



# APPLICATION GUIDELINES

## Eligible Applicants

Any private, non-profit organization, public institutions of higher education, groups of three or more persons that form an unincorporated association for non-profit purposes, an ad hoc committee, or an individual may receive a grant. Applicants from outside the Northern Mariana Islands must have a substantial partnership with an organization within the NMI or support from a scholar within the NMI. Examples of eligible applicants include social service organizations, clubs, churches, state and local government agencies, business and professional groups, unions, schools, corporations, public radio and television stations, museums, historical societies, public libraries, art organizations, colleges, and universities.

Informal groups organized solely to submit a grant may also apply for funding. Applicants need not be incorporated as a non-profit organization or have tax-exempt status. However, the group must demonstrate that they are not "for profit" and can manage all aspects of the project adequately. The sponsoring organization and its members, upon receipt of Council funds, become fully liable for the responsible use of those funds. Any liability incurred by project participants is solely the responsibility of the participants, not of the Council. Applicants must be in good standing and must not have an active grant with the Council. UEI and SAM: Applicants must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number at the time of application and maintain active System for Award Management (SAM) registration with current information at all times. Visit [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) to obtain a UEI. Individuals who apply for a grant unrelated to any business or non-profit organization he/she may own or operate in his/her name is exempt from this







requirement. Individual applicants are only eligible for a planning grant.

## Eligible Projects








Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to lectures, exhibits, film and tape showings, newspaper publications, slide shows, workshops, panel discussions, conferences, and seminars. Research curriculum development projects also may be eligible for support. Applications for media projects should demonstrate cash grant support from third parties.

## Ineligible Projects and Items

The Council will not support:

-  Projects that involve direct action or the planning of direct action to resolve issues of public policy or concern.
-  Projects that influence an audience towards a single position or point of view, or that present a one-sided or biased treatment of an issue of public concern.
-  Scholarships or fellowships.
-  Courses of instruction that target a select limited audience.
-  Performances in the arts unless their primary role is to support discussion of issues of public policy, public concerns or cultural history, or an understanding of areas of the humanities.
-  Museum, historical organization, or library acquisitions unless they are small acquisitions directly related to the implementation of a public project funded by the Council and will be used extensively after completion of the project.



-  Building construction, acquisition or restoration costs, including historical preservation costs.
-  Equipment purchases unless absolutely vital to the project. (We urge applicants to cost-share or rent equipment.)
-  Projects that raise funds for profit or for commercial purposes.
-  Payment for food, alcoholic beverages, refreshments or entertainment for projects or project-related activities.
-  Activities that have political or religious purposes.
-  Funding general operations or administration of the applicant organization, including regular salaries.
-  The Council normally does not provide support for ongoing programs, although it will consider new humanities-related elements to ongoing programs.

### Grant Types

The Council offers two types of Community Grants. Regular grants are awards of up to \$15,000, however, award amounts will be contingent on available funding and the number and quality of other applications being considered. Each project requires a project director, a humanities scholar or area expert, and a fiscal agent. For planning grants only, the individual may serve as the project director and the fiscal officer. Planning Grants are awards of up to \$1,500 and are for planning and developing a project. Planning grants are for activities such as organizational meetings, long distance phone calls to engage scholars in projects, limited travel to other islands to discuss sites and procedures for public presentations, publicity in the media,

secretarial assistance, etc. Funds can also be used to support the inquiry of a humanities scholar into the worthiness of a proposed project as a public program in the humanities.

### Submission Deadlines

Applications for Regular and Planning grants are accepted two times a year in accordance with the following schedule:

#### FIRST GRANT CYCLE

Nov. 15: Grant Announcement  
Dec. 15: Mandatory Pre-application Workshop  
Jan. 15: Project/Grants Management Workshop (Optional)  
Mar. 15: Application Deadline @ 4:00 p.m.  
Mar. 31: Program Committee 1<sup>st</sup> Review  
Apr. 15: Program Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> Review  
Apr. 30: Board Review/Action

#### SECOND GRANT CYCLE

May 15: Grant Launch Announcement  
June 15: Mandatory Pre-Application Orientation  
(Dates vary for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota)  
July 15: Project/Grants Management Workshop (Optional)  
(Dates vary for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota)  
Sept 15: Application Deadline @ 4:00 p.m.  
Sept 30: Program Committee 1<sup>st</sup> Review  
Oct. 15: Program Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> Review  
Oct. 30: Board Review/Action

When a submission deadline falls on a weekend, the application must be received by the last working day of that month. Applications will not be considered officially received until they have been certified complete by staff.



## Submission Guidelines

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Submit a complete application packet (Sections I-V) by postal mail, email, or hand delivery by stated deadlines. Grant application packets submitted via postal mail must be postmarked on or before the deadline and sent to:

Northern Marianas Humanities Council  
P.O. Box 506437  
Saipan, MP 96950

Grant applications may be submitted via email as one PDF document to [info@nmhcouncil.org](mailto:info@nmhcouncil.org).

Hand-delivery submissions may be made to the Northern Marianas Humanities Council office at Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai, Saipan, CNMI.

## Application Process

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The Council strongly encourages applicants to consult with staff throughout the application process.

Requests for applications, application assistance, Council publications, or other program information should be directed to the Program Manager, Northern Marianas Humanities Council, (670) 235-4785 or [grants@nmhcouncil.org](mailto:grants@nmhcouncil.org).

The Community Grant Application Packet may also be downloaded from the Council's website: [www.nmhcouncil.org](http://www.nmhcouncil.org).

## Tips:



Regular Grant applicants must address all 7 project description subsections.



Planning Grant applicants must submit a project description in the form of a letter addressed to the Council's Executive Director detailing the planning activities to be undertaken to include: (a) times, dates, and places of planning activities; (b) the names and qualifications of the humanities scholar(s)/area expert(s) and an explanation of their role in planning and activities to be implemented.



Use Times New Roman, 11 pt. font for the body of the text and double spacing between lines of text.



Charts, tables, images, audio, and visual submissions are allowed.



There is no page limit, however, the project descriptions for Regular Grants are typically 5-8 pages. Be concise!



Consult with the Council's Program Manager throughout the process of preparing your application.



Use the self-assessment rubric to strengthen your project narrative.



## Section I. Applicant Information

**(1) Title of Project.** Your project title should paint a picture for the reader of the key idea(s) of your project. The words you use should clearly reflect the focus of your proposal. Limit your title to no more than 5 words.

**(2) Name of Applicant.** Use the full name of your organization if submitting on behalf of an



organization. Otherwise, use the Project Director's full legal name.

**(3) Type of Grant.** Indicate which grant you are applying for by checking the box for Planning or Regular

**(4) Type of Group or Individual.**

**(5) UEI #.** Applicants must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number at the time of application. Individuals and unincorporated groups are exempt from this requirement.

**(6)-(9) Email, Mailing, Phone.** Provide the addresses and phone numbers for your organization. If applying as an unincorporated group or individual, provide information here for the Project Director.

**(10) Amount Requested.** This is the total grant funds you are requesting in US dollars.

**(11) Amount of Cost Share.** This is the total amount of cash and in-kind support you and/or a non-federal partner will contribute to the project. This figure must be the same or higher than the amount requested.

**(12) Project Start Date.** Your project activities should begin a minimum of 30 days after the application submission deadline.

**(13) Project End Date.** The Council typically approves projects that do not exceed a period of one calendar year.

**(14) Project Director Information.** Complete and sign with a blue ink pen.

**(15) Fiscal Agent Information.** Complete and sign with a blue ink pen.

**(16) Project Summary.** This is a brief but concrete statement of the project goals, activities, and impact. It is a 2-3 sentence "elevator pitch" of your project. Your summary should not exceed the space provided.

## Section II. Project Description

A narrative describing your project is required and should be organized into the following subsections:

**(1). Goals, Outcomes, and Outputs:** Your project will be assessed based on how well its goals, outcomes, and outputs demonstrate clarity, specificity, and capacity to address humanities-related themes that are relevant to the CNMI community. Goals are clear broad statements describing desired change in the community resulting from your project. Your goals should be SMART or specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based. Each goal should be supported by one or more outcomes you hope to achieve. Outcomes are concrete and attainable changes in behavior, status, attitude, skill, knowledge, or circumstance in the community. Your outcomes can be described by answering the question: "What changes in behavior/skills do you want to see?" Outputs are the means through which you will achieve your project goals and outcomes. They are tangible and concrete activities and products of your project. Your output can be described by answering the question: "How will you achieve your outcomes and goals?". Indicate major milestones and provide a timeline for major activities. Important note on published works: subrecipients are required to provide an e-copy of the final published work to the Council. Subrecipients must agree to grant the Council an irrevocable, royalty-free, non-transferrable, non-exclusive right and license to use, reproduce, make derivative works, display, and perform publicly any copyrights or copyrighted material (including computer software and its documentation and/or databases) first developed and delivered under a sub-award. Subrecipients whose projects lead to published works in print media are required to provide 30 print copies to the Council and articulate



a plan for distributing additional print copies to CNMI-based libraries and repositories for public access.

**(2). Alignment of Goals and Outcomes to SMP:** Your project will be assessed based on its alignment with the [Council's Strategic Master Plan](#). Your project must be consistent with one or more of the goals and objectives of the Council's Strategic Master Plan (SMP). Describe how one or more of your project goals support or advance the Council's SMP.

**(3). Humanities Content:** Your project will be assessed based on how well it promotes and supports humanities content and/or employs humanities methods. (a) Explain how your project relates to one or more areas within the humanities. This is defined as academic areas that include history; philosophy; languages; linguistics; literature; archaeology; jurisprudence; history and philosophy of science; ethics; comparative religion; and those social sciences employing historical or philosophical approaches to their content. This last category may include cultural anthropology, sociology, political theory, international relations, and other subjects concerned with questions of human value; (b) Describe how your project will enhance the appreciation and understanding of the humanities; (c) Describe methods of the humanities to be used (i.e. critical thinking, group discussion, research, documentation, etc.) to provide ways to talk about, study, and analyze the themes of your project; (d) if your content touches on an issue, describe how your project will offer a balanced presentation, provide for a variety of views, and avoid bias or calling for a specific course of action.

**(4). Audience:** Your project will be assessed based on its likelihood to reach a substantial target audience within the CNMI. Who are your

intended beneficiaries of the project? How do you know there is a demand for your project outputs? How will you engage your audience throughout the project? How does your project format provide opportunities for active public participation?

**(5). Evaluation Plan:** Your project will be assessed based on the comprehensiveness of its evaluation plan and the methods used to measure success in relation to the project's goals, outcomes, and outputs. Develop a table in this section to link your project goals, outcomes, and outputs to performance indicators and means of assessment. A performance Indicator is the data that will demonstrate the change behavior described in your outcome statements. Performance indicators can be described by answering the question: "What does success look like?". Your means of assessment are the methods you plan to use to collect information to evaluate the extent to which you are achieving your goals and outcomes. Your evaluation plan should include the specific methods (i.e. surveys, pre-test/post-test, observations, focus groups, etc.) and the timeline for data collection, analysis, and reporting.

**(6). Personnel:** Your project will be assessed based on the capacity of personnel to execute their roles in an effective and timely fashion. Describe the relevant qualifications of the Project Director, Fiscal Agent, Humanities Scholar(s), and other key individuals and their respective roles in support of the project. Attach resumés or curriculum vitae if available.

**(7). Project and Funds Management:** Your project will be assessed based on the clarity, pragmatism, and feasibility of its plans for execution and management of grant funds. Describe how your group will manage project activities, including funds dedicated to the success of this project. Disclose any plans or intent to generate revenue from your



project. If you determine a need to charge a fee for access to your work, present a detailed plan that addresses how that income will be managed to advance your project goals. More information can be found about federal funds management requirements in the Title 2 Part 200 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Provide a brief history of your group leading up to this project, including aspects of your group or organization that will be leveraged to ensure project success.

### **Section III. Project Budget (SEE FORM)**

#### **Cost Share**

Fill out and complete the Cost Share Table as part of your application. Applicants must demonstrate that they are able to provide at least 50% of the total cost of the project in the form of cash or non-cash "in-kind" contributions by the applicant and non-federal third parties. As a rule, the Council will fund up to one-half the total cost of a project.

#### **Project Budget**

Fill out and complete the Project Budget Table to itemize project costs and distinguish between costs to be covered by grant funds (NMHC Cost) and costs to be covered by the applicant (Subrecipient costs). Applicants should review relevant sections of [Title 2, Part 200, Subpart E \(Cost Principles\) of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) for allocating project costs and determining if these costs are allowable. Cost categories listed on the table are typical project costs. Use the "Other" cost category in the table to itemize other necessary, allowable project costs.

### **Section IV. Project Budget Narrative**

Your project will be assessed based on how well the proposed spending plan presents a thorough accounting of how grant dollars will be used, with reasonable cost estimates, appropriately

proportioned compensation costs, and extent to which costs are allowable.

The Project Budget Narrative supplements the Project Budget Table by providing brief descriptions for each budget item. Please ensure that you provide the basis for and computation breakdown of your costs. Project applicants should present realistic costs and only request funds absolutely essential for the project. Project Budget Narratives should be organized in the order in which major cost categories appear in the Project Budget Table, and should distinguish between costs covered by the applicant vs. costs to be covered by the Council.

#### **Advertising & Public Relations (2 CFR § 200.421).**

Advertising costs typically reflect expenses for the use of advertising media to recruit project participants and promote information about your project to your target audiences. Public relations costs may include expenses for the use of advertising media to communicate and promote awareness of your project's findings, results, or achievements to the general public. Here is an example of providing a detailed justification for Advertising & Public Relations costs:

The project will recruit 25 students to participate in our writing workshops and will use print media, radio, email, and social media to promote the application and selection criteria for this opportunity.

#### **Applicant Share**

Facebook post boost budget (15-day boost to NMI community) = \$25





#### Council Share

Print ad in local newspaper (1/3 page, full color @ \$411/run x 3 runs) = \$1,233

Radio ad on local radio station (30-second spot, 6 spots/day @ \$15/spot for 10 days) = \$900

#### **Compensation (2 CFR § 200.430).**

Compensation costs are payments to employees, including key project staff, for services in support of the project. List the position title of employees and project staff, and a brief description of their roles in support of project activities. The compensation for these persons should be calculated by the number of hours or days, or the percent of time spent on project activities, multiplied by a fixed rate of pay, for example; 100 hours x \$10/hr. or 5 days x \$50/day. Rates should be based upon the usual fee or the fair market value of the services provided. If staff perform multiple functions in the project (for instance, a project director might also be a humanities scholar who gives a lecture), then the amount of pay for each function should be calculated separately.

To the extent possible, compensation for key project staff should be in-kind donated contributions. No more than one-third of your request for grant funds should comprise compensation costs. Furthermore, the Council will not fund regular salaries of employees from other organizations.

The cost of fringe benefits come under compensation costs and are generally allowable if they are part of your organization's established policies. These costs should be computed using an established standard rate. In all cases, the applicant organization is responsible for any salary

benefits and applicable income taxes required by law.

#### **Conferences (2 CFR § 200.432).**

The cost of hosting meetings, workshops, seminars, or training involving project participants for the primary purpose of disseminating technical information fall under this category. This includes rental of facilities, costs of meals and refreshments, local transportation, and other items incidental to hosting such conferences. Itemize these costs and provide a justification to demonstrate they are appropriate and necessary in the context of your project's scope of work and programmatic activities.

#### **Materials & Supplies (2 CFR § 200.453).**

In general, materials and supplies for your project with a cost of \$200 or less per unit fall under this category, including associated shipping expenses. Small electronic accessories such as memory sticks may fall under this category. Computers and electronic devices, machinery, furniture, fixtures, and items valued above \$200 are considered equipment.

#### **Participant Support (2 CFR § 200.456).**

Participant support costs are items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects.

#### **Professional Services (2 CFR § 200.459).**

This category is reserved for the costs of services performed by individuals or organizations, other than costs associated with services provided by the applicant's officers and employees, or key project staff. These services must be performed by individuals or entities with the necessary capacity, expertise, or skills to complete one or more aspects



of the project's scope of work. Describe the professional services required for the success of your project and whether these services will be provided 'for hire' or as honoraria. A 'for hire' payment is for services for which fees are traditionally charged and determined by the service provider. This arrangement is contractual in nature with the service provider legally bound to provide services in exchange for payment by the applicant based on a verbal or written agreement. An honoraria is a small payment for services for which fees are not legally or traditionally required. An honoraria is a token of appreciation for a service that is usually done for free. The amounts of each must be reasonable and fair, though there is no simple formula to determine a set amount in each case. In the past, and depending on what function they fulfilled, honoraria have ranged from \$50 per day to as much as \$200 for a public presentation. Panelists or moderators normally receive less than those making speeches or other public presentations. Whatever rate of pay is determined reasonable and necessary, the applicant is responsible for establishing a responsible relationship with the service provider. If the Council judges a project worthwhile but believes that particular service fees are too high, the Council may agree to fund only a portion of the fee. The Council may consider extraordinary fee payments for speakers of particular excellence and national reputation to enhance public understanding of the humanities.

#### **Publications and Printing (2 CFR § 200.461).**

For our purposes, publication is defined as the act of making information and stories available to the public in a printed or electronic form. Publication costs for electronic and print media, including distribution, promotion, and general handling are allowable. Costs associated with producing a book or other literary material (i.e., professional editing

services, layout and graphic design, indexing, etc.), a podcast or film (costumes, audio/visual recording, sound design, graphic design, color grading, editing, etc.) should be allocated across other appropriate cost categories.

#### **Rental Costs of Real Property and Equipment (2 CFR § 200.465).**

The rental of commercial or other spaces (which may include utilities) for project activities is allowable. Equipment rental costs are allowable and encouraged in lieu of equipment purchases. *The rental of any property owned by any individuals or entities affiliated with the applicant is unallowable.* Equipment purchases with grant funds are discouraged and rarely approved. The Council may approve the purchase of equipment to support grant activities when, upon request and in writing the applicant: a) justifies to the Council's satisfaction that the equipment is essential in meeting project objectives; b) establishes that rental of such equipment is not available in the Commonwealth; and c) provides to the Council an acceptable plan for the final disposition of the equipment at the end of the project's period of performance in accordance with the Council's policy on Equipment Purchase and Disposition of Equipment.

#### **Travel (2 CFR § 200.475).**

Travel costs are the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by the applicant's employees or key project staff who are in travel status conducting project-related activities. Provide a narrative justification describing the travel staff members will perform. List where travel will be undertaken, number of trips planned, who will be making the trips, and approximate dates. Travel bookings should be made in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.475 or policies established by the applicant's organization, whichever is more stringent. In the





absence of such policies, use the following as a guide: If travel is by air, use the basic least expensive unrestricted economy class fare as an estimate. If travel is by private vehicle, provide the number of miles at 50 cents per mile; If per diem and lodging is to be paid, indicate the number of days and amount of daily per diem, as well as the number of nights and estimated cost of lodging. Include the cost of ground transportation, when applicable.

Use Federal per diem rates, which includes a ceiling for lodging and meals. Go to <https://www.travel.dod.mil/Travel-Transportation-Rates/Per-Diem/Per-Diem-Rate-Lookup/> to lookup per diem rates by location.

**Other Costs.** All expenses (except indirect costs) that do not fit into the categories above should be itemized under "Other". List these costs in the Project Budget Table using cost categories defined in [Title 2, Part 200, Subpart E \(Cost Principles\) of the Code of Federal Regulations](#). Provide a detailed description and justification for these costs in your budget narrative.

**Indirect Costs (2 CFR § 200.414).** Indirect costs are those costs incurred for common or joint objectives that are not easily assigned to one project or the other. Typical examples of indirect costs for many non-profit organizations include depreciation or use allowances on buildings and equipment, the costs of operating and maintaining facilities such as a library, and general (non-project) administration and general expenses such as processing checks.

The Council may support a portion of the indirect costs incurred by an organization in the execution of a funded project. Organizations are eligible to request for indirect costs in an amount equal to an established rate with the federal government.

Organizations without a negotiated rate with the federal government may request for an amount equal to the de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs. Applicants who apply for indirect costs are required to include in their applications some verification of the formula used to determine the indirect costs listed in the budget.

#### **Section V. Scholar's Form (SEE FORM)**

This form should be filled out and signed by the Humanities Scholar or area expert. It should also provide information on the scholar's/area expert's professional qualifications, his or her role in the project, and the approach to be taken.

#### **Section VI. Self-Assessment (SEE FORM)**

This rubric should be completed by the applicant. The Council recommends that applicants consider improving any sections graded below "Very Good" before submitting a final application.

#### **Application Review**

Following submission, all applications undergo initial review by staff to ensure that the proposed project is eligible, that it is consistent with the Council's Strategic Master Plan, that the budget items are allowable, and that all required information is included. Any missing items will be brought to the applicant's attention by staff. Applications will not be considered officially received until they have been certified complete by staff.

Applications certified as complete will be presented to the Council's Program Committee.



This Committee will vote to either recommend approval or disapproval. Program committee recommendations will then be presented to the Council's full board for final funding decisions.

The Council may approve an application without change, approve with stipulated changes, or disapprove the application. The Council may suggest changes to proposals that have potential. Such recommendation or action, however, does not imply that the revised and resubmitted proposal will be approved and funded.

#### Grant Award Notification

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Official notification is provided to applicants when an award decision is made. If the project proposal is approved, the applicant will receive a Notice of Award and enter a contractual agreement that obligates the applicant to complete all project activities in accordance with the schedule outlined in the proposal and approved by the Council.