



Frequently Asked Questions



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT
FOR THE HUMANITIES

1. What is CARES Act funding? Where does it come from?

As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which became law on March 27, 2020, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) received \$75 million to support museums, libraries and archives, historic sites, and other cultural nonprofits that have been financially impacted by the coronavirus. The Pennsylvania Humanities Council (PHC) received a portion of these emergency relief funds to distribute to the state-wide public humanities community.

2. How much will PHC distribute?

PHC will distribute \$750,000 to eligible humanities organizations for general operations and programs. Most awards will not exceed \$10,000, however, exceptions may be made.

3. Who is eligible for a PHC CARES grant?

PHC CARES grant funds are intended for 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations with a humanities-based mission in Pennsylvania who are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19.

Eligible nonprofit organizations can include: libraries, museums, historic sites, preservation and historical societies, and community and cultural organizations with a significant humanities focus.

4. What are the humanities? What does it mean to have a mission that is solely focused on the humanities?

PHC CARES grants are intended for organizations whose core mission and programming focus on the humanities. At PHC, we believe the humanities are a pathway to better understand the human experience by providing insight into ourselves, our communities and our worlds. They can inspire discovery and learning, spur critical thinking and reflection, provide important historical context, open our eyes to different points of view and challenge us to take action. Typically, humanities fields of study are (but are not limited to) history, literature, film studies, art history and criticism, philosophy, anthropology, archaeology, cultural studies, folklore studies, gender and sexuality studies, jurisprudence, languages and linguistics, music history and criticism, political science, religious studies, sociology, theater history and criticism.

5. I am an arts organization. Am I eligible?

No. PHC CARES grant funds are from the National Endowment from the Humanities, and according to their guidelines cannot support organizations whose missions center on the creation or performance of art, including creative writing, autobiographies, memoirs, and creative

nonfiction. Arts organizations should visit the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts [website](#) to learn more about funding resources related to COVID-19.

6. I am a library. Am I eligible?

Yes, Pennsylvania public libraries are eligible for PHC CARES grants. Your headquarters or administrative entity should apply. Foundations or friends groups with 501(c)3 status may apply on behalf of your library as well. Eligibility is based on criteria for the individual library. Libraries associated with colleges and universities are not eligible.

7. Are colleges, universities, or academic departments eligible?

No. The CARES Act provided \$14 billion for colleges and universities, millions of which will be distributed to Pennsylvania colleges and universities to aid in relief. PHC will prioritize humanities-based organizations that may not have access to other significant funding sources.

8. I am not a 501(c)(3). Can I use a fiscal agent or sponsor to apply for a grant?

No. Fiscal agents are not permitted to receive CARES Act funding.

9. The PHC CARES guidelines state that PHC will prioritize humanities-based organizations that engage underrepresented communities. What does this mean?

PHC is interested in funding humanities-based organizations who make an intentional effort to engage with and include underrepresented audiences in programming. Underrepresented groups vary in each community and are traditionally under-resourced in the humanities. These groups can include people who live in rural areas; people of color; people who identify as LGBTQIA+; people with disabilities; people who identify as immigrants or refugees; and people whose first (or only) language is not English.

10. How will final grant awards be determined?

PHC is committed to equitable grantmaking and considers geographic diversity and the importance of reaching underrepresented communities in its funding decisions. PHC will prioritize organizations serving and led by members of communities traditionally under-resourced in the humanities, especially people of color, people experiencing poverty, rural residents, immigrants or refugees, youth, seniors, LGBTQIA+, and other groups.

Applications will be scored, and awards calculated, based upon a strong demonstration of core humanities programs, as well as the impact to services, operations, and financial sustainability due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most grants will not exceed \$10,000, however, exceptions may be made based on need and availability of funding.

11. What can funding be used for?

This funding is reserved to provide relief and recovery to humanities organizations facing financial hardship due to COVID-19, and are intended for general operations and public humanities programming. Funds may be used for programmatic humanities offerings, whether in-person or virtual. Types of eligible operation expenses funding can be used for are (but not limited) to rent/mortgage, utilities, payroll and other operating expenses that impact the viability of the organization. Costs associated with remote work, virtual programming, and enhanced facility cleaning and sanitation and the purchase of necessary equipment, software, and technology subscriptions for these purposes are also allowed. Funds must be allocated to budget line items that are not receiving other federal funds, including NEH and NEA grants.

12. Are there restrictions on activities and expenses?

Federal regulations **prohibit the use of funds** for any of the following: activities that promote a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view; advocacy of social or political action; support of specific public policies or legislation; lobbying; purchase of land or facilities, construction, or renovation; purchase of alcohol; prizes, awards, or scholarships; foreign travel; fundraising; endowment contributions. Re-granting of these funds is strictly prohibited.

13. Is a match required for the PHC CARES grant?

No match is required for this opportunity. However, organizations that can match are encouraged to do so.

14. What is a DUNS number and how do I get one?

A DUNS number, which stands for Data Universal Numbering System, is a free, unique nine-digit number issued by Dun & Bradstreet to a single business entity that allows the federal government to track grantees. To receive federal funding, grantees must obtain and retain a DUNS number. A DUNS number may be obtained from D&B by telephone at 866.705.5711 or [online](#). It typically takes one to five business days to get your DUNS number. However, due to the pandemic wait times may increase. We encourage applicants to start this process as soon as possible.

15. What is the deadline for the PHC CARES grant? When will I hear if I received the award?

Organizations can apply for the PHC CARES grant from June 1 - June 21, 2020 at 11:59pm. PHC will notify applicants of funding decisions by July 15, 2020.

16. If I am awarded a PHC CARES grant, when can I expect the funds? If I'm no longer in the office, how do I receive my funds?

Once all grant paperwork is signed and received by PHC, disbursement of funds typically takes about 2 weeks. It is recommended that, if possible, organizations enable electronic funds transfer to expedite this process. PHC will ask for banking information during the grant contracting process to ensure funds are distributed in a timely manner.

17. When must funds be used by? Is there a particular start date for using funds?

Funds can be used as soon as the proper grant paperwork is signed and received by PHC. Funds must be used by September 30, 2020.

18. Are there reporting requirements?

Yes, grantees will be required to submit a report by September 30, 2020. PHC will provide the report with your grant packet. Organizations should expect to report on the impact of funding on their organization and how funds were used.

19. I received a PPP Loan or am applying/receiving funding from other sources. Will it impact my chances of getting a PHC CARES grant?

No, but we do ask applicants to provide information on sources of other funding and relief support they are receiving or pursuing so that reviewers get a full picture of need and steps the organization is taking to respond to the crisis. If funded, PHC CARES awards must be allocated to budget line items that are not receiving other federal funds, including NEH and NEA grants.

20. Who do I contact if I have questions?

PHC staff are happy to provide guidance on determining eligibility, completing an application, addressing narrative or budgetary questions, as well as troubleshooting technical difficulties.

Please direct any questions to Celeste Vargo, Grants Manager and Program Administrator at cvargo@pahumanities.org.