

NJCH is pleased to once again provide support for New Jersey humanities organizations and programs through our COVID-19 Response Grants. NJCH has made these funds available as operational and programmatic support for nonprofit organizations that provide humanities programming to public audiences to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the coronavirus. Please note: these guidelines have been updated since the 2020 COVID-19 Response Grants. All prospective applicants should read the guidelines and FAQs in full prior to applying, as some details have changed.

COVID-19 RESPONSE GRANT OVERVIEW

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP), approved by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Joseph R. Biden, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) received \$135 million in supplemental funding for to respond to and recover from the coronavirus pandemic. 40% of those funds were allotted to the national network of nonprofit state humanities councils, including the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.

NJCH offers two different awards through this grant program:

- *General Operating Support* grants (\$5000-20,000) are available to nonprofit organizations that have a mission rooted in the public humanities, an organizational budget greater than \$50,000, and at least one full-time staff person (or one FTE).
- *Program Support* grants (\$2000-20,000) are available for nonprofit and governmental organizations who undertake humanities programs, whether or not their organization's primary mission is based in the humanities.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC HUMANITIES

To be eligible for funding, the applicant organization must be doing work in the [public humanities](#). The humanities examine our history, cultures, values, and beliefs. The public humanities take these ideas out of classrooms to engage broad public audiences in that examination.

The humanities help us to analyze our complex society and make thoughtful decisions based on inquiry, evaluation, and empathy. They can help us to think critically about activities and issues of importance to communities, offer historical and cultural perspective, and broaden our thinking. Humanities fields include (but are not limited to) anthropology, archaeology, area studies, art and architectural history and criticism, cultural studies, economics, ethics, ethnic studies, folklore, gender and sexuality studies, geography, history, history of science and technology, international studies, jurisprudence, languages and linguistics, literature, music history and criticism, philosophy, political science, religion and comparative religion, sociology, theater history and criticism.

INFORMATIONAL WEBINARS

NJCH will be hosting informational webinars about the COVID-19 Response Grant funding. Each session will include an overview of the two grant types, eligibility, and application requirements, and time will be set aside for Q&A.

Tuesday, June 22 – 2pm and 8pm
Thursday, August 5 – 11 am
Monday, October 13 – 2pm

You can register for webinars and view recordings at njhumanities.org/grants/covid-19.

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS

General Operating Support grants (\$5,000 to \$20,000) provide operational and programmatic support for nonprofit organizations who have missions focused on the public humanities and who are facing ongoing financial hardship and/or new needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for GOS funding, the applicant organization must have:

- A mission based in the public humanities;
- An organizational budget greater than \$50,000 (average over three years);
- Nonprofit status for at least one year; and
- At least one full-time employee or one FTE.

Applicants may apply for only ONE type of COVID-19 Response Grant: either General Operating Support or Program Support, not both.

Types of eligible institutions:

- Museums.
- Historical societies and heritage organizations.
- Other cultural and community nonprofits with humanities-focused missions.

Institutions that are NOT eligible for this type of grant include:

- Colleges and universities, including affiliated centers, institutes, foundations, etc.
- K-12 educational institutions.
- Departments or agencies of government, including municipal libraries.
- Organizations without a humanities-focused mission. For example:
 - Arts and cultural organizations whose mission focuses on the creation, performance, instruction about, and display of art.
 - Social service organizations that do not have a humanities-focused mission.
 - Science centers, environmental organizations, nature centers, zoos, and other science-learning organizations.
- For-profit businesses.
- Foreign entities.
- Individuals.

Applicants may not apply for a COVID-19 Response Grant with a fiscal sponsor.

USE OF FUNDS

General Operating Support (GOS) grants range from \$5,000-\$20,000. Organizations are unlikely to receive more than 10% of their average annual operating budget (determined by averaging operating budgets from the last three years), as indicated in the grant application, up to the maximum grant amount. Organizations may receive substantially less.

The grant period for each awarded grant will begin on the date of application and end on November 30, 2022. All expenses related to the grant must be incurred during that period. When determining budget and requested amount, applicants should keep these dates in mind.

GOS grants are designed to support New Jersey-based nonprofit organizations that have a mission in the public humanities. While last spring's COVID-19 Response Grants focused on emergency needs stemming from the devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic, this year's GOS grants can also help humanities organizations plan for the future and begin the long process of response and recovery to the pandemic. For example, GOS grants may support:

- General operating costs, including staff support and administrative costs.
- Humanities programming (new and extant).
- Strategic planning and capacity building related to coronavirus impacts.
- Technical or consulting needs related to digital transition or access.
- Expansion of outdoor and/or virtual activities and increase in access to those activities for target populations.
- Equity assessments and planning related to coronavirus and attendant economic crisis.

Per the National Endowment for the Humanities, funds may not be used for any of the following:

- Work 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).
- Overlapping project costs with any other pending or approved application for federal funding and/or approved federal awards, including an open NJCH Incubation or Action Grant.
- Funds for activities supported by other non-NEH federal funds.
- Equipment costs in excess of 20% of total project costs.
- Collections acquisitions (archival or material culture).
- Re-grants, prizes, awards, or scholarships.
- Travel (both foreign and domestic).
- The preservation, organization, or description of materials that are not regularly accessible for research, education, or public programming.
- Contributions to endowment.
- Cancellation costs.
- Lobbying.
- Promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view.
- Advocacy of a particular program of social or political action.
- Support of specific public policies or legislation.
- Purchase of land or facilities, capital projects, construction, or major alteration or renovation.
- Environmental sustainability.
- Unallowable expenses as defined in [2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost principles](#).

Priority will be given to organizations with a track record of engaging the public, particularly traditionally underserved and underrepresented audiences, in the humanities.

There is no matching or cost share requirement tied to these funds. NJCH may not collect any information related to cost share or matching funds for GOS awards.

Organizations that have an open NJCH Action or Incubation Grant may apply for a COVID-19 Response Grant, assuming the institution meets all other eligibility criteria. Costs may not overlap between the two NJCH grants and COVID-19 Response Grant funding may not be used towards the required match on an Incubation or Action Grant.

Organizations who received a COVID-19 Response Grant in the spring or summer of 2020 (through the CARES Act) must submit their final report for that funding before applying for another grant.

COVID-19 Response Grantees are not currently required to register with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) required of most federal grants, however it is recommended that any grantee consider registering in this system, as that exclusion is likely to be eliminated in the future.

APPLICATION PROCESS & NOTIFICATION

NJCH uses an online system called Foundant for application and administration of grants and other program awards. If you have applied for a grant or other program award with NJCH since September 2020, chances are you have already created a login. If you do not, you can create one from the application page. After creating your login, you will be required to enter basic organizational information.

1. The first step in the process of creating a COVID-19 Response Grant for General Operating Support will be to submit an LOI (Letter of Intent). The LOI form collects basic application information and should be able to be filled out in a very short time.

Please note: to enable staff to review your LOI and for you to have time to fill out the application, the last day to submit an LOI will be Friday, October 8, 2021.

2. Upon receipt, LOIs will be reviewed by NJCH staff for eligibility. If an organization is determined to be ineligible for funding, they will be notified of that decision. The organization may reapply if the ineligibility issue is something that can be fixed.
3. LOIs that are determined to be eligible will be notified via email and the full application will be made available to you via Foundant. When the application is complete, please click Submit. Your application will be considered at the next due date. Deadlines:
July 15, 2021
September 1, 2021
October 15, 2021
4. The review process will take approximately 2-3 weeks from each due date, after which each applicant will be notified of the funding decision.
5. Organizations that are awarded funding will be notified via email. Awarded funds will be paid as soon as a grant contract is signed by an authorized official at the applicant organization.

Applicants that are not funded may amend and resubmit their application by emailing that request to NJCH staff. All unfunded applications will automatically be given a second consideration after the final due date.

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

COVID-19 Response Grants will be administered through Foundant, the same system through which you will apply for funds. After awards are made, NJCH will follow up with grantees to document the vital role that the funds play collectively in New Jersey's cultural organizations.

If you receive a grant, NJCH staff will send more detailed requirements for administering your grant. You will be required to:

- Review the grant agreement we send you and return a copy signed by an authorized official from the organization.
- Confirm your DUNS number. If you do not have a DUNS number already, we recommend that you [apply](#) for one immediately. It is free and your grant funds cannot be dispersed without it.
- Send letters to your state and federal elected officials announcing your grant award.
- Comply with basic state and federal nondiscrimination statutes.
- Acknowledge the support of NJCH and the NEH as directed.
- Provide simple reports as requested by the NJCH staff.
- Retain auditable records of grant funds for at least three years, or as directed by law.

The grant administration process will include periodic check-ins and a short final report that includes both narrative and fiscal information about how funds were spent. These reports are significant for the broader public humanities community because they help us show our lawmakers that public funding is important to the economies and social fabrics of our communities. Every effort will be made to ensure that grant administration requirements are not burdensome for any organization receiving COVID-19 Response Grant funds, but they are a crucial part of successfully using your grant.

QUESTIONS & APPLICATION SUPPORT

We anticipate the volume of applicants for NJCH's COVID-19 Response Grants to be very high. We encourage you to read through all the information available on our website before coming to us with a question. We have developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for your reference and will be updating it regularly as additional queries come in. We are also holding a number of informational webinars to go over criteria for these grants and answer questions (please see above for dates and times).

All NJCH grants, including COVID-19 Response Grants, are overseen by Gigi Naglak, Director of Programs, and James Kirkland, Program Officer. Emails sent to grants@njhumanities.org are received by both staff, so that is usually the fastest way to get in touch.

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FAQ

Below is a list of helpful questions about the COVID-19 Response funding opportunities.

1. Can I apply for both a General Operating Support grant and a Program Support Grant?

No. A single organization can only apply for one type of COVID-19 Response Grant.

2. I'm not sure if I should apply for a General Operating Support or a Program Support grant. What should I do?

First assess whether you are in fact eligible for both grants. Only organizations with a mission rooted in the humanities may apply for General Operating Support. If you are eligible to apply for a GOS grant, you should do so, as those grants offer the greatest flexibility in how funding may be used. If you are NOT a humanities-missioned organization but do conduct humanities public programs, you are likely eligible for a Program Support grant. If you still have questions about which type of grant to apply to, we strongly recommend attending one of our grant webinars.

3. I have an open grant with NJCH. Can I still apply for a COVID-19 Response Grant?

Yes, assuming your organization meets the rest of the criteria to do so. Program expenses may not overlap between the two grants and the COVID-19 Response Grant may not serve as cost-share for your Incubation or Action Grant.

4. Can I receive the COVID-19 Response Grant and still qualify for an Incubation or Action grant next year?

Yes. The COVID-19 Response Grant will not impact your ability to apply for NJCH's project grants. Please note, however, that NJCH will not be running our usual fall round of Incubation and Action Grants. There will only be one round of those grants in the spring of 2022.

5. Will there still be Incubation and Action grants in the fall?

No. NJCH will focus on COVID-19 Response Grants through the fall of 2021. The next round of Incubation and Action Grants will be available in the spring of 2022.

6. I'm interested in talking with a NJCH program officer. Who do I contact?

The best way to contact our program officers is by email at grants@njhumanities.org. Emails sent to that address will reach both Gigi Naglak, Director of Programs, and James Kirkland, Program Officer, allowing

one of them to respond to you quickly and directly. Because of the volume of applicants who will be applying for the COVID-19 Response Grants, we strongly encourage you to read ALL of the COVID-19 Response Grant information and/or attend one of the grant webinars before reaching out to NJCH staff.

7. How much emergency funding did New Jersey receive through the American Rescue Plan Act?

NJCH received just under \$1.2 million to help sustain the public humanities in New Jersey. The vast majority of that funding will be distributed through the COVID-19 Response Grant program. The remainder will support other programs administered by NJCH.

8. Where can I learn more about the public humanities?

You can review the NJCH website to read about the public humanities and learn more about some of the excellent work in the public humanities that NJCH has funded.

9. Is there a PDF available of the COVID-19 Response Grant applications?

Yes. You can find a link to the GOS and PS applications in the FAQs on [NJCH's website](#).

10. I have applied for other emergency funding (grants and/or loans). Can I still apply for a COVID-19 Response Grant?

Yes. It is important to look at any restrictions for how each type of funding may be spent. For example, you can still apply for NJCH if you have applied directly to other federal grant programs (including the NEH), but the funds may not be used for overlapping costs. Make sure to read all the guidelines closely and only apply for funds that you need.

11. Can more than one department at the same college or university apply for a COVID-19 Program Support Grant?

Yes. For all NJCH grants, a department, institute, or division of a college or university counts as an organization. However, NJCH may limit the number of grants a single university receives to ensure that available funding is spread equitably across the state. The guidelines emphasize that this funding supports the public humanities specifically. Programs that do not have significant public engagement beyond the university community are extremely unlikely to be funded.

12. Can I save a draft of my COVID-19 Response Grant application and come back to it?

Yes. NJCH uses an award application and management system called Foundant that will allow you to return to your draft application as often as you wish prior to submitting the final draft. You will also use this system to manage your award and reporting if you receive funding.

13. Where can I see a list of COVID Response funding recipients?

2020 COVID-19 Response Grant awards are listed on the Impact page. Once awards are publicly announced in this round, a similar listing of recipients will be available on that page.

As new or additional information becomes available, questions and answers may be added to this page.