FY25 Mini Grant Application Review Guide
Research

Thank you for serving as an FY25 mini grant application reviewer! This review guide is meant to serve as a springboard for your own thoughts about and assessments of our **research mini grant application** (there is a separate guide for public projects mini grant applications). We suggest you use it in the following way:

- Download the Staff Notes document from the Shared Documents section of the grants portal.
- Through the homepage of the grants portal, open the application.
- Go through the application question-by-question, using the questions in the guide as prompts, and the Staff Notes document for information about eligibility and technical notes.
- Once you are ready to share your feedback and recommendations for the application, complete and submit the evaluation form for the application, also available through the grants portal.
- Repeat these steps for each application assigned to you for review.

Please contact grants@rihumanities.org with any questions, and thank you again!

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Eligibility Check

Please refer to the Staff Notes document for staff assessment of the eligibility considerations of the project. Potential eligibility considerations may arise throughout the application.

Project Plan – The What and the Why

Project Description (The "What")
- Does the applicant have a clear and specific vision of the project's topics, research plan, and key questions?

Project Significance (The "Why")
- Has the applicant clearly identified the importance of the project? Is that importance compelling?
- Is it clear what changes the applicant hopes to make through the project in their intended audiences, local communities, and/or Rhode Island?

Project Plan – Concluding Activity (Non-Doc. Film and Media)
- Is it clear what will happen as part of the concluding activity?
- Given the nature of the research project, does the concluding activity seem reasonable and appropriate to communicate the findings to the public?

1

Project Plan – Concluding Activity (Doc. Film and Media)

Sharing of Findings
- Is it clear if they plan to submit a report/presentation, or if they plan to present their findings publicly?
- If they do plan to present their findings publicly, is it clear what will happen as part of the concluding activity?
- If they plan to present their findings publicly, given the nature of the research project, does the concluding activity seem reasonable and appropriate?

Project Plan – Logistics

Project Timeline
- Does this timeline seem reasonable / feasible given the scope of the project?

Relevant Skills / Background
- Given the nature of the project, does it seem that the project team has the necessary skills / background to feasibly and appropriately realize the project?

Connection to the Humanities

Humanities Content (definition on p. 12 of Grants Guidelines)
- Is the project meaningfully engaging with humanities content?

Humanities Methods (definition on p. 12 of Grants Guidelines)
- Is the project meaningfully using humanities methods?

Research Sources
- Has the applicant identified sources to perform their research? Do the identified sources seem relevant, sufficient, and culturally appropriate given the research topic?

Research Bibliography (Optional)
- If provided, does this bibliography seem relevant, sufficient, and culturally appropriate given the research topic?

Humanities Scholars (definition on p. 9 of Grants Guidelines)
- Given the nature of the project, are there any critical areas of humanities scholarship that are lacking?
- Given the current levels of commitment from listed humanities scholars, do you have confidence that humanities scholar involvement will be sufficient to realize the project?
- Given the nature of the project, has the applicant engaged with culturally appropriate humanities scholars?

Community Engagement – Partners and Civic Health

Partners (Optional)
- If applicable, given the nature of the project, are there any critical areas of partnership needed that are lacking?
- If applicable, given the current levels of commitment from listed partners, do you have confidence that partner involvement will be sufficient to realize the project?
- If applicable, given the nature of the project, has the applicant engaged with culturally appropriate partners?
- If the applicant is working with K-12 students, have they established any necessary partnerships with schools/districts/teachers/after-school programs, etc.?

Contributions to Civic Health
- Has the applicant indicated via the checkboxes how the project will contribute to Rhode Island's civic health, and do these answers seem reasonable given the nature of the project?
- If the applicant has provided their own explanation of how the project will contribute to the civic health of Rhode Island, is that explanation clear and reasonable?

Community Engagement – Audience

Target Audience(s)
- Has the applicant identified specific target audiences for the project?
- Has the applicant clearly articulated how their project design reflects the needs and interests of their target audiences, as they understand them?

Audience Outreach Plans
- *If the applicant is sharing their findings publicly:*
  - Are the audience outreach plans specific, robust, culturally appropriate, and feasible?
  - If the applicant has past experience with their target audiences, how is that experience informing their outreach plan? If they do not, do they have specific, robust, culturally appropriate, and feasible plans to reach these new audiences?
- *If the project is part of a doc. film and media project and the applicant is **not** sharing their findings publicly:*
  - Do the preliminary audience outreach plans seem robust, culturally appropriate, and feasible?

Project Plan (Evaluation)

Evaluation Plan

- Is it clear which part of the project the applicant seeks to evaluate?
- Given this, does their evaluation plan seem appropriate, feasible, and sufficient?

Project Plan (Budget)

Please note that RI Humanities staff have noted any technical issues with the budget in the Staff Notes. Staff and reviewers should solely review line items to evaluate their eligibility and connection to the grant-funded project.
Additional Documents (optional)
Budget
- Do the budget line items support the proposed project?
- Do the budget line items correlate with the stated project scope and timeline?

- Do any additional documents provided strengthen the application? Introduce new concerns?