

NEW JERSEY COUNCIL
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

**Creating an Outstanding Proposal:
Narrative**

Purpose: Idea → Proposal

- Pre-Application
- What Makes a Competitive Project?
- Review Criteria
- Why Proposals Are Not Funded
- Sample Project

Pre-Application

Parts of the application:

- Project narrative
- Support materials (optional)
- Project budget
- Organization info – budget, FTEs, UEI, financial materials....

What you need to know

- Who is the project for? How are they involved?
- What is the problem or need being addressed?
- Why your organization?
- What will you have at the end?
- What does success look like?

What Makes a Competitive Project?

- Follows guidelines
- Matches funding priorities
- Clear project description – the “what”
- Value to audience – the “why” part 1
- Value to organization – the “why” part 2

Why are you doing **THIS**?

Why are **YOU** doing this?

Review Criteria

- Project Plan and Outcomes
- Humanities Content and Project Team
- Audience and Outreach
- Budget and Capacity

Project Plan and Outcomes

- Incubation v. Action
- Realistic and well-conceived plan
- Clear timeline and deliverables
- Assessment

Humanities Content and Project Team

- Centers humanities topics and practices.
- Pursues complex questions and ideas.
- Active learning and engagement.
- Well-rounded, experienced project team.

Audience and Outreach

- Clearly identified, specific audience(s).
- Co-designed with audience.
- Underrepresented or marginalized people.
- Untold stories.
- Clear strategies for connection.

Budget and Capacity

- Budget matches narrative.
- Project makes sense for organization.
- More in part 2 of this workshop!

Why Proposals Are Not Funded

- Lacks humanities focus.
- Project plan is unclear or vague.
- No defined audience and/or lacks public focus.
- Does not involve the audience.
- Does not match NJCH funding priorities.

Sample Project

Roebling Museum

To Be Good Neighbors

The community urged us to preserve a house across from the museum, an authentic example of 20th century industrial immigrant workforce housing within a company town. Now that we own it, how might we use this opportunity to create connection and growth in our community?

To Be Good Neighbors: Project Plan

- Research community engagement practices
- Develop community engagement strategy
- Community outreach
- Synthesize findings
- Create plan

Reminders

- Draft review: submit by Oct 11
- Grant Consultation
- Deadline: October 17 at 11:59pm
- Notification: by December 31