels.

Responsibilities for Managing Humanities Tennessee Grants

If you are selected to receive a Humanities Tennessee SHARP grant, our staff will send you information outlining the requirements for managing your award. Among other things you will be required to:

- Sign a Grant Agreement. This is standard language and is non-negotiable.
- Comply with all Restrictions and Policies laid out in this document.
- Report any concerns or major changes regarding the grant funded activities and receive Humanities Tennessee approval prior to the execution of any major changes.
- We reserve the right to cancel the Agreement if you make significant changes to your project scope, purpose, activities, personnel, budget, or timeline without obtaining our written permission.

- Acknowledge the support of Humanities Tennessee and the National Endowment for the Humanities in your standard outlets (signage, website, annual report, etc) as stipulated in the Grant Agreement.
- Submit a Final Report as directed in the Grant Agreement that we send you. The Final Report will require the submission of stories of how this grant impacted your organization and the communities you serve, the number of humanities programs completed, estimates of the demographics and number of people each program event served, as well as a final budget report.
- Retain auditable records of grant funds for three years after the award is closed. Note that the Humanities Tennessee pays awards on an advance basis. However, depending on the size of your award there may be an installment schedule.