

CThumanities

PROJECT GRANTS

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GUIDELINES

Connecticut Humanities Fund (CTHF) Project Grants support a wide range of community-oriented, public-serving projects that help us understand and appreciate human history, culture, values, and beliefs. They allow us to analyze our complex society and to make thoughtful decisions based on inquiry, evaluation, and empathy.

The Project Grant line supports projects from planning through implementation, and the flexible funding range allows organizations to develop projects of all sizes. There is one application for both planning and implementation phases, with some different requirements.

Project Grants may be awarded for exhibitions, discussion-based public programs, interpretive digital media projects, documentary films, curriculum development, local history tours, K-12 education programs, and community reading projects.

All Project Grant proposals must demonstrate significant humanities expertise and content and articulate clearly defined goals that will be achieved during the project. Implementation phase projects must be:

- Open to the public
- Free or low cost to attend
- Clearly interpretive and based in the humanities

Only one (1) Project Grant can be open at a time. Applicants may only apply for one (1) Project Grant at any application deadline.

Organizations may receive a maximum of two (2) implementation phase Project Grants in any three (3) consecutive Connecticut Humanities (CTH) fiscal years (July 1 to June 30). This policy only involves implementation phase Project Grants and does not apply to any other CTH grant line including planning phase Project Grants, Capacity Grants, or Mini Grants.

1.1 FUNDING PRIORITIES

CT Humanities (CTH) gives priority to projects that:

- Include significant humanities expertise and content;
- Explore topics and stories in an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible manner;
- And do one or more of the following:
 - Help cultural institutions create programs and resources aligned with state education standards that enrich K-12 classroom learning;
 - Support civic and community learning opportunities that encourage dialogue and critical thinking in order to strengthen and promote our civic health;

- Foster community collaboration in service to the public among organizations, groups, and/or municipalities;
- Increase an organization's internal capacity, adaptability, and resiliency;
- Ensure access to the project's content and resources beyond the length of the grant.

Projects that help the public better understand and contextualize community issues or current events, relate the past to the present, and/or are Connecticut focused are encouraged.

If your project involves or interprets Indigenous history or cultures, please also note [CT Humanities' Indigenous Values Statement](#).

1.2 WHO CAN APPLY

An applicant organization must:

- Be incorporated in the state of Connecticut for at least one year as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization governed by a board of directors that meets regularly **OR** be a Connecticut municipality **OR** be a Connecticut-based federally or State recognized tribe
- Provide significant programming and/or services to the public on a regular basis, including open hours and special events, or function as a professional service organization that supports humanities program providers
- Be in compliance on all terms and conditions of all previous Connecticut Humanities grants

The following are not eligible for funding:

- For-profit organizations
- Individuals
- Agencies of the State of Connecticut, including state universities, state parks and historic sites
- Organizations not in compliance with terms and conditions of previous Connecticut Humanities grants

1.3 FUNDING LIMITS AND PROJECT DURATION

Planning phase Project Grants range in amount from \$5,000 to \$25,000. Implementation phase Project Grants range in amount from \$5,000 to \$35,000. All Project Grant project periods are twenty-four (24) months in duration, beginning on the day the CTH Board of Directors vote to adjudicate awards (see section 1.8 below).

All CTH grant funded and matching activities must occur and be completed within the twenty-four (24) month project period.

1.4 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Salary and wages for work directly related to the project
- Honoraria and fees for consultants, experts, and other outside professionals
- Travel expenses directly related to the project
- Technical design services including graphic, exhibition, or website design

- Expenses for video recordings, audio recordings, or photography used in the project
- Purchase and/or rental of equipment, software, and intellectual property directly related to the project
- Film screening fees
- Performer fees
- Materials used to build exhibitions
- Transportation between sites
- Book purchases for titles used in Community Read programs
- Speaker and performer travel expenses
- Venue rental
- Office supplies and photocopying or printing of materials (excluding book printing)
- Advertising and marketing expenses, including postage, production of promotional materials, and advertising expenses
- Project evaluation expenses

1.5 MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

Project Grants must be matched dollar for dollar.

Matching funds for Project Grants may come from in-kind contributions, the applicant organization's own cash, or external funders. Matching funds are defined as:

1. In-kind contributions made to the applicant organization including:
 - Donated services, including volunteer time dedicated to the project
 - Donated materials and supplies
 - Donated or loaned equipment
 - Donated or loaned rental space not owned by the grantee
2. Cash contributed by applicants including:
 - Fees paid directly to consultants on this project
 - Materials, supplies and equipment purchased exclusively for the project
 - Rental fees for equipment and space
 - Contracted services
 - Cash from partners
 - Salaries and wages of applicant and partner staff dedicated to this project
3. External cash contributions from donors and/or third parties specifically for this project in the form of grants, gifts or bequests. (Note: If an admission or registration fee is required to attend a grant-funded activity those fees may **not** be counted as an external cash contribution.) For a full description of eligible external cash contributions and how they will need to be documented for implementation phase projects by the end of the grant period, [please review this document](#).

Please note that funding from the State of Connecticut cannot be used for matching purposes.

For implementation phase Project Grants:

- Requests of \$24,999 or less must demonstrate at least 25% of requisite matching funds from external funding sources.
- Requests of \$25,000 or more must demonstrate at least 50% of requisite matching funds from external funding sources.

For implementation phase Project Grants, a revenue plan identifying anticipated sources of matching funds from external funding sources must be submitted with the grant application. Matching funds from external sources must be secured and received by the applicant organization prior to the end of the CTH grant period to ensure full final payment of a CTH grant award.

1.6 FUNDING EXCLUSIONS

- Projects advocating a particular political, philosophical, religious or ideological point of view or a particular program of social action or change
- Projects intended primarily to create musical compositions, dance, paintings, sculpture, poetry, short stories, novels or other artistic products
- Renovation, restoration, rehabilitation or construction of historic sites
- Conservation treatment that is not directly related to a CTH-funded exhibition
- Book printing or publication
- Curricula for classes not accessible to the general public
- Endowments
- Individual fellowships, graduate education or university-based projects that require participants to register for academic credit
- Acquisition of artifacts, works of art or documents
- Capital improvements to applicant site and/or facilities
- Purchases of capital equipment, buildings or land
- Repayment of loans or debt service
- Costs associated with social events or fundraising activities
- Purchase of food, alcohol, refreshments or catering services, including food purchased during travel or as a per diem
- Retroactive funding for activities undertaken before the start of the proposed grant period
- Undocumented expenses
- Ticket or admission fee underwriting or reimbursement
- Indirect costs or overhead expenses at the applicant organization, including, but not limited to, insurance, taxes, administrative and grant management fees, employee benefits and site operating expenses
- Honoraria, stipends or professional fees for applicant organization's board members

- Honoraria, stipends or professional fees for elected officials or declared candidates seeking public office
- Honoraria, stipends or professional fees for active CTH board members and staff

1.7 ADDITIONAL REQUIRED INFORMATION

Project Grant applications must include:

- A CV or resume of up to 3 pages for major humanities experts that are contributing to and/or helping to guide and shape your project for whom CTH grant funding is being sought. These should demonstrate appropriate skills and/or expertise and experience to carry out their role in the project.
- Letters of commitment from the project's key partners and collaborators, if applicable (a template is linked within the application)
- A project budget using the CTH Budget Form (linked within the application)
- The applicant organization's current board list with names & contact information in PDF format*
- The applicant organization's current year operating budget and previous year operating budget*

*If you are applying through a fiscal sponsor, your application must include a board list and operating budget for both the fiscal agent organization and your organization.

1.8 APPLICATION DEADLINE SCHEDULE

Project Grant applications are accepted twice a year and are due to CTH by 11:59pm on November 1, 2026 and May 1, 2027. Award notifications for applications received by the November deadline are made by the first business day of February, and award notifications applications received by the May deadline are made by the first business day of July.

1.9 HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted using [Connecticut Humanities' online grant portal](#).

Before applying, it is highly recommended that organizations contact CTH Grants staff (grants@cthumanities.org) to discuss your project idea, especially for first-time applicants. If Grants staff are contacted within a week of the deadline, they may not have the capacity to schedule a meeting.

If you would like an optional draft review, you must save your draft in the CTH Grant Portal and email staff at grants@cthumanities.org requesting a draft review no later than two weeks before the application deadline.

Both consults and draft reviews are done in order of requests received and pending CTH staff availability.

Please note the following application errors that will cause an application not to be considered by the review committee:

- Applications submitted from an ineligible organization (see Section 1.2)
- Applications from organizations that have not submitted the final report for an existing open Project Grant by the application deadline
- Applications for projects unrelated to the humanities
- Incomplete applications
- Applications that do not use the required CTH Budget Form (linked within the application)
- Applications with project budgets where 25% or less of the CTH funding requested is for Eligible Expenses (see Section 1.3). Please note that grants awarded containing items on the Funding Exclusions list will have those items and amount requested removed from their award amount (see Section 1.6)
- Applications with project budgets containing 25% or less of the requisite matching fund requirements (see Section 1.4). Please note that grants awarded containing insufficient matching funds will have their award reduced accordingly
- Applications for implementation phase projects that do not demonstrate the required external cash match (see Section 1.4)
- Applications that are submitted after the application deadline or are left in draft mode but not submitted by the application deadline

No edits may be made to an application once the grant deadline has passed. Please review your application carefully before submitting it.

If an applicant experiences technical difficulties when submitting their application, the applicant must reach out to CTH Grants Staff either by phone or email (grants@cthumanities.org) within 12 hours of the grant deadline to alert CTH of the technical difficulties. Incomplete applications where the applicant organization did not contact Grants Staff within 12 hours of the grant deadline will not be considered.

For more information on the application process, visit: <https://cthumanities.org/grant-application-process/>

1.10 POST-SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- For information about the grants management process, visit: <https://cthumanities.org/grant-application-process/#grant-approved>

- You can also find resources for grantees, including a checklist of tasks to complete post-award, a Public Relations Toolkit, and information about your final report on our Resources for Grantees page: <https://cthumanities.org/resources/>
- Please note that your project may have specific public relations requirements based on your project's subject matter. Literature programs will be co-branded with the CT Center for the Book, the state affiliate of the National Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, to provide increased visibility. These instructions will be sent along with the award email.
- All awarded grants are subject to CT Humanities' Intellectual Property Policy. You can learn more about this policy and how it impacts your projects here: <https://cthumanities.org/intellectual-property-policy/>