

Frequently Asked Questions 2026 Louisiana Culture Care Fund Grant

What are the humanities?

When Congress established the National Endowment for the Humanities, and subsequently state and territorial councils like the LEH, it defined the humanities to include the following disciplines:

- History
- Philosophy
- Literature
- Foreign languages (classical and modern)
- Linguistics
- Comparative religion
- Ethics
- Archaeology
- Jurisprudence
- Art history
- Theory and criticism
- Philosophical and historical approaches to social sciences

These fields are differentiated from the quantitative social sciences and the arts (visual, performing, or creative). However, the social sciences and the arts can interface with the humanities in terms of method or content. For example, political theory and cultural anthropology and geography are considered humanities disciplines. So are folklore and certain interdisciplinary fields such as American, ethnic, and women's studies.

A common point of confusion is differentiating humanities-focused organizations from humanitarian-focused organizations. If your organization does not have a history of public programming related to the NEH-defined subject matter listing shared above but are focused on providing humanitarian aid through first response or health efforts, you are not eligible for this grant stream. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to LEH Grant Manager, Wayne Dowdy at dowdy@leh.org.

Is nonprofit status a condition of funding?

Organizations eligible to receive funds under the 2026 Louisiana Culture Care Fund Grant are humanities-based organizations operating within the sixty-four parishes of Louisiana. Organizations must be nonprofits with 501(c)(3) status; public-facing organizations operating within accredited institutions of higher learning; state and local government agencies; or state or federally recognized Native American tribal governments in Louisiana.

What is cost-share?

Cost-share is the amount of funding provided by non-LEH sources. This support may be either in actual cash or in the form of in-kind contributions including volunteer time, contributed equipment and supplies, contributed facilities, and indirect costs. **Cost-sharing is not required for the 2026 Louisiana Culture Care Fund Grant Opportunity.**

What costs are eligible for LEH 2026 Louisiana Culture Care Fund Grant?

Allowable costs must clearly and directly cover general operating expenses for humanities-based organizations operating within the sixty-four parishes of Louisiana.

Programmatic costs are unallowable for this grant stream. Eligible operating expenses include (but are not limited to):

Strategic Planning

- Hiring consultants
- Staff time
- Professional development or training
- Space rental

Sustaining Operations

- staff retention (salaries, wages, and benefits)
- rent
- insurance
- utilities

Capacity Building

- Hiring staff or contracting consultants
- Professional development or training

How are grant applications evaluated?

LEH staff reviews all grant applications submitted through the LEH online application portal. The online application closes at 11:59 p.m. on the day of the specified deadline. Late applications will not be accepted or reviewed. No exceptions are made. The staff issues recommendations to the LEH Grants Review Committee. The 2026 Louisiana Culture Care Fund Grant committee approves or rejects applications based on the following criteria:

- Organization's record of humanities-based programming
- Alignment with approved use of funds
- Geographic location (organization must be in one of Louisiana's sixty-four parishes)*
- Organization size*
- Estimated annual audience*
- Town or parish population density*
- Organizations who previously received an Emergency Readiness Grant will be given priority consideration.

** LEH aims to reach all areas of the state and support organizations of all sizes and communities of benefit.*

What final reports and evaluation are required for funded projects?

All grants require submission of a final report at the end of the project period of performance. ***Grantees should refer to the specific reporting requirements specified in their award agreement for detailed instructions on what to include.***

What role does LEH staff play?

The LEH staff is available to review preliminary proposals, review preliminary budgets, and advise on LEH guidelines. If you have questions about 2026 Louisiana Culture Care Fund Grants or if you would like to set up a virtual meeting to discuss your plans, we encourage you to contact Grant Manager Wayne Dowdy at dowdy@leh.org.

Additional FAQ's from previous Q&A sessions, by topic

990 forms:

Q: If our organization does not file form 990, would an audit suffice?

A: For this grant application, your form 990 from the most recently completed fiscal year demonstrates which grant tier you would qualify under should your organization receive an award. If your organization does not file a form 990 you may submit the equivalent for this purpose, whether that is a 990N or a general ledger or statement of account demonstrating your most recently completed fiscal year's general operating costs. If you are not certain of what to submit for your organization, please reach out to the grant program officer for clarification.

Q: Our organization files a 990N - which has no numbers associated with it- will this form satisfy the required tax status verification component?

A: A 990-N form or Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) is used by small, tax-exempt organizations whose gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less. This is an acceptable document to submit to satisfy this required component.

Organization types:

Q: Can organizations with fiscal sponsors apply?

A: No.

Q: Are there any limitations on size of the organizations

A: No but grant award amounts will be determined by the organization's annual general operating budget for your most recently completed fiscal year. Please refer to the published guidance on the website or see the recorded video guidance for further details.

Q: How do you define a "humanities-based" organization?

A: Please refer to LCCF grant webpage and the recorded video guidance.

Q: We apply as a historic site that is owned by a larger entity. Should we base the request amount off the site's operating budget? The larger entity is national and encompasses work outside Louisiana, so we typically just submit based off the historic site's budget, rather than the larger entity's budget.

A: Yes. The operating budget under which you apply should be the one that most accurately reflects your specific office, division, or department if you are a part of a larger organization, such as an institute of higher education or similar.

Q: I see that preference will be given to organizations that haven't received the grant before. What if an organization that has received a grant has new management - a new executive director and administration?

A: Change in personnel is not considered when assessing whether an organization is a previous recipient under this grant program. While your organization's history of grantmaking from LEH is a consideration for discussion by reviewers, it is one of many factors and does not automatically disqualify an applicant. Please refer to published guidance on the RFP webpage and the video guidance for further details.

Q: Does the timing of our application submission matter? Are these applications awarded on a "first-come-first-served" basis?

A: No, not for this grant program.

Q: Strategic planning: can the funds cover curriculum development and consulting as we expand our youth theater programs and outreach (part of a 4-year plan leading to our 50th anniversary in 2028)

A: Costs covered by this grant should be operational rather than programmatic. If you propose to cover costs that may seem more programmatic in nature, please reach out to the grant program officer to discuss the context of your situation.

Q: If our organization is established in another state, but our work focuses on Louisiana, are we eligible to apply?

A: Organizations located within the 64 parishes are eligible to apply. If your organization does not meet this criterion, please reach out to the grant program officer to discuss the context of your situation.

Costs covered:

Q: Can you apply for funding that would cover costs to pay for a consultant that you already have a signed contract with?

A: Existing or ongoing contracts are acceptable. Funds are to be expended within the grant period of performance.

Q: Can a non-profit 501(c)(3) civic organization apply for the grant to help cover building insurance?

A: Yes.

Q: If an organization is primarily a performing arts organization (touring orchestra), but they have existing programming that works to preserve Black art and culture for youth within New Orleans, can they apply?

A: If you are a creative arts organization with humanities-focused public programming, please provide examples to support your case within the application. Creative arts organizations with no humanities-focused public programming are not eligible to apply.

Q: Can staff time - salaries and benefits include contracted persons?

A: Yes.

Q: Insofar as the hiring of consultants under the strategic planning component, is the hiring of a grant writer to seek funds for other projects an allowable expense?

A: Salaries/wages of current or to-be-hired employees or contractors, including administrative services, are acceptable.

Application components:

Q: Do we have to provide a detailed, line-itemized budget of how we will spend the funds as part of the application?

A: A budget or budget detail is not required for this grant program. You are asked to identify within which cost categories your funding will be expended.

Notice of award:

Q: Once submitted when will we know if we are awarded? Will there be a final report required?

A: Applicants will be notified of award or decline in March of 2026. A final report is required as specified in your award agreement, typically a set period of days after completion of the grant period of performance to close out the grant.

Post award requirements:

Q: If awarded, are we required to add the LEH logo on our materials?

A: You are required to make a public announcement and where applicable and reasonable indicate LEH funding for your organization. Details for this requirement will be further provided in a communications toolkit that accompanies the grant award agreement.

Q: If we chose to use funding for staff retention or insurance or utilities, (something that will use it up right away within a month or two) will we just be able to send one or two months of documentation to support the expenditures?

A: You are required to retain documentation affiliated with this grant for a period of time specified in the grant award agreement. Reporting requirements outlined in the award agreement and reporting forms accessible via the LEH grant portal (once awarded) will indicate what specific documentation, if any, is required to be submitted.

Character counts:

Q: Is the character count in the application with or without spaces?

A: With spaces.

Q: The character limits on the application are pretty tight – can applicants attach additional documentation?

A: Additional documentation should provide supplemental illustration or examples that support the content of the completed fields in the application form. They are not intended to circumvent the specified character limitations. Please limit your text responses as determined by the fields provided.

Q: Is it possible to include links to audio or other kinds of examples?

A: Yes, please provide any such documentation via a PDF document.

Grant period:

Q: If we're interested in a grant for strategic planning, is the timing such that we could complete strategic planning this year?

A: The grant period will run from March 2026 through March 2027, with exact dates specified in your award agreement documents. Costs covered by the grant should fall within this period of performance.