



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF RESEARCH
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 23, 2007

TO: Participants, NEH Application-Writing Workshop hosted by the Center for Collaborative Study in the Humanities at Georgia State University

FROM: Russell M. Wyland, NEH Assistant Director for Research

SUBJECT: Materials for upcoming workshop

The NEH application-writing workshop hosted by the Center for Collaborative Study in the Humanities at Georgia State University will be held on Friday, April 20. The workshop will be divided in two sessions: a general information session at 10 a.m. and a mock review panel at 11:30 a.m. Materials for the latter are attached. These include two sample Fellowships applications. For reasons of confidentiality, I have omitted the résumés and the letters of recommendation for this exercise. If you are not interested in individual grants such as Fellowships, I encourage you to participate in the workshop nonetheless. Panel procedures across the NEH are very similar, and the concerns of peer review panelists are remarkably consistent from one program to another. I have chosen to use individual grant applications because they have the virtues of being short enough to allow easy distribution and group evaluation. If you are interested in the particulars of others, please don't be shy about asking.

As you read these applications, please keep in mind that they have been selected for a particular purpose, that is, to give workshop participants a chance to consider different proposals with different approaches. They are not intended to serve as models to be slavishly followed, nor are they intended, by virtue of their subjects, to suggest particular areas of special Endowment interest. Applications for NEH awards are as diverse, in both subject matter and methodology, as the applicants who submit them.

Before reviewing the applications, please read the "Evaluation Criteria" following this memo. Then evaluate the applications according to the criteria. For each application, indicate an initial rating using the scale provided and write two or three sentences about the virtues--if any--and shortcomings--if any--you've found. The ratings and comments will be the starting point for our discussion about what does and doesn't "work" in applications.

Again, thank you for your participation. I look forward to my GSU visit.

If you have any questions in advance of the workshop, do not hesitate to let me know. My email address is rwyl@neh.gov.

Additional materials

Evaluation Criteria (below)

Useful Links and Rating Scale (below)

Application 1: "The City Adorned" (attached)

Application 2: "The Politics of Literacy in Shenandoah National Park Letters" (attached)

Evaluation Criteria

Guidelines

Fellowships are opportunities for individuals to pursue advanced work in the humanities. Applicants may be faculty or staff members of colleges or universities, or of primary or secondary schools, and scholars and writers.

Projects may contribute to scholarly knowledge or to the general public's understanding of the humanities. Recipients might eventually produce scholarly articles, a monograph on a specialized subject, a book on a broad topic, an archaeological site report, a translation, an edition, or other scholarly tools.

Fellowships support projects that can be completed during the tenure of an award or those that are part of a long-term endeavor.

Applicants need not have advanced degrees, but only scholars who have completed their formal academic training are eligible to apply. NEH Fellowships do not support projects to study teaching methods or theories. Neither do they support surveys of courses and programs or the preparation of institutional curricula.

The following criteria are used in evaluating applications for NEH Fellowships:

Evaluators are asked to apply the following criteria in evaluating applications:

1. The intellectual significance of the project to the humanities, including its potential contribution to knowledge and learning.
2. The quality or promise of quality of the applicant's work as an interpreter of the humanities.
3. The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project.
4. The feasibility of the proposed plan of work and the likelihood that the applicant will complete the project.

Useful Links

<http://www.neh.gov> - NEH homepage on the Internet

<http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/fellowships.html> - NEH Fellowships Guidelines

<http://www.neh.gov/whoweare/overview.html> - overview of the Endowment

<http://www.neh.gov/news/awards/fellowships2007.html> - list of recently funded fellowships

Rating Scale used by panelists

E - Excellent

E/VG

VG – Very Good

VG/G

G – Good

G/S

S – Satisfactory

S/N

N – Not Recommended