

Humanities Nebraska

PDF of entire text of Grant Application Requirements web page

<https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/grant-application-requirements/>

Updated 4/29/26

Grant opportunities will remain the same in 2026 as in previous years, with overall fewer dollars available for grant awards due to uncertainty regarding HN's federal funding.

<https://humanitiesnebraska.org/faq-neh/>

Because Humanities Nebraska (HN) exists to help people explore what connects us and makes us human, we offer grants to nonprofit organizations and government entities to support projects related to the public humanities. This webpage contains information and links to help guide you through the application process, and HN grants staff are available to help you, too.

Scroll to the end of this page to find the "Apply for a grant now!" button.

We highly recommend that you contact the HN grants staff when you are developing an application.

We are more than happy to answer your questions and give you advice. We can also log in to view your draft application in the system and provide specific feedback if you give us enough lead time before grant due dates.

- If you have never applied to HN before, or if you are new to grant writing, we especially want to work with you to help make this process as easy as possible.
- If you have successfully applied to HN before, we still encourage you to contact HN staff. We can help you fine-tune your application to better fit our guidelines.

Humanities Nebraska Grants Staff

Any of the HN staff members who work with grants are happy to talk to you about your grant application:

- Katie Bradshaw, Grants Management & Outreach Specialist, katie@humanitiesnebraska.org or (402) 474-2131 ext 114 (regular hours: 9-4 Central, Tu, Wed, Th)
- Barbara Grant, Office and Grants Coordinator, barbara@humanitiesnebraska.org or (402) 474-2131 ext. 102
- Erika Hamilton, Director of Literary Programs, erika@humanitiesnebraska.org or (402) 474-2131 ext. 104
- Kristi Hayek Carley, Program Manager, kristi@humanitiesnebraska.org or (402) 474-2131 ext. 108

What makes a successful HN grant application?

The following basic elements are generally required for a successful application. More details are provided in the FAQ sections below. When you have questions, contact HN staff!

- Applicant is a non-profit according to the State of Nebraska and the IRS and has 501(c)(3) or other 501(c) status, or is a federal, state, county, local, or tribal government entity – including public schools and libraries – that doesn't have any past-due HN grant reports still pending.
- Humanities are central to the portion of the applicant's project HN is being asked to fund, and the program encourages interaction, thought, and discussion over ideas, topics, and questions.
- At least one humanities subject expert is involved in planning and/or implementing the project, and their role and expertise are clearly described.
- The project takes place in Nebraska and/or has direct significance to Nebraska, and Nebraskans are a primary target audience.
- The project does not involve advocacy for a particular viewpoint and is free of bias and includes a balance of views.
- A public program that is free or has a nominal fee (not a fundraiser).
- A project budget showing at least a 1:1 match between HN grant funds and cash or in-kind budget items.
- Adequate plans to promote and evaluate the project.
- Reasonable timeline and proportional budget.

Special consideration may be given to projects that reach across Nebraska or that target underserved audiences (due to geography or socioeconomic status).

Humanities Nebraska grant reviewers prioritize strong humanities projects that meet a "connections" theme, linking the humanities and other disciplines, connecting the humanities with other activities, or bringing together a humanities organization and a nontraditional project partner.

<https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/connections-grant-emphasis/>

While applications exploring the connections theme will be given priority, HN granting will remain competitive and open to other humanities projects.

Humanities Nebraska embraces inclusive grantmaking. We encourage submissions of projects that address the experiences of diverse and underrepresented groups in Nebraska public humanities programming. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

Types of Grants, Deadlines, and Matching Funds

All three types of HN program grants -- mini, major, and media -- have the same basic requirements. The main differences are (1) the amount of money requested and (2) the deadlines, with larger grants and grants for "media" projects (creation of websites, podcasts, radio programs, films, etc.) requiring some additional information and review time.

GRANT TYPE	REQUEST	GRANT DEADLINE	PROJECT BEGINS ON OR AFTER*	MATCHING FUNDS
Mini Grant	\$2,000 or less. The average award is \$1,600.	Jan 1	Feb 1*	Cash or in-kind expenses** equal to or greater than the request; a 1:1 match. (Applicant must provide at least half the total project cost.)
		Mar 1	Apr 1*	
		May 1	Jun 1*	
		Jul 1	Aug 1*	
		Sep 1	Oct 1*	
Major Grant	More than \$2,000. While there is no maximum request, the average award is \$5,100, and awards are typically less than \$10,000.	Mar 1	May 1*	Cash or in-kind expenses** equal to or greater than the request; a 1:1 match. (Applicant must provide at least half the total project cost.) At least 10% of the match must be cash.
		Aug 1	Oct 1*	
Media Grant	More than \$2,000. While there is no maximum request, the average award is \$7,900. Few grants larger than \$15,000 have been awarded.	Jan 15 Jun 15	May 1* Oct 1*	Cash or in-kind expenses** equal to or greater than the request; a 1:1 match. (Applicant must provide at least half the total project cost.) At least 10% of the match must be cash.

Grant applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on the due date. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the grant is due the next business day.

**Items in a project budget that will be paid for with HN grant funds cannot be incurred before the "project begins on or after" date (see the table above).*

****See the FAQs for an explanation of cash versus in-kind expenses.**

Additional information for Media Grants

Any project that involves production of film, television or radio, or creation of digital projects such as websites, DVDs or podcasts, is considered to be a media project and should be applied for using the Media Application. (Under certain circumstances funding for pre-production aspects of media projects is available through the Mini Grant process – contact HN staff to discuss your project.)

Digital products may be components of a larger project or a project in its own right. Projects relying heavily or solely on a digital format should have strong humanities content, be based on sound scholarship, and offer users an interactive and engaging experience. These projects could be humanities-based Internet presentations such as online exhibitions that might be interactive and could include open dialogue moderated by humanities scholars. Projects must be humanities based. HN will not fund organizational websites or promotional websites or CD/DVDs.

Media grant applications are sent to outside reviewers who have media expertise. Each reviewer will assess the technical merits of the project and the capability of the project team to deliver the proposed results. The applicant will receive a copy of each reviewer's assessment and will be given the

opportunity to submit a formal response to the technical review. The media grant application, technical reviewer's comments and the applicant response will then be included for review during the following Major Grants round. The applicant will be notified regarding funding within three months of the media grant submission deadline.

Out-of-state applicants must submit a \$150 processing fee to subsidize the cost of the technical review process.

Additional information about Artificial Intelligence

In its founding legislation, the National Endowment for the Humanities was tasked with making the American people "masters of their technology and not its unthinking servants." The rapid expansion of generative artificial intelligence (AI) underscores the importance of engaging with the idea of "what it means to be human." Humanities Nebraska has a duty to help shape acceptable and ethical use of AI to support human flourishing through its internal practices and grantmaking activity.

AI policy for grant applications that propose to use generative AI in the project

- HN will not fund projects that simply teach people how to use AI as a tool. The use of AI must contribute to a strong humanities learning objective.
- HN will not fund projects in which people passively consume AI-generated output. There must be evidence of how people will be challenged to use critical, evaluative skills to question and contextualize AI-generated output.
- Applicants must describe what AI model will be used in the project (model name, whether it is open source or proprietary), how the model will be trained, and how potential biases in the training data will be addressed.
- HN's AI policy will continue to evolve as the technology evolves and as more project examples are presented.

Can I use generative artificial intelligence (AI) to write my grant application?

Yes, however, as with any responses to grant application questions, your responses should be an accurate reflection of what you can realistically accomplish, not a response that just sounds good on paper. If you submit an application that you are then unable to carry out according to the plan as written, you are risking your organization's reputation and may jeopardize future grant awards. You are ultimately responsible for reviewing, editing, and verifying all application text.

A note about creative and performing arts

HN cannot fund creative or performing arts unless the project includes a significant humanities-based educational component. The goal of an event or experience should be to help the audience understand and discuss things like values, history and social context. The experience or event must be accompanied by some form of facilitated learning in order to give the audience something to think about in addition to something to enjoy.

The application should demonstrate that a humanities subject expert will be involved in planning to ensure that the humanities are well represented in the project. The application should thoroughly

explain how the performing or creative arts component will complement and enhance the humanities aspect.

HN funds may be requested to pay humanities subject experts and presenters and their travel (when necessary), publicity to develop an audience, and resources needed to facilitate learning. Some funding of performers may be requested as needed to illustrate the educational component.

Creative and performing arts projects that are ineligible for HN funding may be eligible for [Nebraska Arts Council](#) funding.

Examples of eligible arts projects

- A pre-performance talk by a humanities subject expert describing the culture and the times that influenced William Shakespeare
- Facilitated discussion with accompanying performance that presents the historical and social context of opera and the role of opera in today's culture
- Presentation and discussion of the various musical traditions and instruments of ancient and contemporary cultures
- Workshops that introduce students to the values, principles and history of African society and life through the study of traditional storytelling, dance, drumming and music
- Lecture-recital program exploring the evolution of American roots music
- Workshops for high school students that incorporate the history and cultural influence of photography with photography training
- Talks given by Native American presenters recognized for their knowledge of the history and cultural impact of dance in Native American societies followed by dance and drum exhibition
- Presentation of the history of a community that results in art that portrays that history
- Living history portrayal of a historical figure ending in discussion with a humanities subject expert
- A series of talks about the historical, social and critical context of paintings in a gallery exhibit
- Writing workshops that include discussion of the human condition, such as workshops on character development, motivation, conflict and resolution, and historical context.

Examples of ineligible arts projects

- Performance-only programming
- Art classes focusing on creative technique
- Workshops addressing the mechanics and business of writing
- Music or dance performances that do not include a formal presentation of the history and cultural meaning of the dance or music

HN Grants Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

YES, ELIGIBLE

- Applicant is a non-profit according to the State of Nebraska and the IRS and has 501(c)(3) or other 501(c) status, or
- Applicant is a federal, state, county, local, or tribal government entity – including public schools and libraries.

NO, NOT ELIGIBLE

- Individuals
- For-profit entities or businesses
- Entities with overdue reports on previous HN grants
- Entities unable to certify compliance with nondiscrimination and other federal statutes. [Click here](#) to find the grant application questions preview, which contains the certification text all grantees are required to sign.

<https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/grant-application-resources/>

What kinds of projects are eligible? What kinds of projects are ineligible?

YES, ELIGIBLE

- Projects that:
- Have a central focus in the humanities
 - Involve at least one person who has demonstrated knowledge about the humanities topic(s) (a “humanities subject expert”)
 - Are open to the general public, or to a specific segment of the public (students, veterans, migrant workers, etc.), or to professionals who

POSSIBLY ELIGIBLE: CONTACT HN TO ASK

- Creative or performing arts projects that include significant humanities content*
- Multiple grant applications for a single project or set of programs. Applicants are expected to address all aspects of a project in a single application. An exception is a mini grant to help plan a larger project that may be eligible for a major or media grant.
- Repeat applications for recurring events may be expected to request less funding, seek funding from

NO, NOT ELIGIBLE

- Projects where HN is asked to provide more than 50% of the funding
- Fundraisers
- Lobbying or direct action campaigns
- Advocacy of a specific viewpoint or partisan objectives
- Creative or performing arts projects without clear humanities content *

serve the public
(teachers, doctors,
police officers, etc.)

- Are free or that have a minimal charge to help cover direct project expenses
- Are about Nebraska or have Nebraskans as the primary audience
- Demonstrate the required 1:1 funding match in their budget

other sources, and/or
show innovation in the
project.

- Projects that do not relate to Nebraska, or do not have Nebraskans as the primary audience
- Projects that benefit a private group or individual and do not serve the public
- Programs designed by colleges/universities primarily for their students
- Book publishing
- Academic credit or research for solely scholarly purposes
- Travel to professional meetings
- Occupational training**
- Institutional planning and development
- Direct social service, e.g., counseling, therapeutic, legal, or medical services.

*See "A note about creative and performing arts projects" below.

**Some exceptions can be made for humanities-based occupational training for professions that serve the public (e.g., doctors, teachers, law enforcement officers).

To get a sense of the types of programming HN helps to fund, see the lists of organizations and programs that have received HN recent grant awards in the menu on the left side of this page.

What kinds of expenses can be paid with HN grant funds? What expenses are ineligible?

YES, POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE FOR HN FUNDS

- Up to \$1,000 honorarium per “humanist” for a single day of active project work, and up to \$500 per active day of project work after the first
- Travel expenses for humanists (mileage up to 60 cents per mile as of 7/1/22, economy airfare)
- Per diem (food and hotel) for out-of-town humanists up to \$100 per day, for days they are actively participating in the project
- Up to 20% of the HN grant request for administrative expenses (some exceptions may be made in areas of program emphasis – talk to HN staff)
- Advertising costs (newspaper, radio, social media, TV) to ensure an audience (television advertising is limited to \$500)
- Supplies and books integral to the project**
- Facility use fees
- Exhibit design and construction
- Technology (devices, software, equipment, subscriptions, etc.) that is integral to the project**
- Accessibility expenses like event interpreters or braille or large-print event programs or exhibit panels.

NO, NOT ELIGIBLE FOR HN FUNDS*

- Expenses incurred before the grant was approved
- Alcohol
- Refreshments for audiences or in-town humanities subject experts
- General construction or renovation projects
- General operating expenses or indirect costs
- Purchase of property or real estate
- Museum, school, or library acquisitions or collections preservation
- Scholarships or fellowships
- Competitions or prizes
- Humanities Nebraska Speakers Bureau fees

- Printing costs not related to a public project
- Gifts, giveaways, or promotional items

- Performance costs like costumes or set construction
- Stipends paid to the applicant organization's board members

* While these expenses cannot be paid with HN grant funds, they can be included in the project budget as part of a cash match. Talk to HN staff if you're not sure.

**Budget line items that include supplies or technology may be subject to additional scrutiny / stipulations to ensure the items will continue to be used for humanities-related purposes after the grant period.

*** If you wish to book a speaker from the HN Speakers Bureau catalog, please follow the procedure in How to Book a Speaker. <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/how-to-book-a-speaker/> HN grant funds cannot be used to pay the fee to book a speaker. An exception would be if a speaker in the HN catalog is giving a program substantially different from their Speakers Bureau program(s); then their honorarium could be eligible for HN grant funds. Talk to HN staff if you have questions.

HN Grants FAQs

What are "the humanities"?

HN can only fund projects that have a strong humanities component. "The humanities" is a very broad subject that includes learning about, thinking about, describing, and discussing "what it means to be human." A list of possible humanities topics is included in our grant application.



Who can be a "humanities subject expert"?

Typically, the humanities subject expert is a college or university professor in a humanities discipline. If a non-academic humanities subject expert is chosen for a project, the applicant must provide sufficient background information on the individual to demonstrate that they will capably represent the humanities. If there is more than one humanities subject expert involved, there must be an explanation for each person. Types of non-academic humanities experts could include:

- Cultural expert or someone with lived experience
- Skilled conversation facilitator
- Self-taught expert
- Artist or writer (if they are talking about humanities topics like human values, history, inspiration, culture, social context)

For major grants, a resume of no more than two pages and a letter (from the project director or humanities subject expert) explaining the expert's involvement in the project (e.g. guest lecturer, topic and title of lecture) must be included.

Can I preview the application form?

Yes! For a preview of the questions, visit the grants resources page.

<https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/grant-application-resources/> There is a link to a PDF with the questions that all grant applicants must answer, plus documents with the additional questions for major and media grant applications.

How do I fill out the budget form?

The budget form is the number-one place where new (and even experienced) grant applicants get confused and make mistakes. We definitely recommend that you contact HN staff for advice. Here's what a section of the budget forms look like, and a link to a page where you can download the budget form. (It's also available to download through the grant application page):

A	B	C	D	E	F
Budget Items	Explanation	HN Funds	Cash Match	In-Kind Match	Total Funds
					0
TOTALS		3,750	2,500	5,480	11,730

Click here to find budget form download links: <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/grant-application-resources/>

1. Start by making a list of all your project's expenses – including the value of "overhead" items directly related to your project, and donated items or volunteer time. (Tip: you can look up the current Nebraska value for an hour of volunteer service at independentsector.org.)
2. Enter each expense into the appropriate category in the HN budget form, but divide the dollar amounts among the "HN funds", "cash match", and in-kind match" columns. The gray-shaded areas are calculated fields that will automatically total lines and rows.
In-kind match: first fill in the value of any items or services that are donated or are "overhead"

expenses that you would not pay a bill for.

HN Funds: Put grant-eligible direct expenses here. See “what kinds of expenses can be paid with HN grant funds?” in the FAQ

Cash Match: Put direct expenses that are not eligible for payment with HN funds here. See “what kinds of expenses can be paid with HN grant funds?” in the FAQ

3. Look at the totals at the bottom of the page to see if you are meeting the match requirement. If the current match is less than the minimum required match, move some expenses from the “HN funds” column into the “cash match” column until you meet the match requirement.
4. Enter the total for the HN funds column (column C) in your grant application as the amount of funds you are requesting, and upload your budget document where the application requests it.

What are cash and in-kind matching funds?

HN wants to be a partner on humanities projects around the state and not the sole funder. For this reason, we require at least a 50% match to be demonstrated in the grant application budget. In other words, whatever the total grant budget, HN can pay for no more than half. The other 50% of the grant funds must come from the applicant’s resources as matching funds, either in “cash” or “in-kind” match. Contact HN staff when you have questions.

CASH MATCH

IN-KIND MATCH

Expenses for which you have to pay a bill, like:

Donated items or services, or “overhead” expenses directly related to the project, like:

- Humanist honoraria that exceed \$1,000 the first day and \$500 for subsequent days
- Humanist per diem (food and hotel) more than \$100 per day
- Humanist travel expenses exceeding 60 cents per mile or economy airfare rates
- Humanities Nebraska Speakers Bureau fees that are part of a larger program, or other assistance or resources from Humanities Nebraska (whether applied for by your organization or some other organization).
- Administrative expenses (like project director or budget administrator salary) directly related

- Volunteer time (you may use the hourly value of volunteer services for Nebraska found at independentsector.org)
 - The value of donated goods or services
 - The value of free publicity
 - The value of free facility use
 - Use of your own facility for a project event, at rates you would ordinarily rent it to others
-

to the project that exceed 20% of the grant request

- Any other direct expenses to make the 1:1 funding match balance
 - Art supplies
-

Am I allowed to charge a fee or admission for my grant-funded event?

The short answer is yes. However, the estimated income from a fee or admission charge should cover event expenses, rather than serve as a fundraiser. Grant reviewers may also consider whether the fee or admission may be a barrier to attendance.

Can HN help publicize my event?

Yes! If HN gives you a grant, we will include your public grant-funded events on our web calendar <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/events/> and, as appropriate, in our weekly e-blast that goes out to humanities fans all across the state. We gather information from your grant application, plus your organization's website and social media, but it's even better if you can send a direct press release to Grants Management and Outreach Specialist Katie Bradshaw katie@humanitiesnebraska.org

HN policy is to list only grant-funded and Speakers Bureau events on our calendar or e-blast. If you have a Nebraska-based humanities event that HN did not fund, we may be able to promote it on our social media if it fits with HN's mission. Contact SheriLynne Hansen sherilynne@humanitiesnebraska.org to request social media promotion.

What do I need to remember as I undertake my grant-funded project?

See the information on the "Manage Your Grants" page. <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/manage-your-grants/>

What do I do if my program changes from what I wrote in my grant application?

Don't stress – contact HN staff! While we expect grant applicants to carry out their programming as described in good faith, we know things sometimes change. Talk to us about changes to humanists or event dates or budget items.

It's easier to discuss changes to your program during your grant period rather than waiting until the final report to sort things out. Budget changes that result in unused funds require you to return those funds to HN. However, HN staff can approve certain budget changes that allow you to flex your grant budget within the terms of your grant agreement to avoid returning funds. Such changes must be approved in advance.

Are there limits on the number of grants I can apply for?

There are no limits on the number of grant applications one entity can submit; however, the number of grants PER PROJECT is limited.

Applicants are expected to address all aspects of a project in a single application. An exception is a mini grant to help plan a larger project that may be eligible for a major or media grant.

Repeat applications for recurring events may be expected to request less funding, seek funding from other sources, and/or show innovation in the project.

HN discourages applicants from submitting more than one grant application in a single grant round, as those applications will compete against each other.

Can two organizations both apply for HN grants for the same project?

No. Applicants are expected to address all aspects of a project in a single application. If multiple entities are working together on the same project, they should coordinate to submit a single application.

HN funds can't be used as matching funds for another HN grant, even if the applicants are different. Grant funds from other sources may be used as matching funds, though. Some applicants have used grants from the Nebraska Arts Council to help provide matching funds for a HN grant, for example. <https://www.artscouncil.nebraska.gov/arts-education/grants/>

How does the application process work?

Step 1 - applicant logs in to the HN grants system

Log into your organization's existing account in the HN grants management site. If you are a new applicant, create a new account. All applications must be submitted through this system. Log in here: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=nebraskahumanities&>

Note: if your organization has previously applied for a HN grant but you can't find the login information, please contact HN staff for assistance. Please don't create another new account, which will duplicate your organization's information in the HN grants system.

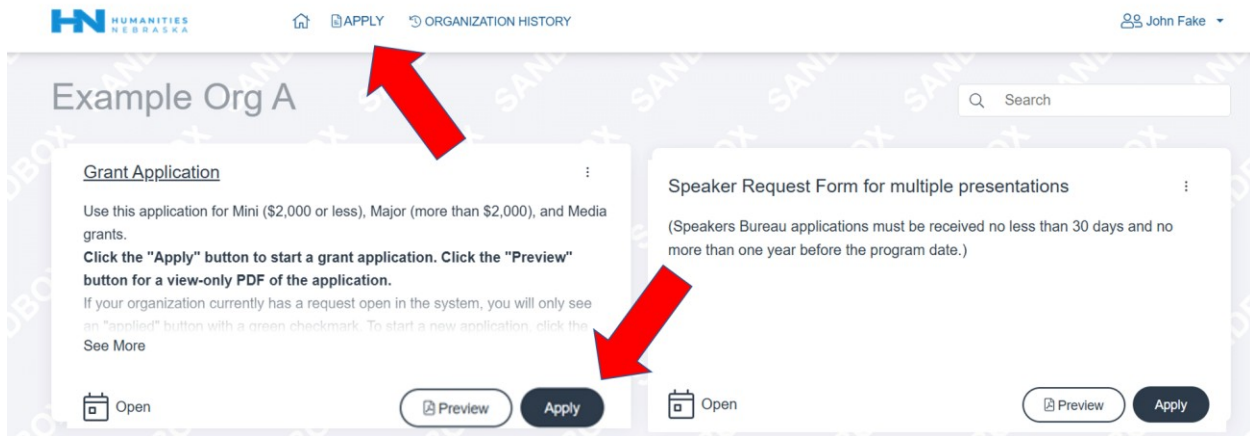
Step 2 - applicant opens an application, enters the requested information, and submits it

For a full explanation of how the online application system is laid out, visit this page: <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/applicant-dashboard-update-2025/>

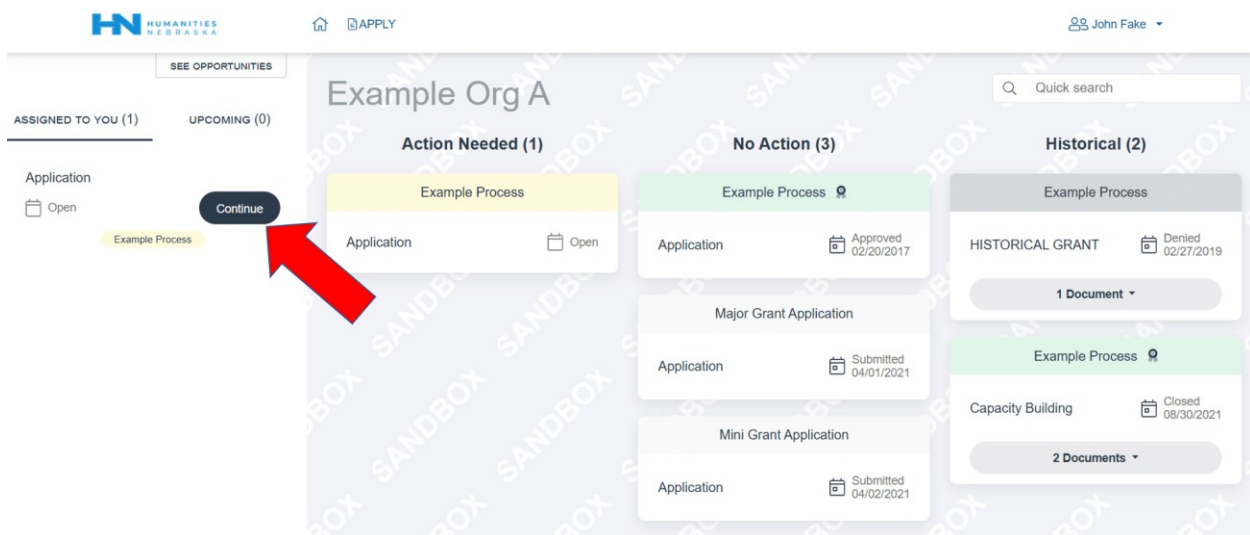
Otherwise, here is a summary:

When you are logged in:

- For a new application, click on the "apply" icon on the top of your HN grants page dashboard to open the page of available opportunities, then click the "apply" button next to the application you want to start.



- To work on a draft application that you have previously saved, log into the system, and your draft will appear in the “assigned to you” column on the left side of the page. Click on the “continue” button to continue working on your draft.



Fill in the grant application form online. Progress on your draft application can be saved in the system. HN staff can log in to view your draft and provide feedback upon request.

Your application is not complete until you click “submit”. Incomplete applications, or applications submitted after the deadline, will not be considered.

To preview the questions without logging in to the application system, visit the grants resources page: <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/grant-application-resources/>

Additional considerations:

- All applications will need to be virtually signed by both a project director and a budget administrator, who cannot be the same person and cannot be from the same family or household.

- Nonprofit organizations that have not applied to HN before need to upload a copy of their 501(c) determination letter. Government entities, including schools, are exempt from this requirement.
- All applicants will need to upload a project budget, preferably using the Excel form provided. The budget forms are available to download in the application, and are downloadable on the grants resources page as well. <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants-landing-page/grant-application-resources/>

Step 3 - HN staff prepares information

HN staff assembles information packets for each grant application and may reach out with clarification questions if time permits.

Step 4 - grant review

The grant applications are reviewed by the HN Board of Directors.

The media grant review process is a little different – media grants go first to technical reviewers. You will then have an opportunity to respond to the reviewer comments before the application is submitted to the HN Board of Directors for review.

Grant requests are fully or partially awarded based on guideline compliance, the relative merit of the application compared to other applications submitted in the same round, and the total request of all applications in a round compared to the budget available that round. HN may choose not to fund an application, fund a grant at a lesser amount, fund only certain parts of a project, and/or fund a grant with certain stipulations.

Step 5 - applicant notification

HN contacts applicants by phone and/or email to notify them of their grant status. This contact will usually occur within one month after a mini grant application deadline, within two months after a major grant application deadline, and within three and a half months after a media grant application deadline.