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October 2016

## National Museum Act Program (1973-1974): Booklet 01

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## INTRODUCTION

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an agency of the United States Government, established in 1965 to provide financial support to individuals and institutions working in and with the humanities. For the purposes of the Endowment and by the law which created the agency, the humanities include (but are not limited to) the study of the following: "language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archeology; the history, criticism, theory and practice of the arts; and those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods." In 1970, the Congress added ethics and comparative religion to the fields supported by the Endowment and included in the agency's statutory mandate "particular attention to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

From its inception the Endowment has operated from the conviction that the study of history, archeology, the arts—as well as comparative historical and philosophical studies—were not solely the concern of the scholar and curator, but rather that these studies had broad implications for the American public. Both as citizens whose democratic form of government requires informed participation and as private persons whose values are the ultimate determinant of the nation's culture, the public has need of and use for knowledge in the humanities. Museums are clearly of prime importance in providing such knowledge, especially to the adult "out-of-school" public, and also to students. The programs described in this brochure spring from the Endowment's recognition of the pivotal role of museums and historical societies of all kinds in conveying and interpreting humanistic knowledge to every sector of the society.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES  
MUSEUM PROGRAM

*Cover illustration is visage  
of Apollo on silver coin  
from Catana, c. 415-400 B.C.;  
British Museum, London.*

## SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Museum professional staff and museums as institutions of learning may qualify for support under a number of the Endowment's programs. Projects involving the cooperative efforts of museums and schools—elementary, secondary or college level—may qualify for an Education grant. Museum staff personnel may qualify for an Endowment Fellowship to pursue further study in a given subject area or for a Research grant to contribute to the body of knowledge in one of the humanities. Youthgrants for young people to pursue a special research project under the sponsorship of a museum are also available. Support under the Endowment's *Education, Fellowship, Research* and *Youthgrant* programs are described on page 9, below.

The Division of Public Programs is that area of Endowment activity concerned with providing support for projects in the humanities affecting the broad general public. Since museums are an obviously central source and site for such projects, one of the Endowment's public programs—the Museum Program—is devoted exclusively to providing support for museums and historical societies. This support is available under three distinct headings, set forth below: Interpretive Exhibitions; Community Education Programs; and [Museum] Personnel Training. Deadlines for application and other information for applicants under these programs appear on page 13, under "Application Procedures."

### *Interpretive Exhibitions*

Support is available under this program for exhibitions which seek, as their primary objective, to provide a learning experience for the visiting general public through effective and imaginative use of museum collections. More specifically, the interpretive exhibition is one which may employ a variety of interpretive methods to explain the objects on display and show their relationship to one another or to a given theme.

Such methods might include audio and visual technology and materials, including photography; printed educational materials; maps; demonstrations and illustrations. Preparation of an interpretive exhibition engages the human resources of museum education specialists and also suggests the inclusion of other academic and non-academic resources from outside the museum. Through the coordinated efforts of these persons, an exhibition may be mounted which is as informative as it is interesting, as understandable to the curious as to the studious visitor and a learning experience for both.

Interpretive exhibitions, then, depend on the imaginative exploitation of museum collections, with a view to enhancing the public's understanding of the materials presented. Three kinds of grants are available in this area: (1) support for the development of interpretive exhibitions using newly assembled materials; (2) support for the interpretation of special exhibitions already planned; and (3) support for the planning of new interpretive exhibitions cooperatively planned by two or more museums and suitable for travel to other museums.

In all of these activities the objective is to provide an educational experience, attractive and accessible to a broad general public, which will be of some lasting importance to the visitor for the understanding it imparts, as much as for the appreciation it evokes. This objective implies a fully coordinated use of the museums' human and material resources, the whole spectrum of audio-visual media, and a rich variety of associated programming within the museum. It is also important, of course, that these kinds of exhibitions reach as broad an audience as possible, and the Endowment will, in general, accord priority consideration to supporting exhibitions suitable for travel.

The first kind of grant is offered in support of the development of new interpretive exhibitions with funding both for the assembling of the materials and objects to be

exhibited and for development of the interpretive methods to be employed in the exhibition. Applicant museums should note that Endowment support for new interpretive exhibitions is predicated on the assumption that the educational experience intended for the public—the theme to be treated—will determine the nature of the objects to be assembled, and not vice versa.

The second kind of grant for interpretive exhibitions is offered to encourage museums to develop the full educational potential of special exhibitions already planned and in preparation, by introducing interpretive methods into the eventual exhibit. Support for the development and incorporation of these interpretive methods is available under this kind of grant.

The third area of support is offered to promote inter-museum cooperation in the creation of an interpretive exhibition which can be readily transported to other museums which do not have access to such exhibitions. In this single area, planning grants are available; they are offered to enable the larger museums with diversified collections to develop together an interpretive exhibition which would subsequently travel—in whole or in part—to other museums, regionally or nationally. Support may be provided not only for planning of the substantive educational experience intended but also for the consultation, negotiation and planning of the logistic efforts involved in the subsequent travel of the exhibition.

Grants of the first kind, for new interpretive exhibitions, are expected to average about \$80,000; high-quality proposals at lower funding levels than this average are also welcome. Grants of the second kind, for interpretation of exhibitions already planned, are expected to average \$50,000; high quality proposals at lower funding levels than this average are also welcome. Grants of the third kind, for the planning of cooperatively developed interpretive exhibitions for travel, might average \$20,000 (to be shared

by the cooperating museums); funding for implementation of the exhibition will be considered by subsequent and separate application, but the receipt of a planning grant does not necessarily lead to Endowment support for the subsequent exhibition.

#### *Community Education Grants*

The second area of major support under the Museum Program is concerned with strengthening the museum's role as a community educator. It is in this area especially that the Museum Program reinforces other programs of the Endowment designed to enhance public understanding, appreciation and use of the humanities (see "Other Public Programs," on page 7).

Because the Endowment seeks the widest possible dissemination of humanistic knowledge in contemporary society, it welcomes application by the museum as the sponsor and locus of learning events in the community. Through the presentation of seminars and other projects, the development of community galleries, and any sort of special series or event designed specifically for the local community, museums of every kind can fulfill their role and acquire new identification as community educators. Participation of the community in the planning as well as staging of educational events in museums is encouraged and priority consideration will be accorded proposals which provide for such participation. The Endowment also urges that each such project reflect local conditions and interests, especially in urban areas.

Grants for Community Education programs are available to all museums and historical societies and are expected to average \$25,000.

#### *Personnel Training*

The training of museum staff is obviously essential to the development of effective interpretation of collections and

related activities involving the adult public: The Endowment, through its Personnel Development grants, places strong emphasis on the development of expertise in interpretation. Grant support is available for graduate fellowships and internships, as well as for short-term seminars, institutes or other types of training opportunities for current and potential museum and historical society staff personnel. It should be noted that these grants are made by the Division of Public Programs (Museum Program) and are not to be confused with awards of the Division of Fellowships and Stipends, which are also available (see "Further Endowment Support," on page 8). The former are concerned with increasing the individual fellow's competence as a museum professional, and the latter are concerned with his scholarly competence in one of the humanistic disciplines.

Support for personnel training programs is available to museums, historical societies, colleges and universities, and other non-profit organizations. In the case of fellowships and in-service training opportunities, therefore, the Endowment encourages applications which indicate collaborative arrangements between museums and institutions of higher education with strong emphasis on training experiences in the museum itself. The content of these training projects should center upon the problems related to effective interpretive use of museum collections, rather than on skills related to connoisseurship. A broader understanding of the collection and its potential uses for the dissemination of humanistic knowledge—as well as of the needs and interests of the public to be served—is the primary training goal. Training opportunities which will enable the educator-interpreter to experience the actual workings of a museum installation—collaboration with curators, designers and conservators—are encouraged in these grants.

Training fellowship programs will be based on awards of approximately \$5,400 per fellow, which includes tuition to be paid the participating museum and the academic

institution and an allowance for student travel. Internships will be funded in amounts of approximately \$7,500 per intern for a 12-month period. There is no fixed limit on grants for seminars or other institutes.

#### *Other Public Programs*

In addition to the Museum Program, the Division of Public Programs administers four other programs, any one of which may involve and would welcome cooperation with museums. The titles of these four public program activities are: the State-Based Program; Film/TV Program; National Humanities Series; and Special Projects.

**State-Based Program.**—The Endowment has established State Committees in the Humanities in most of the United States which, by re-granting Endowment funds to specific projects in the State, support public programming in the humanities from a State-level orientation. To qualify for support from the Committee, projects must involve the general adult public and professional humanists, must draw upon the humanities and relate to the State Committee's programming theme for the year, and must be aimed predominantly at producing better understanding of the theme treated (rather than increased esthetic appreciation of objects displayed). Museums and historical societies are encouraged to make contact with their State Committee in order to ascertain the theme for Committee programming and explore the possibilities for fundable "community education" projects under museum sponsorship and funded by the State Committees. The Endowment will provide the State Committee address on request (write to: Museum Program, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506).

**Film/TV Program.**—This program supports the production of major films in the humanities for television and theater exhibition, as well as subsequent use in community projects mounted under other public programs of the Endowment.

Museum projects built around one or more of these films and aiming at a national audience—a joint undertaking, for example, by a museum or historical society and a television network—are a possibility encouraged by the Endowment. Future editions of this brochure will explore the possible uses of these kinds of film productions in museum projects.

**National Humanities Series.**—Public presentations in the humanities by teams of humanists using live performers, film, slides, printed materials, and the like are brought to smaller communities of the nation (50,000 population or less) through the National Humanities Series. The Series operates through three NHS Centers supported by the Endowment in the West, Midwest and East, which work with humanists to develop presentations relevant to contemporary life for the purpose of promoting open discussion among their audiences. Museums might serve very well as the site for such presentations in the community and provide follow-up programming. Museums in communities of less than 50,000 population who might be interested in more information about the National Humanities Series should notify the Endowment by writing to: Museum Program, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506.

**Special Projects.**—Under this program, projects undertaken in States not yet served by a State Committee may qualify for support directly from the Endowment. Museum participation in a project for the general public in the humanities funded under the “Special Projects” program is generally desirable and encouraged. Projects of this sort *initiated* by museums would be supportable under the “Community Education” grants of the Museum Program (see page 5).

### FURTHER ENDOWMENT SUPPORT

The programs described above are all administered by the Endowment's Division of Public Programs. In addition to

these sources, support for museums and museum personnel is available from other Divisions of the Endowment, which are set forth below. Whatever the funding source within the Endowment, however, all inquiries and/or requests by museums and historical societies for support should be addressed to: Museum Program, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506.

**Education Division.**—Project grants are available from the Education Division for experimental efforts involving the museum and a formal institution of learning—elementary, secondary, college or university—by which the museum is made part of a formal educational process, in partnership with the school. For example, an Education grant was made in support of a project under museum sponsorship which enabled local fifth-grade students to live for one day in a restored 18th century American village.

Projects whereby a museum provides training for teachers in local educational institutions in the potential uses of the museum also qualify for Education grants. One such grant enabled an art museum's education staff to work with teachers in the local school system to develop ways of incorporating the museum into the curriculum and using it as a permanent educational resource.

**Fellowships and Stipends.**—The Endowment's Fellowship and Stipend awards are made to help humanists develop their abilities as teachers, scholars and interpreters of the humanities. Museum staff personnel who wish to pursue their studies in a given subject area among the humanities—their own special field or one related to it—are eligible if they have completed their professional training and agree to devote their full time to the fellowship study proposed for the tenure of the fellowship. These awards differ from Museum Personnel Development awards (see page 6) in two important respects: (1) Museum Personnel Development awards (fellowships or internships) are given to enhance the fellow's competence as a museum professional, well versed in

methods for interpreting the museum's collection and making the museum or historical society a community educator; Fellowship and Stipend awards are given to enhance the fellow's knowledge of his field of study, in one of the humanities; and (2) Museum Personnel Development awards are available as graduate fellowships and internships, while Fellowship and Stipend awards go only to those who have completed professional training and are not active candidates for degrees.

The following Fellowship and Stipend programs may be of interest to the museum professional:

The Senior Fellowship program is intended for persons who have considerable experience as scholars or interpreters of the humanities and have produced significant work. Senior Fellowships are awarded for six to twelve continuous months of tenure and carry a maximum annual stipend of \$18,000 pro-rated at \$1,500 per month for periods of less than a year.

Fellowships for Younger Humanists are awarded to give younger humanists free time to develop their abilities as contributors to learning in the humanities. How the proposed undertaking may contribute to the growth of the applicant as a teacher or interpreter of the humanities is a more important consideration than any immediate contribution it may make to a particular field. Preference is given to applicants who are at a relatively early point in their professional development. Each fellowship provides a maximum stipend of \$1,250 per month for six to nine continuous months of full-time study. Summer stipends for younger humanists are available, providing \$2,000 for two continuous months of full-time study. (An applicant for a summer stipend must be nominated by the director or other designated official of the institution employing him.)

Fellowships for Study in Selected Fields offers fellowships for advanced study in U.S. ethnic minorities—whether historical, cultural or social in nature. Preference is given to young scholars who have just completed their academic

training. The advanced study is pursued under the guidance of experienced scholars and its goal is to prepare the fellows for future contributions to the development of learning in these fields. These fellowships are awarded for tenure at certain designated institutions; each fellowship carries a stipend of \$10,000, and the fellow is expected to devote full time to the proposed study, in residence at the Fellowship institution.

Senior and younger museum staff personnel are welcome to apply under any of the above Fellowship programs.

**Research Grants.**—The Division of Research Grants entertains applications for the support of original thought, basic research, and editing projects in the humanities, as well as for support of interpretive writing in the humanities for the general public. A research grant is based upon the importance of the work involved and on the end product, while a Fellowships and Stipends grant is based more upon the individual's potential growth as a humanist and scholar, as a result of the activity proposed. Research grants have gone to museums for such purposes as to permit scholars at a museum to research and render the work of an American artist in historical and artistic perspective or for the raising, restoring and displaying of a fourth century B.C. ship found off the coast of Greece.

Either the museum as an institution or museum staff personnel may apply for a research grant.

**Youthgrants.**—One of the Endowment's newest programs provides grants to support humanities projects developed and conducted by students and other young people. Such projects must relate to the humanities in some clear way, have a specific purpose, a carefully designed scope, and a high promise of helping individuals develop their critical faculties. The director of the project for which support is sought should preferably not be over 30 years of age at the time the grant is awarded, and consideration will be given first to projects by persons who have not completed professional

training. The projects may concern education (either formal or informal in nature), study or research of a specific problem, or activities aimed at disseminating humanistic knowledge and materials, or to applying them to the understanding of ethical, social or political problems.

Museum staff personnel may be eligible directly for a Youthgrant or act as advisors or consultants to young people who are eligible. One recent Youthgrant award went in support of a project sponsored by an historical museum and directed by a young person leading a team of college students in a case study of ethnicity and ethnic change in the local neighborhood.

**Statistical Studies.**—Support for statistical studies or surveys concerning museums and their activities are available from the Endowment's Office of Planning and Analysis.

#### *Humanities and the Arts*

Because the "sister-agency" of the Endowment—the National Endowment for the Arts—also conducts museum programs, it is important that prospective applicants to either Endowment be able to distinguish between the programs of the two. The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, as amended (which created the two Endowments), includes within its definition of the humanities the study of the history, criticism, theory and practice of the arts, as well as other disciplines customarily identified with the humanities: language, linguistics, literature, history, jurisprudence, philosophy, archeology, ethics, comparative religion, and "those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods."

It is apparent that museum proposals whose emphasis lies primarily in the arts might be supported by either Endowment, depending on the nature of the activity to be supported. Projects eligible for support by the National Endowment for the Humanities are those which seek to

interpret history or the arts, projects which draw upon the past for insight into and perspective on the present through cultural and historical analysis, and projects which seek, in the broadest sense, to educate the general public.

As more and more museums of all kinds work to become sources of learning as well as of esthetic enjoyment for the general public, the Humanities Endowment hopes to maintain a close, continuing contact with large numbers of them—whether art or history or other kinds of museums.

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES

*All inquiries and/or proposals for funding under any of the programs described in this brochure by museums or historical societies should be addressed to: Museum Program, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506. Please note that the following sections on procedure apply only to museum grant programs operated by the Division of Public Programs.*

#### *Eligibility*

All American museums of all types—art, history, science, or other—as well as historical societies and libraries which are considered museums, are eligible to apply. In general, the Endowment accepts the definition of museums developed by the American Association of Museums: "... a non-profit institution essentially educational or esthetic in purpose with professional staff, which owns and utilizes tangible objects, cares for them and exhibits them to the public in some regular schedule."

#### *Preliminary Inquiry*

Application forms and further detailed information are available on request from the Endowment. Potential applicants are urged, however, *at least one month* before submitting a formal application, to send an informal description of their proposal or any inquiry they have about the museum program. This process will enable the staff to advise on potential problems and to assist the applicant in preparing formal applications. The informal description should include a brief summary of the project proposed; its purpose and justification; who will be involved; the approximate funding necessary; and the specific items and services for which the grant funds will be used.



Inquiries and informal descriptions should be sent to: Museum Program, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506.

### *Formal Application*

If the preliminary inquiry indicates that a formal proposal is in order, application forms and necessary instructions will be sent. The formal application will consist of the following:

- (1) an abstract of the project (200-300 words);
- (2) a full description covering the project's purpose, a brief history of its conception and development, the expected result, the plan of work, and proposed evaluation;
- (3) an itemized budget specifying all expected costs of the project;
- (4) a short biography of the project director and principal co-workers;
- (5) authorization from the person—if different from the project director—who will be responsible for receiving, disbursing, and accounting for any grant funds on behalf of the project; and
- (6) if project involves extensive use of an institution's facilities or equipment, approval from the authorizing official of the institution.

### *Application Deadlines*

Applications for museum program may be submitted any time. However, the schedule for review of applications during 1972-73 is as follows:

Museum Personnel Development Grants: (support for which is sought between July 1973 and July 1974): application must be received by December 1, 1972.

Interpretive Exhibitions & Community Education Grants: December 1, 1972 for action by March, 1973; March 1, 1973 for action by June, 1973; June 1, 1973 for action by September, 1973.

### *Application Review Process*

As in all other Endowment programs, limited funds permit only a selected number of museum program proposals to be supported. Each application undergoes a careful review by evaluators and panelists drawn from the humanities and from the museum field. The National Council on the Humanities, which consists of 26 distinguished private citizens appointed by the President to give advice and guidance to the Endowment, makes ultimate recommendations on applications received.

### *Duration of the Project*

Grant funds can be used for one year from the time of announcement of the award. In certain instances, an extension of that time limit is allowable. Maximum grant period is 15 months.

### *Cost-Sharing*

More than a nominal amount of cost-sharing is expected from all applicants. A copy of the applicant institution's current financial statement should accompany each proposal. In the case of *Museum Personnel Development applications*, special consideration will be shown to those where a substantial portion of training and education expense is borne by the applicant organization.

### *Gifts-and-Matching Grants*

As a supplement to an outright grant or as the sole form of Endowment support, an applicant may sometimes be offered a "gifts-and-matching" grant. Under this arrangement, the Endowment agrees to accept a gift for the support of some particular project in whatever amount the donor is willing to give; the Endowment then matches this money with federal funds up to a pre-stated limit (which the gift may exceed) and disburses the whole—a sum equal to the gift plus the matching money—in support of the project.

The Endowment will not match a gift from the institution conducting the project for which the gift is intended, or from others involved in the project; the Endowment will not match a gift from other federal funds or from current or pending recipients of Endowment grants. Prospective applicants are encouraged to seek sources of gifts that may be matched for their projects and, when a gifts-and-matching grant has been made, to take the initiative in seeking such gifts. The Endowment will assist in this effort whenever possible.