




NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

**Humanities**  
FIFTY YEARS

**Digital Projects for the Public:  
Program Overview and Application  
Strategies**

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National Endowment for the Humanities





# Summary

- About the Endowment
- NEH Programs & Funded Projects
- Application Strategies
  - Grants.gov
  - Tips
  - Peer Review



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# News and Upcoming Events

## Recent:

- Ken Burns, Jefferson Lecture  
(streaming at [neh.gov](http://neh.gov))
- Workshop @ Lower Eastside Tenement Museum  
– <http://digitalstorytellingtenement.weebly.com/>

## Next week:

- “The Future of the African-American Past”  
Conference at Smithsonian: May 19-21<sup>st</sup> with live streaming & archiving of panel sessions.  
– <https://futureafampast.si.edu/>



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# How NEH spends its money

- NEH's Overall Budget (2014): US \$146 million
- \$27M for administration (salaries, rent)
- \$42M distributed to 56 state and territory-based humanities councils
- Remaining \$77M given out as direct grants to US institutions—particularly to universities, libraries, and museums—and to individual scholars





# Division of Public Programs

*Our projects tell **stories** through the humanities.*

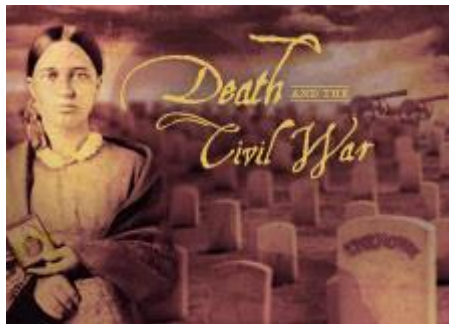


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# Division of Public Programs

Public humanities projects:

- promote the experience of lifelong learning in the humanities.
- offer new insights into familiar subjects
- invite conversation about important humanities ideas and questions.
- reach large and diverse public audiences
- make creative use of new and emerging technologies





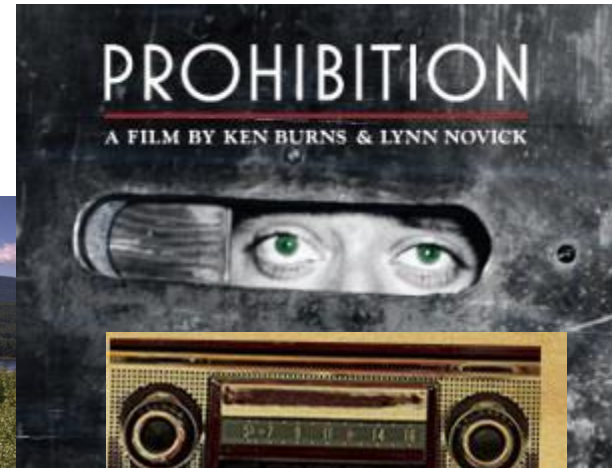


# Public Programs Grants

- Public Humanities Projects: Exhibitions, Community Conversations, and Historic Sites—Planning and Implementation Grants
  - Deadlines: August and January
- Media Projects: Film, Television, Radio, Podcasts—Development Grants and Production Grants
  - Deadlines: August and January

# What We (Usually) Fund

- Film
- Television
- Radio
- Museums
- Historical Sites
- Digital projects



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# Preservation & Access

- Humanities Collections & Reference Resources
  - Deadline: July 19, 2016
  - Digitization, archives, cataloguing, conservation, digital tools, reference resources
- Preservation Assistance Grants
  - Deadline: May 3, 2016
  - Address major challenges in preserving & providing access to humanities collections



# Office of Digital Humanities

- **Digital Humanities Advancement Grants (DHAG)**
- **Deadline: January 11, 2017**
- Designed to encourage experimentation in the digital humanities (emphasis on both method & content).
- Level 1: Max \$40,000  
Level 2: Max \$75,000  
Level 3: Max \$325,000



# Digital Projects for the Public

- **Supports:**

- Games
- (Curated) Websites + Online Experiences
- Mobile Applications + site-specific storytelling at museums, historic sites, etc.
- Virtual reality environments
- Interactive documentaries
- Transmedia approaches across platforms
- Non-promotional extensions of content (film, radio, museum exhibits)



# Digital Projects for the Public

- Launched June 2014
- Next deadline: June 8, 2016
- Three levels of funding:
  - **Discovery**
  - **Prototyping**
  - **Production**



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# Digital Projects for the Public

- DISCOVERY: Up to \$30,000
  - designed to fund the exploratory stages of a digital project.
  - Activities must include: scholarly consultation, refinement of the humanities themes, analysis and development of potential platforms.
  - ‘Consultation grants’ + deliverable = Design Document



# Digital Projects for the Public

- PROTOTYPING: Up to \$100,000
  - support the creation of a proof-of-concept prototype.
  - Other activities can include: further refinement of humanities content, further consultation with scholars and digital media experts, scripting, user interface and backend development, audience evaluation and testing.
  - Prerequisite = Design Document (see checklist in guidelines)
  - Deliverable = prototype



# Digital Projects for the Public

- PRODUCTION: Up to \$400,000
  - Support the final stages of a digital project, including: prototype refinement and testing, audience outreach, project distribution and any related public programming.



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# Digital Projects for the Public

- Things to Consider about DPP:
- *Content is first in Public Programs*
  - A team of content experts is both necessary + vital to success
  - Doesn't need to be cutting edge scholarship, but contemporary interpretations of humanities content *translated* for a general public



# Digital Projects for the Public

- Things to Consider about DPP:
- *We are NOT the Office of Digital Humanities*
  - Experimentation is welcome, but we need projects that will simply work for general public audiences– open source and proprietary tech. all welcome
  - Projects successful in ODH might take the next step with DPP



# Digital Projects for the Public

- **Approaching DPP**
- Archive + Access → *Curated Pathways through data*
- Audience of Experts/ Familiars → *General Public*
- Tools to generate research → *Tools for increasing engagement and generating curiosity and inquiry*






# Digital Projects for the Public

## *Funded Projects*



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# Walden, a game

Tracy Fullerton, USC



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# Telling Stories with the AIDS Memorial Quilt Project

Anne Balsamo, New School



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# Pox and the City, aka, The Pox Hunter

Lisa Rosner, Stockton College



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# Digital Civil Rights Radio

Seth Kotch, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill



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# Participatory Media

Grace Hale, University of Virginia



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# Slavery in the North

Historic Hudson Valley



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# Waterfront

Brooklyn Historical Society



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# What about podcasts/documentary shorts?

→ Media Projects, not DPP

- Why? Better review/ related projects.
- Next deadline: August 2016



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# **Application Strategies**

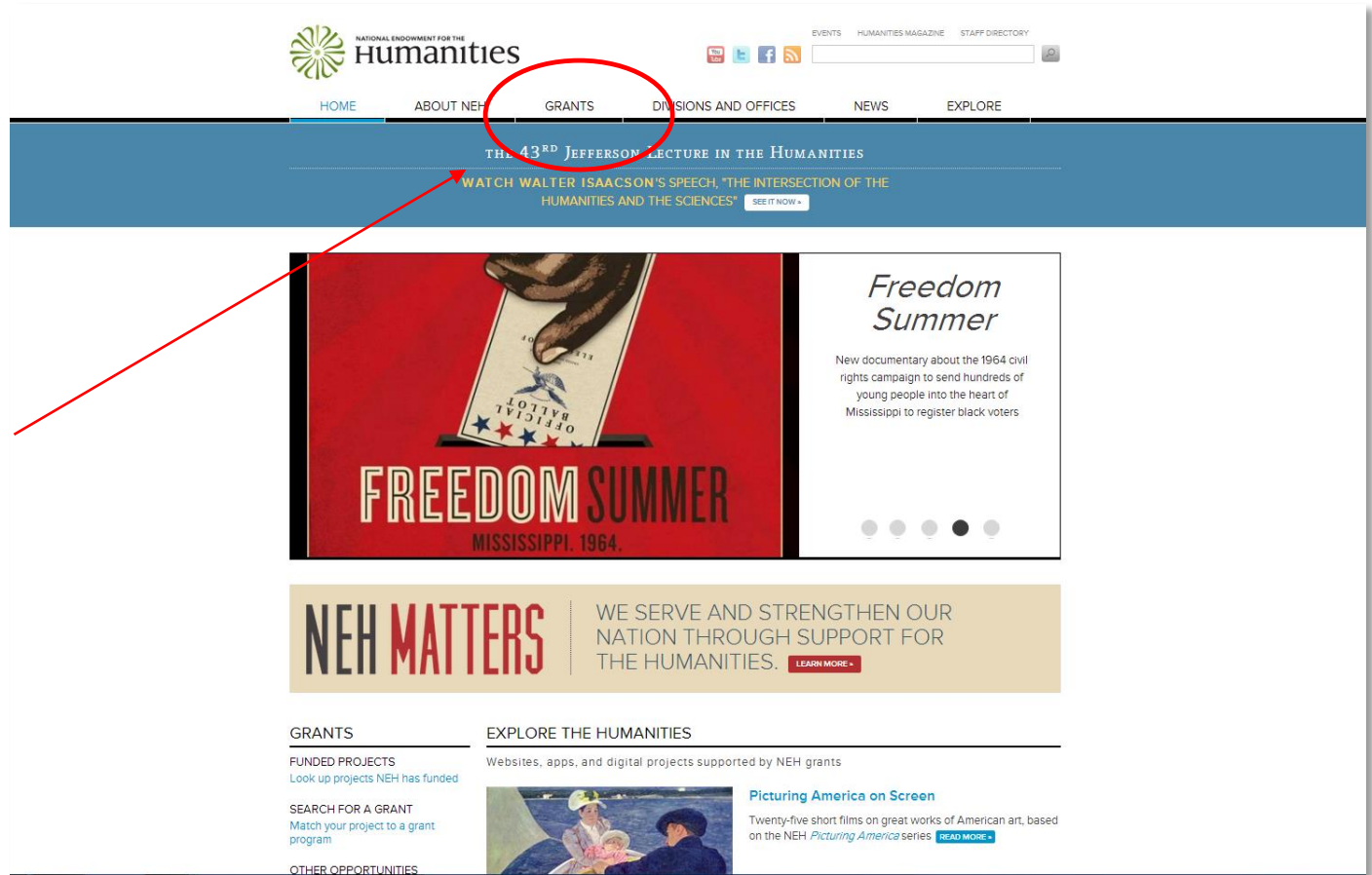


# Find the Right Program

- Different grant programs have different goals
- How can your project be divided into multiple smaller projects appropriate to specific grant categories?
- Can usually apply to multiple programs at once
- Examples of projects funded through multiple divisions

# How do I apply?

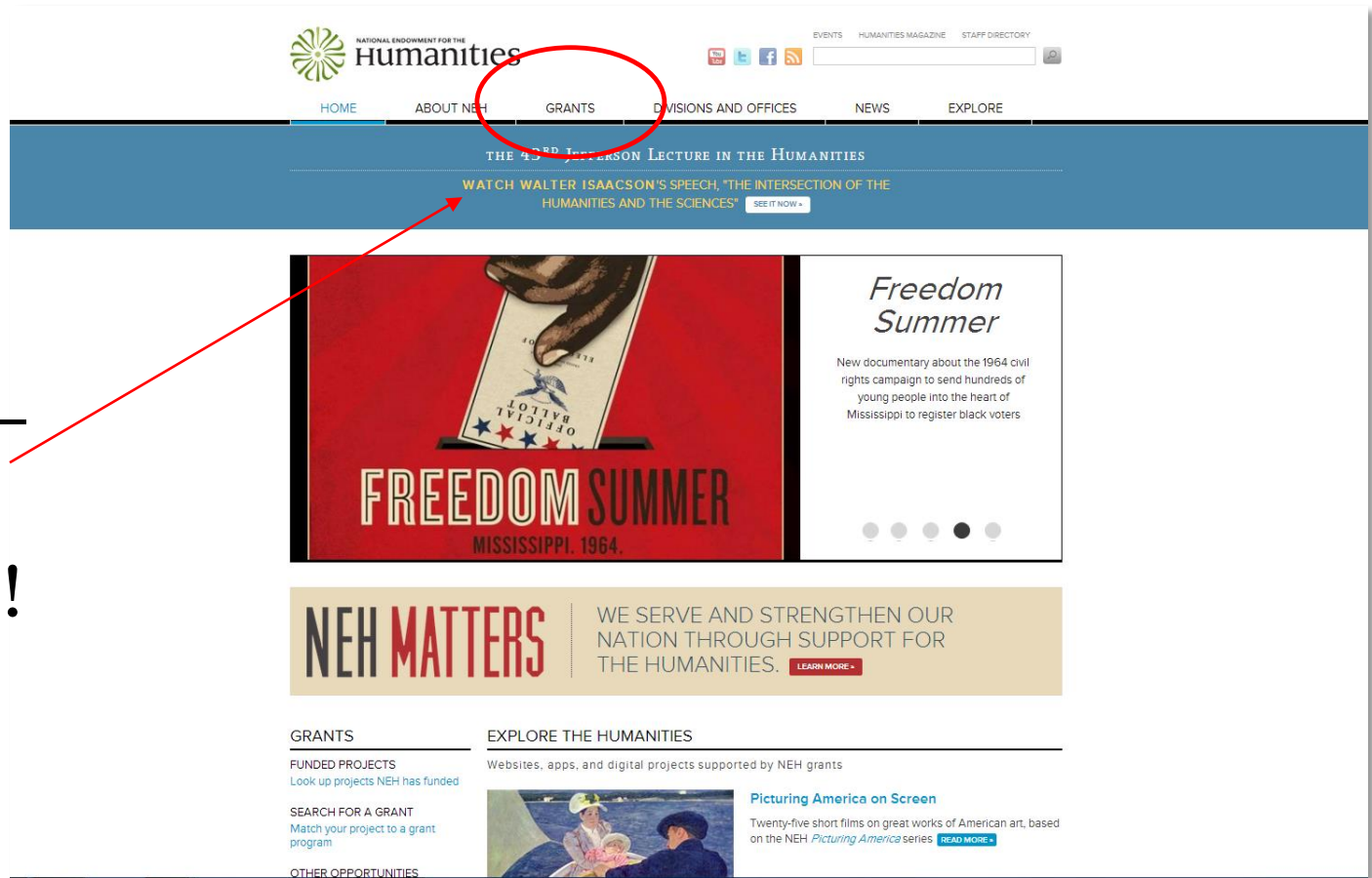
Step One:  
Visit the NEH  
Website  
([www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov))  
and  
READ THE  
GUIDELINES.





# How do I apply?

No, really—  
Read the  
Guidelines!





Keep up-to-date with upcoming  
Grant Program deadlines.

# Digital Projects for the Public



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EMAIL



PRINT

## Division of Public Programs

Receipt Deadline **June 8, 2016** for Projects Beginning January 2017

### Brief Summary

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.

All Digital Projects for the Public projects should

- deepen public understanding of significant humanities stories and ideas;
- incorporate sound humanities scholarship;
- involve humanities scholars in all phases of development and production;

## GUIDELINES RESOURCES

### Download Application Materials

[Digital Projects for the Public Program Guidelines \(PDF\)](#)

[Digital Projects for the Public Grants.gov application package](#)

### Budget Resources

[Budget Instructions, January 2016 \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample Budget, February 2016 \(PDF\)](#)

[Budget Form, January 2016 \(MS Excel\)](#)


### Program Resources

[Digital Projects for the Public, Frequently Asked Questions, 2016 \(PDF\)](#)

[Grants.gov Instructions for Institutional Applicants, February 2016 \(PDF\)](#)

[List of recent Discovery grants](#)

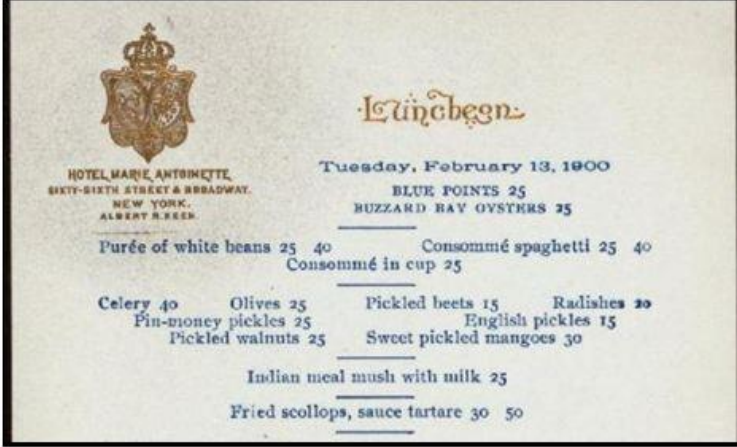
# Other Funded Projects



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[ACCESSIBILITY](#) [PRIVACY POLICY](#) [STAFF DIRECTORY](#)

[HOME](#) [ABOUT NEH](#) [GRANTS](#) [DIVISIONS AND OFFICES](#) [NEWS](#) [EXPLORE](#)



**What's on the Menu?**

The New York Public Library is using 'crowdsourcing' to create a searchable digital database of tens of thousands of restaurant menu offerings from the early 20th Century.

## GRANTS

**FUNDED PROJECTS**  
[Look up projects NEH has funded.](#)


**SEARCH FOR A GRANT**  
[Match your project to a grant program](#)

**OTHER OPPORTUNITIES**  
[Apply for an NEH-funded Seminar, Institute, or Workshop](#)

**APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS**

## EXPLORE THE HUMANITIES

Websites, apps, and digital projects supported by NEH grants



**The World of Dante**

Let this compendium of translations, music, and art inspired by Dante's epic poem be your guide through the *Divine Comedy*.

[READ MORE >](#)

[BACK](#) | [NEXT](#)

# Other Funded Projects

## NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES Funded Projects Query Form


Grant number	<input type="text"/>		
Project director	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
	First name	Last name	
Key words	<input type="text"/>		
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> ANY of these words <input type="radio"/> ALL of these words <input type="radio"/> This phrase <input type="checkbox"/> Whole words only		
Organization name	<input type="text"/>		
State	<input type="text"/>		
Field of project	<input type="text"/>		
Grant program	<input type="text"/>		
Division	<input type="text"/>		
Award date range	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
	From	To	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sorting options <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Products, coverage, prizes, white papers		
<input type="button" value="Display results"/>			
<a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a> <a href="#">Query Form</a> <a href="#">NEH Website</a> Grant data as of 6/4/2012			



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# Step 2: Visit Grants.gov



- 
- Step Three: Review the available samples and ask questions!
  - Step Four: Draft your application and get someone to read it.





# Consider the Funding Source

- What is the mandate of the granting agency?
  - NEH can only fund projects that furthers our mission to promote the value of the humanities to the American public
- Read the guidelines thoroughly
  - We aim for transparency
  - Guidelines offer clues on how to frame your application
- Consider backgrounds of potential reviewers
  - Different divisions will have different reviewers
  - Think broadly and be **explicit**



# Think about your audience

- For the application: Generalists and specialists
- For the final product: *What are the takeaways?* How is this information significant for them?
- Don't make it hard on reviewers—make clear what you're doing, limit the jargon
- Explicitly address the evaluation criteria



## V. Application Review

Evaluation of the application will take into account both the activities proposed for the start-up project and the long-term project goals.

Evaluators are asked to apply the following criteria:

1. The intellectual significance of the project for the humanities, including its potential to enhance research, teaching and learning in the humanities.
2. The likelihood that the project will stimulate or facilitate new research of value to scholars and general audiences in the humanities, or use new digital technologies to communicate humanities scholarship to broad audiences.
3. The quality of innovation in terms of the idea, approach, method, or digital technology, and the appropriateness of the technology employed in the project.
4. The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project and the applicant's clarity of expression.
5. The feasibility of the plan of work, including whether the start-up activities will significantly contribute to the project's long-term goals.
6. The qualifications, expertise, and levels of commitment of the project director and key project staff or contributors.

### Review and selection process

Knowledgeable persons outside NEH will read each application and advise the agency about its merits. NEH staff comments on matters of fact or on significant issues that otherwise would be missing from these reviews, then makes recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities. The National Council meets at various times during the year to advise the NEH chairman on grants. The chairman takes into account the advice provided by the review process and, by law, makes all funding decisions.



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# Use your space wisely

- Be thorough, but also clear and concise
- Use your project description and appendices effectively
- Offer background, but focus on what will happen in the *proposed* project— the proposal should focus on the humanities content to be communicated by the project, not just the theory behind the approach
- Carefully craft your work plan—should be detailed and realistic
- Stay within page limit!

- 
- Step Five: submit your application by the deadline and...wait. These things take time.



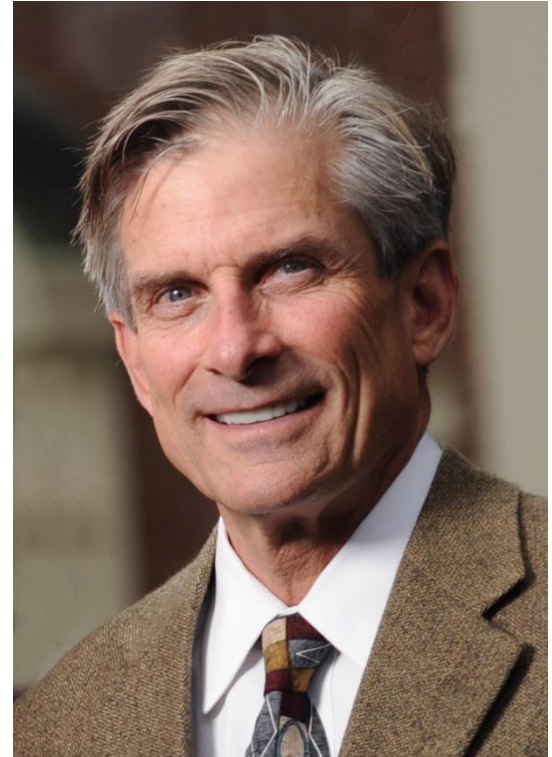
# Peer Review Process

- Applications submitted for single grant program
- Reviewers recruited to evaluate applications
- Reviewers offer preliminary grades and comments online
- Sitting panel meets at NEH offices for final discussion



# Additional Stages of Review

- The Staff
- The National Council on the Humanities
- Our Chairman –  
Dr. William “Bro” Adams



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# Remember!



We're here to help!



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Feel free to get in touch.

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