

## Writing a NEH Fellowship proposal

<b>General Recommendations</b>
Read the guidelines thoroughly & refer to them while writing
Call or email the NEH if you have questions
Read samples of funded projects, available on the NEH site
Address NEH's evaluation criteria.
Register & submit well ahead of deadline to avoid problems on web or grants.gov
<b>** The intellectual merit of the proposal is most important.**</b>
Discuss your project with others in & out of your department. Consider their feedback.
Draft your application early.
Present evidence why the NEH should give you money to pursue your project.
Demonstrate the likelihood of completing the project, even if you may not finish until after the grant period.
The two-page cv shows that you are the person to do this project.
Workplan: Describe how you'll spend your time. Is there enough work for the fellowship period?
Make sure that the workplan isn't dependent on something beyond your control.
Ask for the right amount of time. For fellowships: asking for half a year instead of a full year won't make you competitive.
The abstract should be a useful summary. It will represent your project as it moves from one panel to the next.
The bibliography should include key and recent texts. If you're working in a foreign language that you read, the bibliography should include works in that language.
Letters of recommendation should come from scholars in your field, but not necessarily from your institution. The letters must be in support of your project.
Although you may not have published a book and don't have a contract, show that you have thought about publication: List the presses that you have in mind.
<b>Explain how you will contribute to the scholarship. ~Why should reviewers care about your proposed research?~</b>
<b>Proposal Writing</b>
Write a persuasive application, not an essay.
All parts of your application should form a united argument for funding.
Write for specialists and non-specialists. Therefore, <b>AVOID JARGON:</b> <i>'Nothing will turn reviewers off as fast as jargon.'</i>
Demonstrate the uniqueness of your project & that it will change thinking on this topic
Provide a context for your work.
Identify connections to other areas.
Demonstrate rather than assert.
Broaden your argument. "The broader the significance, the better."
Clarity of expression and feasibility of project are essential.
Avoid including judgments about your own work.
Don't say that your work is <i>'nuanced'</i> and <i>'complex'</i> – let the reviewers decide.