Nevada Humanities CARES: Emergency Relief Grants to Nevada Cultural Organizations Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility

Q: What is a humanities organization?
A: A humanities organization has a mission explicitly connected to the humanities along with a track record of specifically working in the humanities, as opposed to a group that occasionally tackles or delves into humanities-based themes or activities. Humanities organizations include, but are not limited to, historical societies and heritage groups, historic homes and sites, archives, oral history programs, folklife organizations, cultural centers, museums, nonprofit libraries, literary organizations, nonprofit educational organizations, historic preservation groups, nonprofit media groups that report on culture, other cultural nonprofits with core missions or activities that center on developing and implementing public humanities programming. Nevada Humanities will consider applications for funding from organizations in other fields or endeavors that also deliver significant humanities programming.

Q: We don’t use the word “humanities” in our mission statement. Is this a problem?
A: No. To be eligible to apply you must implement a significant amount of public humanities programming and demonstrate this in your application.

Q: How do I know if my organization is doing “significant” humanities programming?
A: Please describe your programming as requested in the application and make your case.

Q: Is my arts organization eligible?
A: Nevada Humanities CARES funding will not support the creation, performance, or display of art, although Nevada Humanities will consider applications from such organizations that also deliver significant humanities programming. Solely arts focused organizations are encouraged to contact the Nevada Arts Council for information about their CARES Act funding opportunities provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. https://nvculture.org/nevadaartscouncil/caresactgrants/

Q: Is my organization eligible if we also get funding from the Nevada Arts Council?
A: Organizations that apply for Nevada Arts Council funding are also eligible to apply for Nevada Humanities CARES grants, however you may not have overlapping project costs with any other pending or approved application(s) for federal funding.

Q: Is my organization eligible if we also apply for or receive other sources of CARES Act relief funds?
A: Organizations that apply for other sources of CARES Act relief funds are eligible to apply for Nevada Humanities CARES grants, however you may not have overlapping project costs with any other pending or approved application(s) for federal funding.

Q: My organization is attached to a university or institution of higher education but not technically a department. Are we eligible to apply?
A: Humanities focused organizations such as museums, archives, university presses, and public-facing humanities centers affiliated with a college or university that have their own 501(c)(3) status and their own DUNS number not affiliated with an institution of higher education may apply for a Nevada Humanities CARES grant.

Q: Why aren’t colleges universities eligible for funding?
A: The CARES Act has allocated $14 billion to support colleges and universities across the nation, including here in Nevada. While colleges and universities are some of our most significant partners, the goal of this funding is to provide support for humanities organizations across the state that are not already receiving significant CARES Act funding. Humanities focused organizations such as museums, archives, university presses, and public-facing humanities centers affiliated with a college or university that have their own 501(c)(3) status and their own DUNS number not affiliated with an institution of higher education may apply for a Nevada Humanities CARES grant.

Q: Are individuals eligible to apply?
A: No.

Q: Are social service organizations eligible for Nevada Humanities CARES grants?
A: Any federally recognized nonprofit organization may be eligible if it provides significant humanities programs to the public. Organizations that define their mission as social service must present strong evidence that the humanities are a central and significant portion of its programming.

Q: We’ve had 501(c)(3) status for a long time but just began operations in Nevada. Are we eligible?
A: To be eligible, an organization must have a primary business address in Nevada and have been in operation for at least one year prior to July 1, 2020.

Q: My organization already has an active project grant from Nevada Humanities and we are considering applying for additional project grants in the future. Am I eligible to apply for Nevada Humanities CARES Act grants?
A: If you received a previous project grant from Nevada Humanities and are eligible for Nevada Humanities CARES grants, you may apply for Nevada Humanities CARES grant funds. Receipt of Nevada Humanities CARES Act funds will also not affect your eligibility for future Nevada Humanities project grants.

Application
Q: What activities will Nevada Humanities CARES grants support?
A: Nevada Humanities CARES grants will support short-term operating costs for Nevada nonprofit humanities and cultural organizations facing financial hardship and duress resulting from the COVID-19 health emergency. This includes: loss of revenue or anticipated loss of revenue (from loss of ticket sales, admissions, fee for service work, other earned income, investments, donations, canceled programs, canceled fundraising events, etc.); loss of staff (through firings, layoff, furlough, etc.) or reduction in staff salaries; difficulty paying rent/mortgage or utilities and operating costs; risk of closure; inability to deliver programming resulting in reduced visibility or viability of the organization.

Q: Does this funding support the creation and implementation of humanities projects?
A: No. Nevada Humanities CARES funding supports an organization’s general operating costs such as:
- Salaries and fringe benefits
- Honoraria and professional fees for contractual personnel that are essential to an organization’s humanities focused programming
- Rent or mortgage payments
- Utilities, insurance, and other facilities costs.

Q: How do you define the humanities?
A: At Nevada Humanities, our emphasis is on the public humanities and we understand the humanities to be how people process, document, express, comprehend, and live the human experience, and that through the wide breadth of human learning, civic, social, and cultural activities, everyone participates in and has access to the humanities. While we value traditional academic humanities disciplines (such as linguistics, literature, history, jurisprudence, philosophy, archaeology, comparative religion and belief, ethics, the history, criticism and theory of the arts, etc.), we see the humanities as encompassing a wide range of activities and creative expressions that contribute to our individual and collective sense of being human. These include cultural traditions and practices, civic and community engagement, expressions of identity, our understanding of history, our worldview and sense of place, and much more.

Q: Does my organization need a DUNS number in order to apply?
A: As required by federal guidelines, your organization is required to have a DUNS number to receive Nevada Humanities CARES grant funds. You may complete and submit your CARES application if your DUNS number application is in process, but you will not be able to receive awarded grant funds until you provide this number to Nevada Humanities. Learn more about the DUNS number requirement here as described by the National Endowment for the Humanities. It may take a few days to receive your DUNS number, so please anticipate this when submitting your application. Please allow plenty of time to process your request.

Q: Doesn’t it take a long time to get a DUNS? What if we don’t get it in time?
A: It ordinarily takes two business days to receive a DUNS number, but we have heard that demand is currently high and that it may take longer than usual to process your request. Applicants must have a valid DUNS number at the time that they submit their application. Please allow plenty of time to process your request.
Q: Am I required to register with the federal System for Award Management (SAM) system?
A. You are not required to register with SAM to apply for this grant, but it is encouraged. Register with SAM here. Note that it may take up to two weeks to complete your registration. You may complete your application process while your registration is pending.

Q: If my organization does not have its own 501(c)(3) status, may we use a fiscal sponsor?
A: No. The organization that applies for funding must also receive and use the funds if awarded.

Q: Am I required to submit my application online using Nevada Humanities’ grant portal?
A: Yes. No hand-delivered, faxed, or email applications will be accepted. You can register and begin your application here.

Q: Do contractors count as paid staff?
A: Yes, if they directly support your humanities-based programs and operations. Please specify in your application the nature of your contractor’s work.

Q: How are applications reviewed and evaluated?
A: Applications will be processed by Nevada Humanities staff and evaluated by a special committee of the Nevada Humanities Board of Trustees, which will make recommendations to the full Nevada Humanities Board of Trustees for approval. Applications will be evaluated in the context of the overall pool of requests, considering:

- Strength of the organization’s humanities focus and program content
- Strength of the organization’s public facing humanities programming
- Strength of service to underserved demographics
- Impact of COVID-19 emergency on the organization
- The level of need identified in the application
- Demand and availability of funding
- Ability to ensure compliance with federal regulations guiding the use of federal funds

Priority will be given to organizations with annual budgets of $500,000 or less and those that serve underrepresented populations or communities, but all types and sizes of eligible organizations are welcome to apply. We regret that feedback cannot be given on draft applications or grant decisions.

Q: If my application is unsuccessful, may I reapply?
A: If your application is unsuccessful you may not reapply in this round of Nevada Humanities CARES funding, however, you may be eligible to apply for other future rounds of Nevada Humanities grant funding.

Grants
Q: Do we have to pay the money back?
A: No.

Q: Are matching funds required?
A: No. Nevada Humanities CARES grants are for general operating expenses only and do not require matching funds. Nevada Humanities will request that you voluntarily record your cost share in your final report to Nevada Humanities along with other data and information, but match or cost share is not a requirement of this grant.

Q: What is cost share?
A: Cost share is the portion of project costs not paid by federal funds during the grant period of performance. In short, more than one entity shares in the costs of the project with the grantor supplying some of the project funds and the grantee supplying the remainder of the project funds. Cost share funds may consist of applicant cash or third party in-kind contributions. This might include expenses not paid for by your Nevada Humanities CARES grant, including salary and benefits, facilities and other operating costs, and humanities program costs leveraged by your operating support grant. Note that you may not use federal funds as cost share.

Q: By what date does my organization need to expend the funding if my application is successful?
A: The Nevada Humanities CARES grant period of performance is July 15 – September 30, 2020. You must expend the allocated grant within this window of time, and you must expend all of the funds before September 30, 2020. Expenses that extend beyond the grant Period of Performance may be prorated for the duration of the grant Period of Performance (for example, insurance expenses may be included, but prorated only for the period of time covered by the grant Period of Performance).

Q: When will we be notified of our grant award?
A: Applicants will be notified of the status of their grant in mid-July.

Q: How will grant funds be delivered to our organization if our application is successful?
A: If your grant request is successful, you may choose to have the funds deposited directly into your organizational bank account or to receive a check mailed via USPS. You will be able to select your preferred method of delivery when you complete your Nevada Humanities Grant Agreement.

Q: How extensive is the reporting process associated with a Nevada Humanities CARES grant?
A: Organizations will be required to sign a Grant Agreement upon notification of funding. Funds will not be disbursed until a signed Grant Agreement is returned to Nevada Humanities. A final report confirming and describing the use of funds will be due on or before October 31, 2020. The final report will include:

- Basic budget and narrative report describing the use, impact, and outcomes of Nevada Humanities CARES grant funds
- Data including audience served, kinds of humanities programs implemented by the organization during the period of performance, number of people benefitting from Nevada Humanities
CARES grant funds, and number of jobs preserved or created with Nevada Humanities CARES grant funds

- Cost share leveraged by the funds awarded. Note that there is no match or cost share required for this grant, but cost share is requested
- Certification of compliance with federal regulations governing the expenditure and use of federal funds
- Letters from your organization to Nevada’s U.S. representatives and senators thanking them for supporting CARES Act relief funding to Nevada Humanities and your organization

Q: Where can I learn more about my organization’s responsibilities and compliance with the use of federal funds?

A: Nevada Humanities CARES grant funds are provided to Nevada Humanities by Congress and the National Endowment for the Humanities. To learn more about the responsibilities of award recipients visit the National Endowment for the Humanities here.