



# Humanities MONTANA

**FILM + VIDEO**

## GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Grant Website:

<https://www.humanitiesmontana.org/film-video-grants/>

This document contains guidelines for submitting a grant application to Humanities Montana. Please apply for all Humanities Montana grants using our online grant application forms. NOTE: All grants are awarded subject to the availability of funds.

**Grant Type**  
Film + Video

**Maximum Award**  
\$8,000-\$10,000

**Required Match**  
1:1

**Application Deadline**  
August 1

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# General Overview

## Humanities Montana & Grantmaking

Humanities Montana is Montana's state humanities council. With a mission to serve Montana's multicultural communities through stories and conversation, Humanities Montana offers experiences that nurture imagination and ideas by speaking to Montanans' diverse history, literature, and philosophy. Established in 1972, Humanities Montana is one of 56 councils across the nation that the National Endowment for the Humanities created in order to better infuse the humanities directly and effectively into public life. We produce, fund, create, and support humanities-based projects and programs, eye-opening cultural experiences, and meaningful conversations.

Humanities Montana offers this funding opportunity under the authority of the Office of Federal/State Partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the nonprofit network of state and jurisdictional humanities councils and serves as a pass-through entity (PTE). Awards are subject to [2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#) and the [General Terms and Conditions for Awards to Organizations \(for grants and cooperative agreements issued January 1, 2022 or later\)](#).

### **Humanities Montana-funded projects must:**

- Focus on clearly defined humanities theme(s)
- Deepen public understanding of significant humanities questions
- Approach a subject analytically, presenting a variety of perspectives
- Build on sound humanities scholarship and involve humanities scholars (academic, professional, or expert) in all aspects of the project
- Employ appealing and accessible formats that will actively engage the general public in learning
- Demonstrate support and involvement of communities and cultures represented in project content and activities or specifically address why they are not involved (e.g., projects that involve Native American communities or cultures must include letters of support from participating scholars, researchers, or program participants from that specific community outlining their involvement.)

### **Humanities Montana cannot fund:**

- Projects that fall outside of the humanities; the creation or performance of art; creative writing, autobiographies, memoirs, and creative nonfiction; policy studies; and social science research that does not address humanistic questions

and/or utilize humanistic methods (see Arts & Other Disciplines vs. Humanities section)

- Projects that present a one-sided, uncritical treatment of an issue
- Projects that focus on personal instead of public concerns
- Promotion of a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view
- Political advocacy
- Advocacy of a particular program of social or political action
- Support of specific public policies or legislation
- Lobbying
- Obscene, libelous, indecent, or defamatory content (including hate speech, personal attacks, or material constituting harassment)
- Non-public meetings of organizations (although Humanities Montana will consider funding programs open to the public but held in conjunction with a group's meeting)
- Construction, restoration, or operating expenses of existing organizations (includes building materials and construction of exhibits)
- Equipment, property, or other capital purchases
- Museum or library acquisitions, except in unusual circumstances
- Projects that would raise funds for profit-making groups or for commercial purposes
- Meals or refreshments for an audience
- Alcoholic beverages or entertainment costs
- Candidates running for political office
- Fiscal agent and fiscal sponsor fees (see Eligibility section)
- Costs for activities performed by federal entities or personnel

## Defining Humanities

Under [Section 3\(a\) of the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965](#), as amended, "The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; 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."

Humanities Montana adds, "The humanities are the examination of what it means to be human through the interpretation and discussion of all forms of thought, interest, and



expression. While we value traditional humanities disciplines, such as art history, literature, history, and philosophy, our emphasis is on the public humanities, which means that we look at the humanities as more than an academic discipline. For us, the public humanities are a mode of inquiry and conversation that aims to engage, support, or challenge the ideals, beliefs, tensions, and prejudices of the communities in which we live. We believe that important thought can happen outside of the academy — in neighborhood institutions, schools, churches, and at kitchen tables across the country. We are especially interested in instances of the public humanities that promote civic engagement — in raising critical issues facing everyday people and conducted with the hope of increasing participants' thirst for staying engaged. Rather than being defined by rigid disciplinary boundaries, it is the humanistic lens, which emphasizes curiosity, questioning, and dialogue, that matters." [Learn more about Humanities Montana.](#)

## Arts & Other Disciplines vs. Humanities Content

The arts and humanities are *not* the same, which is why Montana is served by both an arts council and Humanities Montana. Arts programs usually focus on creation and performance. Humanities programs focus on the interpretive aspects of the arts: discussions about their historical or philosophical contexts, critical analyses of their methodology, and lectures or films that look at the characteristics of different art movements or periods. Occasionally, Humanities Montana grants modest amounts for performances when such activities are teamed with interpretations, such as when a play or dance is preceded or followed by a lecture or scholar-led discussion.

An application will not typically qualify as a humanities project if its primary objective is to support the production of new art in any medium unless that artwork is significantly grounded in the aims of the humanities. While artistic creativity is an essential human activity, the applicant must demonstrate that they are engaging at a deep level with the study of that activity from a broader cultural, historical, or philosophical-theoretical perspective. Examples might include doing research in an archive while producing a museum exhibit or consulting with collaborators with distinct cultural knowledge in producing a film.

Similarly, an application will not typically qualify as a humanities project simply by proposing a publicly disseminated medium (podcast, video, website). While storytelling is an important human mode of expression, a project's medium will not intrinsically qualify it as having humanities content unless the applicants address the question of how they are using specific ideas or questions from humanities disciplines to develop, explore, or enhance their project. If the project is derived from environmental studies,

math, science, or social science, the burden for the applicant is to demonstrate how the project's methods and personnel engage directly with the humanities.

## Eligibility

To be eligible to apply, the applicant organization must be established in the United States or its jurisdictions as one of the following:

- **Private nonprofit organizations**
- **Accredited institutions of higher education**
- **State, local, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments and agencies (schools, libraries, museums, etc.)**
- **Groups of persons that form an association to carry out a project for approved nonprofit purposes**
- **Individuals (research fellowships ONLY)**

Other considerations:

- Non-public/membership organizations or groups that apply to the councils for funding must be constituted for nonprofit purposes.
- Individuals (with the exception of research fellows) and other organizations, including foreign and for-profit entities, are ineligible.
- Applicant organizations must not function solely as fiscal agents or fiscal sponsors but must make substantive contributions to the success of the project (see Substantive Involvement section).

**A Unique Entity ID (UEI) and Federal Tax ID (EIN) or proof of tax-exempt or nonprofit status are required to apply.** Per [2 CFR § 25.300](#), Humanities Montana may issue subawards with federal funds only to organizations that have obtained and provided their Unique Entity Identifier. Subrecipients are required to complete registration with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier.

If Humanities Montana makes an award, the applicant organization is considered the recipient of record and assumes all programmatic, financial, and legal responsibilities associated with the award, including adherence to, and compliance with, federal regulations and the terms and conditions of the award.

## Substantive Involvement

Humanities Montana only awards Film + Video grants to organizations, not to individuals or production companies instituted for for-profit purposes (e.g., LLCs). Independent filmmakers and fiscal sponsors must consult with Humanities Montana staff to assess substantive involvement and determine eligibility.

Organizations engaging solely in fiscal sponsorship activities (e.g., proposal submissions, reporting, fulfillment of contractual obligations, maintaining IRS status) may not apply on behalf of ineligible applicants. However, an applicant organization that makes substantive contributions to the success of the Film + Video project, may be eligible. Only applicant organizations meeting some or all of the requirements of substantive involvement listed below are eligible to apply.

Eligible applicant organizations make some or all of the following substantive contributions:

- Monitoring the progress of a media project
- Contributing to the work plan, research plan, budget, outreach plan, fundraising plan, and/or distribution plan
- Contributing to choices of personnel who work on a project, including project scholars and production staff
- Consulting with other project personnel regarding humanities themes, treatments, scripts, and/or intellectual approaches to the content
- Providing direction, advice, and/or mentorship to the production team
- Providing input on grant product(s) prior to completion (e.g., reviewing "rough cuts")
- Participating in engagement, direction, and/or supervision of independent media professionals
- Contributing to the development of ancillary resources to support the project
- Contributing to outreach and public engagement

**If awarded, the applicant organization will be required to submit a signed agreement outlining their substantive involvement and contributions to the project.**

[Learn more about managing subawards and subrecipient responsibilities.](#)

If your organization is eligible, you are encouraged to partner with independent producers and other skilled professionals to carry out programmatic activities. Under this arrangement, the applicant organization submits the application on behalf of the partnership(s).

## Cost Sharing / Required Matching Funds

Cost sharing or matching refers to the portion of the project costs you pay for with non-Humanities Montana funds or the value of in-kind contributions from non-federal sources. **Humanities Montana requires a 1:1 cost share match for all Film + Video grant applications and final reports.** For every dollar you request or receive from Humanities Montana, you must provide at least one dollar of cost-share from other cash income,

in-kind contributions, or a mixture of both. Cost-share funds must be applied to allowable expenses and you may not include funds from other federal sources in your estimated cost-share.

If you will charge a fee for admittance to your program, you must report all income as cash income on your budget form, and this income must be spent on project-related expenses. Event registration and attendance may not be cost-prohibitive or limit the program's accessibility to the general public.

You may contribute voluntary cost share to your project if the total costs exceed the amount awarded by Humanities Montana. Voluntary cost share includes:

- Cash contributions made to the project by you or a third party used to pay for allowable project-related expenses incurred during the project's period of performance.
- Your unrecovered indirect costs up to 10% of overall award for organizations that do not have a federal negotiated rate and do not budget for all or a portion of the 10% allowed.
- In-kind contributions (non-cash contributions, such as property or services, that benefit the project and are contributed without charge) by you or a third party.

## General Budget Guidelines

Humanities Montana grant funds may be used only for expenses incurred during the grant period of performance. Grant funds are limited and competition is tight. **Carefully review** the list of allowable and unallowable expenses below AND refer to the list of allowable and unallowable activities on pages 2-3 before drafting your budget.

**Humanities Montana and cost share funds may not be used to pay for capital purchases, liquor, entertainment, or food for audiences.**

### Allowable Costs/Expenses

**Direct costs** include expenses directly accountable to your proposed project activities and the fulfilment of your project outcomes.

#### Examples

- **LIMITED Personnel expenses**, salary expenses for staff responsible for conducting key project activities, but no more than 10% of overall requested amount may be allocated to an Executive Director's salary.



- **Project contractor/consultant/scholar expenses**, panel participation, public presentations, research, and expert services to improve quality of humanities content, general honoraria, etc. For Film + Video you may include film crew in this section.
- **Project-related travel/per diem**, such as lodging, meals, and mileage for project staff, contractors, consultants, and scholars. All original receipts should remain with your organization for audit and tax purposes. (See Appendix for more information)
- **Project activities that directly support project design**, development, implementation, and evaluation efforts.  
Examples include:
  - Promotion/publication expenses for printing costs (posters, programs, etc.), advertising through news outlets (newspaper, television, radio), and social media
  - Rental (only) of facilities and equipment, such as meeting space, audio/visual equipment, etc.
- **Other expenses** need to be approved by Humanities Montana prior to inclusion in your proposed budget.

**Indirect costs** are costs that your institution incurs for common or joint objectives and that you cannot readily identify with a specific project or activity.

#### Examples

- Other sponsored activities
- 10% de minimis and base (e.g., Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC), "salaries," "salaries & fringe") and whether the activity and rate are on- or off-site
- If your budget includes more than one indirect cost rate or base, list them as separate entries (for example, your project includes activities that occur both on and off campus)

You do not have to claim indirect costs. However, if you charge indirect costs to the project, you must not charge those same costs to the project as direct costs.

**For organizations WITHOUT federally negotiated indirect cost rates** – No more than 10% of your overall request award amount may support such expenses as the depreciation on buildings, equipment, and capital improvements; operations and maintenance expenses; accounting and legal services; and salaries of executive officers. If you do not have a current indirect rate agreement with your cognizant agency but intend to negotiate one, provide additional detail in your budget justification. (See Appendix for more information)

**For institutions WITH federally negotiated indirect cost rates (NICRA)** - Except as provided in [2 CFR § 200.414\(c\)\(1\)](#), Humanities Montana must use the negotiated rate(s) in effect at the time it issues your award and will not adjust the rate(s) throughout the life of your award.

If applicable, you will need to include a copy of your NICRA agreement, the name of your cognizant federal agency, and a point of contact with your application. (See Appendix for more information)

Reference [NEH's General Guidance on Calculating Indirect Costs](#) for more information.

## Film + Video Grant Overview

### Program Summary

The Film + Video grant is a competitive grant program intended to support the development, production, and distribution of documentary films or series that engage general audiences with humanities ideas in creative and appealing ways. Humanities Montana seeks to support film projects that promote a deeper understanding of Montana history and culture as well as those that examine themes and subjects in the humanities relevant and important to Montana communities. Projects must be grounded in humanities scholarship and incorporate an approach that is thoughtful, balanced, and analytical; proposals must demonstrate the potential to attract a broad general audience.

Humanities Montana's Film + Video grants offer multiyear support or one-time-only funding for major projects in film and video. Film and television projects may be stand-alone documentaries or series of programs. Major projects are those requiring multiple stages of research and development, production, and post-production and which generally require a script and a year or more to complete. Projects may also include supplementary components such as discussion programs and public screenings.

#### **Film + Video grant projects must:**

- Involve appropriate media professionals
- Appeal to a broad audience
- Demonstrate a plan for statewide, regional, or national audience involvement and of secondary non-broadcast distribution and long-term utilization
- Include a 1:1 cost-share of in-kind or other funds
- Include public programming, such as discussions, lectures, or screenings
- Include outreach/publicity and evaluation plans where appropriate

#### **Film + Video grants are not appropriate for the following purposes:**

- Fictional films and audio projects, including historical dramas, dramatic adaptations of literary works, and other projects with characters or scenes for

which there is not historical documentation or a clear foundation in other relevant humanities scholarship

- Outreach and engagement events and other distribution activities for productions completed before the proposed start date of the period of performance
- Projects that are primarily or exclusively recordings of lectures or stage productions
- Projects that will satisfy requirements for educational degrees or formal professional training
- Projects intended primarily for students in a formal learning environment (though projects may include components that can be used in classrooms)
- General operations, renovation, restoration, rehabilitation, or construction of station or production facilities
- Preservation or cataloging of materials and collections

See [2 CFR 200 Subpart E - Cost Principles](#) for other unallowable costs.

## Film + Video Funding Categories

The Film + Video grant program has funds available for projects in three different stages. Applicants may elect to apply for each stage sequentially or may apply for funds to support the most appropriate stage for their project. At the completion of each stage, the applicant must submit evidence of progressive and satisfactory development in order to be considered for funding at the next stage. No one project can receive more than \$28,000 in total Film + Video grants. All grants are awarded subject to the availability of funds.

**Stage One:** Research and script development awards (up to \$8,000) enable media producers to collaborate with scholars to develop humanities content and other program elements. Awards must result in a script or detailed treatment, which is required to progress to Stage Two funding. [Applicants must submit an example of previous work.](#)

Prior to applying for Stage One, you should have:

- Assessed the major humanities scholarship related to the subject
- Identified humanities themes
- Assembled a group of humanities scholars (see Appendix) to serve as advisers and other experts if applicable
- Consulted with the humanities scholars to identity the project's interpretive ideas
- Formed a media team to see the project through its development period

- Identified resources, such as archival materials and potential interviewees

Stage One awards may support activities such as:

- Meetings with scholars
- Preliminary interviews preparation of program treatments or scripts
- Production of a work-in-progress or trailer
- Creation of partnerships for outreach activities and public engagement
- Archival and other scholarly research to further development of script and humanities themes

**Stage Two:** Production awards (up to \$10,000) support work, including principal photography, source material acquisition, and rights clearance, that results in a rough cut of film/video or equivalent (required to progress to Stage Three funding). Applicants must submit a completed script or detailed narrative treatment.

Prior to applying for Stage Two, you should have:

- Completed all required components of Stage One
- Conducted extensive research on your subject, including archival work and preliminary interviews
- Drafted the script or detailed treatment(s)

Stage Two awards may support activities such as:

- Archival research and rights clearances
- Meetings with scholars
- Additional script development
- Production, including filming, recording, and editing, and distribution

**Stage Three:** Post-production awards (up to \$10,000) support completion of the product and public distribution. Applicants must submit a rough cut of the project.

Prior to applying for Stage Three, you should have:

- Completed all required components of Stage One and Stage Two
- Designed your plans for distribution, outreach, and partnerships

Stage Three awards may support activities such as:

- Development of related resources that explore the humanities content and themes central to the project (e.g., websites and curriculum materials)
- Post-production
- Outreach and public engagement

## Other Film + Video Eligibility Information

**At least one confirmed humanities scholar/subject expert must meaningfully contribute to every project.** All applicants must upload a letter of commitment from at least one humanities scholar with the online application.

**Repeat proposals in a single stage** are allowed. However, applicants should be aware that the total funds awarded to any one project cannot exceed \$28,000.

**Nonsequential proposals are allowed.** You are not required to obtain a Stage One award before applying for a Stage Two or Stage Three award. However, applicants must submit required work samples with their proposals.

**Other considerations** include:

- In accepting an award, the applicant organization/subrecipient agrees to use grant funds in accordance with the Humanities Montana grant award letter and subaward partnership agreement.
- The project director and authorizing official may not be the same person.
- Award funds may be spent only within the grant period of performance for the purposes described in the proposal and for the items specified in the approved budget.
- Project and budget modifications must be approved and documented by Humanities Montana.
- Records of project expenditures must be maintained. A fiscal manager who is not the project director is required.
- All materials publicizing or resulting from grant activities must contain the appropriate acknowledgement of Humanities Montana support.

**Rights to materials** (scripts, films, television and radio programs, viewer and listener guides) will ordinarily remain with the grantee. However, if Humanities Montana has provided over 25% of the total funding for such materials, plans for future use or distribution of must be discussed with Humanities Montana for approval prior to implementation. In addition, the grantee must assure Humanities Montana that utilization of material funded under a grant will be sought on the basis of maximum possible right for non-commercial use or distribution.

**Humanities Montana respects Tribal data sovereignty** and recognizes the importance of Indigenous Knowledge by acknowledging tribes' inherent right to govern the collection, ownership, and application of data and resources. We will work closely with



applicants from tribal organizations to ensure award management policies respect and align with tribes' needs.

**Incomplete, nonresponsive, or ineligible applications** will not be considered for funding.

**Applications submitted after the deadline** will not be considered for funding.

**Applicants and organizations with outstanding final reports** from a previous award or program from Humanities Montana are ineligible and their proposals will not be considered for funding.

[Learn more about eligibility.](#)

## Film + Video Application Requirements

Note: **Application Questions are available for review** as a downloadable PDF on the website and in our grant management portal.

The following information should be included in the application and will be used by the review committee when evaluating applications:

**Project Summary:** A brief description of your proposed project's primary goal and activities, the specific stage for which you are requesting funds, and the amount of funds you are requesting.

**Project Management:** A description of the applicant organization and list of project personnel and contributing humanities scholars and their relevant qualifications (see Appendix for definitions). All projects must provide names, contact information, and a summary of relevant qualifications for each of the following:

- Applicant Organization & Authorizing Official
- Project Director/Applicant
- Fiscal Manager
- Humanities Scholar/Subject Expert

### Project Details:

- Logline: Describes the plot in a captivating way and states the main concept in a few concise sentences.
- Project Description/Synopsis: This is a breakdown of the project's story into prose and should be no longer than 8,000 characters (including spaces and

punctuation). This is the most critical element of the film project proposal because it highlights compelling humanities content and reveals how passionate and dedicated the applicant organization and filmmaker are to the success of the project.

- Required Supporting Materials: You will be prompted to upload or provide a link to your work samples within the online application.
  - Stage One — example of previous work (sizzle reel, demo, etc., no longer than 10 minutes), a look book or mood board (collection of photographs arranged to provide a visual representation of the mood, tone, or feeling of the film) to demonstrate the artistic/technical quality of the production and the humanistic content/themes of it as adequately as possible
  - Stage Two — script or detailed treatment (a multipage document written in prose that tells the story that happens in the film and includes details of directorial style)
  - Stage Three — rough cut of film
- Project Need: This establishes the focus and rationale for the grant proposal. This should include the project's relevance and importance of the film to advancing the humanities in Montana and the impact on local communities.
- Primary Audience and Locations: This should identify the primary communities represented in the film, specific filming locations (Montana town, cities, tribal territories, or other defined areas where the principal photography takes place), and intended viewing audiences.

**Project Budget & Budget Justification:** Accuracy and relevancy are essential in this section. Although your proposed budget is an estimate, it should be thorough and detailed and align with the project work plan (research, production, or post-production). The application should include a full breakdown of budgeted expenses for the individual stage of funding for which you are applying. All expenses included in the budget must be allowable (see Budget Guidelines section). Your budget should also include a full breakdown of budgeted expenses funded through other secured funding or in-kind donations. You are required to provide a 1:1 cost-share match. Note that you cannot use other federal funding sources in your match. Project budgets are examined closely by reviewers, and applications with incorrect, incomplete, or inadequate justification for expenses will receive a deduction in evaluation scoring.

- You will be required to revise a budget form template and upload a final version with your application. The budget form template can be downloaded directly from within the Film + Video application form in our online grant management

system. Other versions of the proposed project budget form will not be accepted.

- You will be required to write a detailed budget narrative providing justification for each expense listed in your budget form.

**Project Work Plan:** This is a complete and detailed description of research, production, and/or post-production schedule and individuals responsible for each activity.

- Stage 1 — Research: Clearly state research and writing goals, planned outputs, key activities, and estimated date(s) of completion.
- Stage 2 — Production: Clearly state production goals, planned outputs, key activities (principal photography days), key crew (producer, director, writer, director of photography, sound editor, etc.) responsible for each activity, and estimated date(s) of completion. The schedule should include realistic timeframes and include plans to mitigate unforeseen circumstances that may impact filming.
- Stage 3 — Post production: Clearly state post-production goals, planned outputs, key activities, and estimated date(s) of completion.

**Marketing & Distribution Plan:** This section should discuss the overall marketing strategy, specific distribution goals, methods for project distribution, and management of publicity. Projects with plans for broadcast syndication or film festival screenings should include letters of support from the relevant entities in their application. This section should also include plans to acknowledge funding from Humanities Montana.

**Evaluation Plan:** This section should outline planned evaluation efforts to measure success toward achieving project goals and outcomes and utilize learning from evaluation findings.

**Required Supplemental Information & Documentation:** Applicants must submit the following information and documents with their application:

- Letter outlining applicant organization's substantive contributions to the film project (upon request)
- Letters of support — Community Partners
- Letters of Commitment — Humanities Scholars/Subject Experts
- Approval and certification of sponsoring organization (template available for download in application)
- Unique Entity ID (UEI) —The Unique Entity ID (UEI) is a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned to an entity by SAM.gov.
- Employer Identification Number (EIN)

- Form W9 — A pdf copy of your organization's most recent Form W9.

## Application Submission

Humanities Montana accepts Film + Video grant applications annually via an online grant application process. Applicants may apply through the link provided on the Film + Video grants page on our website ([Film + Video Grants | Humanities Montana](#)). Registration with [Humanities Montana's online grant management portal](#) is required.

**Interested Film + Video applicants must schedule a 30-minute grant consultation with Humanities Montana staff and submit an online Letter of Interest (LOI) before submitting the online application.**

**Letter of Interest (LOI) and Application Questions are available for review** as downloadable PDFs on the website and in our grant management portal.

## Deadlines

**Grant consultations and LOIs** must be completed at least two weeks prior to the application close date.

Humanities Montana staff will offer **review of draft applications and budgets** up to three weeks prior to the application close date. Draft review is contingent upon staff capacity.

**Eligible applicants must submit applications online by midnight MST of the application close date.** Applicants unable to complete the online application process must contact Humanities Montana prior to 5:00 p.m. MST on the application close date.

## Application Review & Selection

### Review Process

Humanities Montana staff review all applications for eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness. Board members and expert reviewers evaluate all applications that pass this initial screening. Reviewers must comply with federal ethics rules governing conflicts of interest.

Humanities Montana staff, board members, and expert reviewers evaluate applications using a scoring rubric. Each reviewer is required to score and comment in response to the following criteria:

- Compliance & Eligibility
- Strategic Alignment
- Significance
- Quality
- Feasibility

[Learn more about review criteria.](#)

## Selection Process

**The Humanities Montana proposal review process** awards grants on a competitive basis. Funding is limited. After all evaluations are complete, a review committee meets to discuss applications and make funding recommendations to the full Board of Trustees. Award decisions are made at the first board meeting following the application deadline.

Applications may be funded (in whole or in part) with or without conditions, returned for revision and/or resubmission, or rejected. Humanities Montana's return of an application for revision and resubmission does not assure approval of the revised application.

**Common reasons for rejecting an application include** Humanities Montana's limited budget, insufficient detail, lack of substantial humanities content, inadequate participation of qualified humanities personnel, insufficient or restricted audience, advocacy or lack of balance in addressing issues, and insufficient budget detail or justification.

## Assessment of Risk and Other Pre-Award Activities

Following initial award selection, Humanities Montana staff conduct a risk assessment for selected applications. Staff consider the applicant's past performance, if applicable; analyze the project budget; assess the applicant's management systems; confirm the applicant's continued eligibility; and evaluate compliance with public policy requirements.

This assessment guards against the risk that federal financial assistance might be wasted, used fraudulently, or abused. After completing its risk assessment, Humanities Montana will determine whether making an award would be consistent with organizational policies, whether it must impose any special terms and conditions, and



what funding level is appropriate. Humanities Montana may elect not to issue awards to applicants with management or financial instability that affects their ability to comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

## Award Announcements

Applicants are notified of award decisions in writing by the date included in the on the Film + Video webpage. Following Humanities Montana's public announcement of funded projects, you may request results of your project evaluations by contacting [megan.sundy@humanitiesmontana.org](mailto:megan.sundy@humanitiesmontana.org).

## Award Distribution

Note: Each award is subject to [2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#), the [General Terms and Conditions for Awards to Organizations \(for grants and cooperative agreements issued January 1, 2022 or later\)](#), and any specific terms and conditions that NEH places on Humanities Montana as a PTE.

Award funds will be released pursuant to each of the following:

- (1) **Each applicant organization/subrecipient will be contacted by Humanities Montana staff** after the award announcements to adjust and finalize project budgets in response to specific conditions of the award, such as allocation of funds to different expense categories or partial funding amounts.
- (2) To ensure organizations are compliant with both Humanities Montana and NEH requirements, **all subrecipients are required to sign a subaward partnership agreement and provide a copy of the organization's most recent form W9 prior to receiving award funds.** Subrecipients will receive their award letter and subaward partnership agreement electronically via DocuSign. Once received, the subrecipient has 30 days to sign the subaward partnership agreement and provide a copy of the organization's W9. If the agreement is not signed within 30 days, the organization risks forfeiture of their award.
- (3) Unless otherwise specified, **upon receipt of the signed agreement and any required supplemental documentation, Humanities Montana will send a check for 100% of the award amount** to the name and address of the applicant organization as listed on the organization's Form W9. The applicant organization must have a [UEI](#), a [W9](#), and the capability to deposit this check and write checks against the deposited funds. Humanities Montana writes checks to subrecipients (applicant organizations) at the beginning and end of each month.

## Award Management

The Film + Video Award Management Manual provides for detailed instructions for grantees to manage awards from start (date of award decision) to end (submission of final report). This document is located on the Film + Video grant page

<https://www.humanitiesmontana.org/film-video-grants/>.

Humanities Montana must ensure that subrecipients track, appropriately use, and report program income generated by the subaward. [See 2 CFR § 200.332](#) for information that you must include in subaward agreements.

**Humanities Montana reserves the right to terminate awards** consistent with [2 CFR § 200.340](#).

## Humanities Montana Contact Information

All interested applicants must consult with Humanities Montana's grants office via phone, email, virtual meeting, or in person prior to submitting a Film + Video project proposal.

Humanities Montana  
311 Brantly, Missoula, MT 59812  
Main office: (406) 243-6022  
General email:  
[info@humanitiesmontana.org](mailto:info@humanitiesmontana.org)

Megan Hill Sundy  
Grants & Evaluation Director  
(406) 243-6067  
[megan.sundy@humanitiesmontana.org](mailto:megan.sundy@humanitiesmontana.org)

# APPENDIX

## Definitions

### **Project Management**

Applicant Organization: The organization or institution submitting a proposal to Humanities Montana is considered the subrecipient of record and assumes all programmatic, financial, and legal responsibilities associated with the award, including adherence to, and compliance with, federal regulations and the terms and conditions of the award.

Authorizing Official: This person is typically the institution's president, vice president, executive director, board chair, provost, or chancellor, and is the person submitting the application on behalf of the applicant organization.

Project Director/Applicant: The project director is responsible for the programmatic aspects and day-to-day management of the proposed project. If the project director is not employed by the applicant organization, you must have a formal written agreement with the project director that specifies an official relationship between the parties, even if the relationship does not involve a salary or other form of remuneration.

Fiscal Manager: This person is responsible for the fiscal management of the award (e.g., negotiating the budget, ensuring compliance with the terms and conditions of the award, and tracking, accounting for, and reporting project expenses). This person is responsible for ensuring that the applicant maintains and retains supporting financial documentation for all reported expenses paid for with Humanities Montana funds for at least 5 years following the project end date.

Humanities Scholar/Subject Expert: A humanities scholar is an individual with significant knowledge and/or lived experience in a discipline relevant to a project's humanities content. At least one humanities scholar is required in the planning and/or execution of the project, and their inclusion is a major criterion in our review of the application. You will need to include a letter of commitment from at least one humanities scholar with your application. [Learn more about humanities scholars.](#)

## **Budgets**

### **Travel/Per Diem**

- Humanities Montana ***will pay actual expenses for coach air or train travel and per diem.***
- In-state events: \$33.50/day for food (breakfast=\$8.25; lunch=\$9.25; dinner=\$16.00)
- Out-of-state events: \$54.00/day for food (breakfast=\$13.00; lunch=\$15.00; dinner=\$26.00).
- In-state motel: \$12.00 (without receipt); Out-of-state motel: \$50.00.
- Mileage: Humanities Montana allows mileage reimbursement for personal car use pursuant to the standard business mileage rate determined by the IRS. This rate is subject to change. [Visit the IRS website for more information.](#)

### **Indirect costs**

Organizations that wish to include indirect costs in the budget but have never had a NICRA may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Per [2 CFR § 200.1](#), MTDC means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000.

### **Educational institutions WITHOUT federally negotiated indirect cost rates**

If an educational institution does not have a negotiated rate with the federal government when Humanities Montana issues an award (because the educational institution is a new recipient or the parties cannot reach an agreement on a rate), but has a provisional rate, Humanities Montana must use the provisional rate until a final cost is negotiated and approved by the cognizant agency, except as provided in [2 CFR § 200.414](#). If the recipient fails to negotiate an indirect cost rate applicable to the period of performance within the period of performance, NEH may disallow indirect costs. If your organization does not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate, you may:

- Submit an indirect cost proposal to your cognizant federal agency to negotiate a rate within three months of your award's period of performance start date; or
- Charge a de minimis rate of 10% applicable to MTDC (see [2 CFR § 200.414\(f\)](#))

If you choose one of these options, indicate this under Indirect Cost Type. If you do not choose either of the above options, you may charge only costs that are allocable, allowable, and reasonable to the award.

**Institutions WITH federally negotiated indirect cost rates (educational institutions, government organizations, etc.)**

Review your institution's negotiated indirect cost rate(s) (NICRA) to ensure you are using the most appropriate rate for your project. Many institutions of higher education negotiate multiple rates, such as "research," "instruction," and "other sponsored activities." An institution's "research" rate is not the appropriate rate for inclusion in NEH subaward project budgets, except in rare cases, since it is reserved for projects involving scientific research, not scholarly inquiry of the type most often supported by NEH subawards.

If you choose to include indirect costs in your budget and your organization has a current federally negotiated indirect cost rate (NICRA), you will be required to upload a copy of your NICRA document verifying the appropriate rate, the base, the name of the agency with which you negotiated, and the state of that agreement.