



SHARP Grant Guidelines: General Operating Support

SHARP General Operating Support Grants provide operational support for nonprofit organizations with missions rooted in the humanities that are facing ongoing financial hardship and/or new needs due to the coronavirus pandemic. Funding for these grants is made available through the National Endowment the Humanities (NEH) initiative **Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan** (SHARP) as part of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan of 2021.

Funds

Grants of up to \$7,500 for non-profit organizations across Maine with missions rooted in the humanities who are facing ongoing financial hardship, have new needs due to, and/or have costs involved in moving forward and recovering from the coronavirus pandemic. No funding match or cost-share is required.

Funds may be used for general operating expenses including but not limited to:

- rent / mortgage payments
- payroll
- utility bills
- new expenses incurred due to the coronavirus pandemic
- other payments that affect the viability of the organization
- strategic planning and capacity building efforts related to preparing, responding to, and recovering from the coronavirus
- technical/consultant needs related to a digital transition or in support of preservation and access programs (equipment costs cannot exceed 20% of an award)
- equity assessments and planning related to the coronavirus and the economic crisis
- offering humanities programs and projects

Please see the FAQ sheet for a list of what the SHARP funds cannot support.

Timeframe for use of funds:

Funds can support eligible costs incurred between June 2021 through November 30, 2022. Grant funded activity must begin by December 31, 2022.

Priorities

- Intended to support Maine cultural organizations who have a mission rooted in the humanities who are facing ongoing financial hardship and/or new needs as they prepare for, respond to, and recover from the coronavirus pandemic.
- Organizations serving and led by members of communities traditionally under-resourced in the humanities are encouraged to apply.
 - These groups include people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ+, people who live in rural areas, people with disabilities, people who identify as immigrants or refugees, and people whose first (or only) language is not English. (Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.)
- It is the aim of the Maine Humanities Council to maximize the impact of available SHARP Recovery funding.

Eligibility

In order to receive a General Operating Support grant, your organization must be a Maine-based organization with a mission rooted in the humanities and one of the below:

- A 501(c)(3) organization registered in Maine.
- An accredited public and 501(c)(3) institution of higher education.
- A federally recognized Native American tribal government.

Not eligible for General Operating Support grants: Organizations whose mission is not rooted in the humanities; individuals; for-profit organizations; organizations not based in Maine. Organizations may not apply through a fiscal sponsor to meet eligibility requirements.

Note: Organizations whose mission is not rooted in the humanities are NOT eligible to receive funding for operating support but MAY be eligible to apply for SHARP Project Support grant.

Application Review

- Applications must be received by midnight, September 13, 2021
- Applications will be reviewed by a panel made up of staff and Board members of the Maine Humanities Council.
- Eligible applications will be evaluated based on demonstrated need, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the organization, how funds will help the organization move forward, and our stated priorities.
- Grant notifications will be made starting on October 18, 2021

To Apply

- The application period will open August 16, 2021
- Application must be received by midnight, September 13, 2021
- [Apply online](#)

- As required by federal guidelines, applicants must have a DUNS number in order to receive funds. While not required to apply, funds cannot be dispersed without this registration. Apply for this as early as possible, as a DUNS number can take some time to receive (they are free). [Lean more and apply for DUNS number](#)

Information Sessions

We will be hosting information sessions online:

Friday, Aug. 20 (10-11 am)

Monday, Aug 23 (10-11 am)

Wednesday, August 25 (3-4 pm)

Thursday, Aug. 27 (3-4 pm)

[Register online for an information session](#)

Please submit questions for the information sessions via email to lizz@mainehumanities.org; please include the session you will be attending and your phone number in case she needs to contact you for any clarification.

Because of the volume of applicants who will be applying for the SHARP Grants, we strongly encourage you to read the FAQ sheet and all other SHARP Grant information, and ideally attend an information session, before reaching out to MHC staff.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES