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*In an effort to make ASTC members more aware of some of the lesser-known programmatic and funding opportunities offered by a variety of sources – and available to science centers and museums across the world – ASTC has launched **STEM Public Programs: Updates and Opportunities for Science Centers**, a series of electronic briefs where we'll share details from meetings and conversations with key representatives from U.S. federal agencies and elsewhere. In this issue – our first new one after a lengthy hiatus – we'll look at two grant programs offered by the National Endowment for the Humanities.*

In mid-November, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), via its Division of Public Programs, released two new solicitations for its “Museums, Libraries, and Cultural Organizations” grants – one for Planning and the other for Implementation.

According to NEH, the grants provide support for museums, libraries, historic places, and other organizations that produce public programs in the humanities. Science centers and science museums are eligible – and encouraged – to compete for these awards, which support the following formats: (1) exhibitions at museums, libraries, and other venues; (2) interpretations of historic places, sites, or regions; (3) book/film discussion programs; living history presentations; other face-to-face programs at libraries, community centers, and other public venues; and (4) interpretative websites and other digital formats. Planning grants support the early stages of project development (things like consultation with scholars, theme refinement, preliminary design, testing, and audience evaluation), while Implementation grants support final research and consultation, design development, production, and project installation.

Regardless of the chosen format, both Planning and Implementation grants should build on sound humanities and science scholarship, deepen public understanding of significant questions at the intersection of science/technology and the humanities, involve a team of humanities scholars and scientists in all phases of development and implementation, appeal to broad audiences, approach a subject analytically and interpretively through an appropriate variety of perspectives, and encourage dialogue and discussion. NEH notes that projects tailored to particular groups (families, youth, underserved populations, etc.) are welcome.

ASTC is delighted that both of the solicitations contain new language which states that the agency “encourages projects that examine connections between the humanities and science and technology.” ASTC members are encouraged to pay particular attention to this paragraph (which can be found on page 4 of both documents).

As far as funding levels are concerned, NEH says that Planning grants typically fall in the \$40,000-\$75,000 range for 12 months, while Implementation grants typically do not exceed \$400,000 for 12-36 months; there are some exceptions to both, however. There are two annual deadlines for grant applications: January 8, 2014 (for which projects begin in August 2014) and August 13 (for which projects begin in March 2015). Note that all applications must be submitted to NEH via Grants.gov.

For more information, NEH encourages potential applicants to visit the grants section of the NEH website at [www.neh.gov/grants](http://www.neh.gov/grants). A direct link for Planning grants is available at [www.neh.gov/grants/public/museums-libraries-and-cultural-organizations-planning-grants](http://www.neh.gov/grants/public/museums-libraries-and-cultural-organizations-planning-grants) and for

Implementation grants at [www.neh.gov/grants/public/museums-libraries-and-cultural-organizations-implementation-grants](http://www.neh.gov/grants/public/museums-libraries-and-cultural-organizations-implementation-grants). On each page, you'll find a wealth of helpful information, including program guidelines, budget instructions, frequently asked questions, and lists of previous awardees (which include the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York, NY, an ASTC member).

Thinking of submitting an application? An NEH program officer was kind enough to share these additional tips with us – and you, as potential applicants – as well: (1) highlight the humanities and science/technology advisers who will be working on the project; (2) enlist scholars with strong subject matter expertise, and provide evidence that the advisers will work (or have worked) together advising the project; and (3) if you are considering a Planning grant, NEH encourages projects that are already moving along in the planning process – advisers should have already begun consulting on the project and themes should be to some extent worked out. There should also be a fairly clear vision of what the format will be and what the applicant wants the audience to learn.

If, after reviewing the guidelines and supplemental information, you have additional questions, you may contact the staff of NEH's Division of Public Programs at (202) 606-8269 or [publicpgms@neh.gov](mailto:publicpgms@neh.gov).

*Archived issues of "STEM Public Programs: Updates and Opportunities for Science Centers" are available at [www.astc.org/about/government/STEMprog.htm](http://www.astc.org/about/government/STEMprog.htm).*