

# Indiana Humanities American Rescue Plan (ARP) Grants Frequently Asked Questions

## Who's providing funding for Indiana Humanities' ARP grants?

As part of the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP), approved by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Joseph R. Biden, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) received \$135 million to assist humanities organizations and other cultural institutions affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The NEH has in turn allotted a significant portion of the funds to its network of nonprofit state humanities councils, including Indiana Humanities, for further distribution across their regions.

## I see that there are two kinds of ARP grants. What's the difference between them?

Indiana Humanities is indeed offering two types of ARP grants.

- The first grant is an Operating Support Grant. The purpose of this grant is to provide organizations with funding for general operations (salaries, rent, utilities, etc.). This grant is intended only for organizations whose core mission is to provide the public with humanities programming (see the question below to learn more about what we mean by humanities programming).
- The second grant is a Programming and Capacity-Building Grant. The purpose of this grant is to provide a wide range of nonprofits with funding so that they can create and deliver programs that use the humanities to help them and their community “prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the coronavirus.” Organizations can also use these funds to assess the impact of the pandemic and to grow their capacity to provide humanities programming to the public based on what they've experienced and learned in the past year and a half (activities could center on strategic planning, employee training or similar development programs).

## What are the humanities? What does it mean to provide public humanities programming?

When defining the humanities, we use [guidelines provided by the NEH](#). According to the NEH, the humanities include the following disciplines:

- Literature
- Language
- Linguistics
- History
- Philosophy
- Archaeology
- Comparative religion
- Jurisprudence
- Ethics
- The theory, history and criticism of the arts
- Social sciences that have humanistic content and/or employ humanistic methods

Organizations that provide public humanities programming develop and offer to their community activities and events that center on humanities topics. These could come in the form of exhibitions, tours, reading-and-discussion programs, lectures or presentations, facilitated conversations, documentaries, podcasts or other media. Generally speaking, the programs must be open and available to the public at large (that is, everyone in the community should have access and be able to attend).

## **Who's eligible to receive Indiana Humanities ARP grants?**

That depends. Each of the two grants has slightly different eligibility requirements.

To be eligible for an Operating Support Grant, an organization must focus its mission on providing humanities programming to the public, and it must demonstrate that it has been adversely impacted by the Covid crisis. Eligible organizations include:

- Historical societies/heritage groups
- Museums that focus on humanities subjects
- Historical homes and sites
- College/university-affiliated humanities centers and institutes that provide public programs
- Other nonprofits whose core mission centers on developing and implementing humanities programming

Organizations that are not eligible for operating support grants include arts groups, religious organizations, museums that don't focus on the humanities (e.g., science museums), social-service agencies (e.g., food pantries, homeless shelters, etc.), government entities (including public libraries), K-12 schools, and colleges and universities (except humanities centers/institutes that provide public programming).

To be eligible for a Programming and Capacity-Building Grant, an organization must be a nonprofit. Its core mission doesn't necessarily have to focus on the humanities, but the organization must use the funds to provide and/or enhance programming that does involve the humanities. When applying, the organization should describe the proposed programming and how it relates to the humanities. If seeking funds for capacity building, the organization should describe how the funds will enable it to better provide humanities programming to its community. In both cases, the organization should submit a detailed budget and explain how the grant will help it prepare for, prevent, respond to or recover from the pandemic.

## **I see that libraries can't apply for the ARP Operating Support Grant this year. When you provided operating support through your CARES Grant in 2020, libraries could apply. Why the change?**

Indiana Humanities is not providing ARP Operating Support Grants to libraries for a couple of reasons. First, despite concerns at the beginning of the pandemic, most libraries' revenues have remained relatively stable. More important, the [Indiana State Library](#) expects to provide a significant pool of ARP relief funding to libraries across the state.

Note that libraries may apply for Indiana Humanities' ARP Programming and Capacity-Building Grant.

## **Can you provide clarity around the eligibility of arts groups?**

Arts organizations—including those whose mission centers on the creation or performance of art, or on the writing of creative fiction, creative nonfiction, autobiographies and memoirs—are not eligible for the Operating Support Grant. If you're an arts organization and are seeking operating support, we recommend that you contact the [Indiana Arts Commission](#).

An arts organization may apply for a Programming and Capacity-Building Grant to receive support for a program that uses the humanities as a tool for preventing, preparing, responding to or recovering from the pandemic.

## **What about colleges and universities?**

Unlike with our CARES Grants, we're permitting humanities centers and institutes that are affiliated with colleges and universities to apply for ARP Operating Support Grants. Applicants should submit data specific to their center/institute (e.g., the center/institute's budget, not the overall university budget) and explain need (particularly if the center/institute has not benefited from other relief funding provided to

the university). Outside of humanities centers/institutes, we will not provide operating support to colleges and universities.

**May my organization apply for both the Operating Support Grant and the Programming and Capacity-Building Grant?**

If your organization is eligible to apply for both grants, you may do so.

**My organization has never worked with Indiana Humanities before; does that mean we can't apply?**

We welcome new applicants for this funding, even if they haven't received support from us in the past.

**We see that there are different levels of award sizes. How do you determine what size of award we're eligible for?**

For Operating Support Grants, we've created four levels of funding based on annual operating income. On the application we ask you to provide the average of your organization's operating income over the three fiscal years prior to the pandemic, and we'll use that average to determine your funding category. Note that we use the ranges only as guidelines and that we may offer you a grant that's less than the upper limit of your category.

For Programming and Capacity-Building Grants you must submit a proposed budget, and we'll consider it when determining the size of the grant. You may request up to \$10,000, although you may certainly ask for less—if you need only \$3,000 to carry out your proposed program, for example, ask for that. Be aware that we may offer an award that is less than what you requested.

**Are there other relief funding opportunities for that we should be aware of?**

There are a number of opportunities. The [Indiana Arts Commission](#), [Indiana State Library](#) and [Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs](#) are offering ARP funds that may be of benefit to cultural organizations. You might also check with local resources such as your city government, community foundation or local arts council to see about funding opportunities.

**If our organization receives a grant, what can we use the funds for?**

Operating Support Grant funds are intended to provide assistance with operating costs, including but not limited to rent/mortgage payments, payroll, utility bills and other payments that affect the viability of the organization. You must use Programming and Capacity-Building Grant funds on the activities that you outlined in the budget that you submitted (though you may reach out to us if you need to make adjustments).

**Are there activities that we can't use the funds for?**

Yes. The NEH prohibits the use of federal funds for activities that promote political and/or religious viewpoints, activities that support specific public policies or legislation, lobbying, land purchases, construction/renovation, food/beverage purchases, fundraising and more. In addition, you cannot use grant funds for equipment costs in excess of 20 percent of total project costs. See the grant guidelines for a more in-depth list of prohibited activities.

**How will you make decisions on who receives funding?**

We expect that demand for the ARP grants will be high and that we'll have to make difficult decisions when making awards. To assist our reviewers, we have created a scoring rubric, which you can access on the [Indiana Humanities ARP Grants](#) webpage.

**When will we know if we receive a grant?**

If you apply for an Operating Support Grant, you'll know if you receive one by approximately August 31. If you apply for a Programming and Capacity-Building Grant, you'll know if you receive one by approximately October 8.

**What sort of paperwork will we need to fill out if we receive a grant?**

If you receive a grant, you'll need to sign and return a grant agreement; you must provide a DUNS number on the agreement. If you don't have a DUNS number, you can easily apply for one, free of charge, [online](#).

**Will we need to do any reporting? What will that look like?**

We'll ask you to complete a final report by December 31, 2022. While we're still determining the details that you'll need to provide, expect to include a narrative describing the impact of these funds on your organization. Those who receive a Programming and Capacity-Building Grant will have to provide an accounting of final expenditures.

**Whom should we contact if we need help in determining eligibility or filling out the application?**

Review the grant guidelines, then reach out to an Indiana Humanities staff member with your questions. We ask that you initially email us with your query but that you include your phone number in your message in case we need to call you.

- Organizations applying for an Operating Support Grant should contact:  
George Hanlin, Director of Grants  
[ghanlin@indianahumanities.org](mailto:ghanlin@indianahumanities.org)
- Organizations applying for a Programming and Capacity-Building Grant should contact:  
Megan Telligman, Program Manager  
[mtelligman@indianahumanities.org](mailto:mtelligman@indianahumanities.org)