



# NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES & NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

FOR FY2027, THE U OF I SYSTEM REQUESTS \$215 MILLION FOR NEH & \$215 MILLION FOR NEA.

NEH	
FY2026	= \$207M
FY2025	= \$207M
FY2024	= \$207M
FY2023	= \$207M
NEA	
FY2026	= \$207M
FY2025	= \$207M
FY2024	= \$207M
FY2023	= \$207M

**Appropriations Bill:** Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

**Agency:** National Endowment for the Humanities & National Endowment for the Arts

**Questions? Contact:**

**Paul Weinberger**

Assistant VP, Federal Relations  
[paulw3@uillinois.edu](mailto:paulw3@uillinois.edu)

**Melissa Haas**

Director, Federal Relations  
[mshaas@uillinois.edu](mailto:mshaas@uillinois.edu)

**Grace May**

Federal Relations Specialist  
[gamay3@uillinois.edu](mailto:gamay3@uillinois.edu)

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH)**

NEH is the most important source of federal funding for research and scholarship in the humanistic fields, including history, literature, and foreign languages. With a limited federal budget, NEH is able to expand cultural and historical scholarship into K-12 classrooms, sponsor humanistic research and scholarship, and support preservation and exhibition efforts at libraries and museums.

Institutions in the state of Illinois have traditionally received more funding collectively than those of any other state in the Midwest region. From FY15 to FY25, Illinois was awarded more than \$53.7 million in grants by the NEH.

**NEH-Supported Projects at UIUC**

The NEH budget includes crucial support for humanities scholarship that reaches outside the academy to educate and inform the general public—a direction UIUC has also taken through programming at the [Humanities Research Institute](#) (HRI). HRI also administers the internal competition for campus nominees to the NEH Summer Stipend program, which aims to stimulate new research in the humanities and its publication, and has funded many UIUC faculty.

NEH [awarded](#) three years of funding to a training program developed jointly by UIUC and Indiana University. The award punctuates the success of and broad need for the training known as the Intensive NAGPRA Summer Training & Education Program (INSTEP). INSTEP focuses on sharing best practices related to Ancestral human remains and

cultural items under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

The Illinois Newspaper Project at the UIUC Library [received a grant](#) of \$324,189 from NEH, to digitize 100,000 pages of historical Illinois newspapers, as part of the National Digital Newspaper Program, a partnership between the NEH and the Library of Congress.

UIUC faculty members have historically been successful in being awarded NEH Fellowships. NEH Fellowships are highly competitive, with 1,120 applicants competing, on average, for the prestigious award.

**NEH-Supported Projects at UIC**

UIC's [Institute for the Humanities](#) seeks to foster an intellectually vital, interdisciplinary community of scholars. As the hub of humanities scholarship on campus, the Institute provides a forum for intellectual exchange among faculty and students at UIC and other colleges and universities in the region.

**NEH-Supported Projects at UIS**

Building on its location in the hometown of Abraham Lincoln, the University of Illinois Springfield recently established a [Center for Lincoln Studies](#) that is expected to grow into a national center for scholarship, teaching, and public history centered on Abraham Lincoln's life, leadership, and legacy. The Center facilitates research and scholarship by offering public history interpretation, hosting visiting scholars, engaging broad campus and public audiences, offering student internships and a youth leadership academy, and undertaking innovative research projects that engage

students in experiential learning opportunities. In addition to being supported by private gifts, the Center pursues relevant federal funding opportunities and partnerships at appropriate agencies to support programming, research, publishing, and dissemination of materials, hosting of events, and other relevant activities.

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### **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS (NEA)**

Funding from the NEA has helped ensure that our communities—especially underserved or rural communities—receive support to enhance their cultural, artistic, and innovative opportunities in the arts. The past 10 years have seen nearly \$500,000 of awards from the NEA to projects across the U of I System.

In the past five years, the NEA distributed \$31.3M in federal funding, either directly or through state and regional partners, in Illinois. Support of this kind for regional arts ventures ensures the presence of a lively arts culture and economy, where our graduates are often leading contributors within the state's creative workforce.

### **INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS)**

IMLS is an important source of funding for libraries, museums, and archives in Illinois, and for information science research. Strong funding for IMLS will assure continued investment in nationwide initiatives that broaden access to information, improve student outcomes, and foster literacy.

In the past five years, IMLS awarded 22 grants to the University of Illinois, providing nearly \$5.3M of direct support. These awards supported a range of activities, including improved library services, student success initiatives, the conservation of library and archives resources, the digitization of unique collections, and the development of standards and best practices. IMLS support has also been critical in helping early-career faculty develop innovative information-science research, in topics such as artificial intelligence and the credibility of scientific research. Currently, the Urbana-Champaign Library is applying for a grant to better understand and address structural barriers affecting library professionals.

Complementing its direct grant programs, IMLS supports library services through a population-based appropriation, provided annually through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States Program. In 2024, \$5.7M was provided to Illinois, supporting projects and programs throughout the state. Subwards made through the LSTA have been particularly critical in supporting young people through public library/community partnerships.

In 2024, a UIUC professor was [awarded](#) a \$578,677 grant from IMLS under the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program to work with the Public Library Association to implement the Data Storytelling Toolkit for Libraries project to provide guidance and tools to help public libraries reach audiences with stories based on data.

Another UIUC professor was [awarded](#) a \$649,921 Early Career Development grant in 2023 under the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program to research the needs of professional data curators and blind patrons to help support accessible data curation and inclusive data visualization

In 2024, a UIUC professor was [awarded](#) a \$149,995 grant from IMLS for a project to enhance the capacity of makerspaces to meet the evolving needs of their communities as well as advance the maker movement nationally.