

**From:** Sharry, Sharon <sharrys@joneslibrary.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 24, 2023 12:51 PM  
**To:** Lee, Jeffrey  
**Cc:** Bockelman, Paul; Mangano, Sean; Audette, Susan; Lefebvre, Alex; Sarat, Austin; Ameen, Farah; Edwards, Lee; Pam, Robert; Tamson, Ely  
**Subject:** FW: Evaluations for your NEH Grant Application CHA-292057

**From:** challenge@neh.gov <challenge@neh.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 13, 2023 4:54 PM  
**To:** Ginny Hamilton <manager@joneslibrarycapitalcampaign.org>; Sharry, Sharon <sharrys@joneslibrary.org>  
**Subject:** Evaluations for your NEH Grant Application CHA-292057

Thank you for applying to NEH's Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants program.

As with all applications submitted to NEH, your proposal was read and discussed by knowledgeable persons outside the agency who advised NEH on its merits. NEH staff commented on matters of fact or on significant issues that otherwise would have been missing from these evaluations and made recommendations to the National Council on the Humanities, NEH's advisory board. The National Council then met to advise the NEH Chair, who considered all stages of the review process in making final funding decisions, as is prescribed by law.

Per your request, a copy of the panelists' ratings and written comments on your proposal appears below this message. The range of possible ratings is Excellent (E), Very Good (VG), Good (G), Some Merit (SM), and Not Competitive (NC). The panelists' names and references to other panelists or applicants have been omitted.

The next application deadline for the [Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants](#) program is May 17, 2023. Please visit [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov) to learn about NEH funding opportunities.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Walker  
Director, Office of Challenge Programs  
National Endowment for the Humanities

### ***Evaluation from Panelist 1***

#### **1. Humanities significance and audience.**

**In what ways are the institution's current and proposed building, site, collections, activities and/or programs significant for the advancement of the humanities? Who are the identified audiences served, and how will they benefit from the outcomes of the capital project over the long term?**

**2. Long-term impact and institutional commitment.**

How well is the proposed project aligned with and integrated into long-range institutional planning? How strong is the institution's commitment to the project and its expected outcomes? If partners are identified, are they appropriate and committed to the project?

**3. Project plans.**

Is the plan for the capital project advanced and thought through well enough to be realistic and feasible? Are the work plan and budget convincing? Has the compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations been taken into appropriate consideration?

**4. Fundraising plans.**

To what extent do the institution's organization, resources, and history of fundraising suggest that it will be able to conduct a successful campaign to meet the requirement to raise third-party non-federal gifts? Is the timeline and plan for fundraising realistic and aligned with the capital project? Are the prospective sources of funding promising and realistic?

**5. Project and fundraising teams.**

Does the project team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities? Does the fundraising team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities?

**6. Project outcomes and their sustainability.**

Are the proposed outcomes and deliverables reasonable and aligned with the budget and work plan? To what extent will the project, as described, help the applicant achieve its long-term goals for work in the humanities? How compelling are the institution's plans to sustain the project outcomes in the long term?

This proposal and the project Amherst is working towards are excellent. They clearly identify challenges, offer well-thought-out plans to address them, and create positive impact to the community while doing so. The pre- and post-renovation data for other similar centers is a great addition, and adds credibility to the careful work of the planners. My response to all questions by which we are to evaluate this proposal is "yes", and they've made a very compelling case for funding.

**Your initial rating for this project**

E, Excellent

**Additional comments after reviewing fellow panelists' evaluations:**

**Your final rating for this project**

E, Excellent

***Evaluation from Panelist 2***

**1. Humanities significance and audience.**

**In what ways are the institution's current and proposed building, site, collections, activities and/or programs significant for the advancement of the humanities? Who are the identified audiences served, and how will they benefit from the outcomes of the capital project over the long term?**

**2. Long-term impact and institutional commitment.**

**How well is the proposed project aligned with and integrated into long-range institutional planning? How strong is the institution's commitment to the project and its expected outcomes? If partners are identified, are they appropriate and committed to the project?**

**3. Project plans.**

**Is the plan for the capital project advanced and thought through well enough to be realistic and feasible? Are the work plan and budget convincing? Has the compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations been taken into appropriate consideration?**

**4. Fundraising plans.**

**To what extent do the institution's organization, resources, and history of fundraising suggest that it will be able to conduct a successful campaign to meet the requirement to raise third-party non-federal gifts? Is the timeline and plan for fundraising realistic and aligned with the capital project? Are the prospective sources of funding promising and realistic?**

**5. Project and fundraising teams.**

**Does the project team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities? Does the fundraising team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities?**

**6. Project outcomes and their sustainability.**

**Are the proposed outcomes and deliverables reasonable and aligned with the budget and work plan? To what extent will the project, as described, help the applicant achieve its long-term goals for work in the humanities? How compelling are the institution's plans to sustain the project outcomes in the long term?**

Strong and clear case for need to help preserve collections and expand and improve access to humanities-based work, directly in-line with NEH program and its goals. It may seem like a small element of their plan, but I especially liked their intent to work collaboratively with other partners to provide easy (but secure) after hours access to meeting spaces so the library could be used to advance the humanities even when it is officially closed. High dollar amount requested. Will defer to NEH on funding capacity.

**Your initial rating for this project**

E, Excellent

**Additional comments after reviewing fellow panelists' evaluations:**

## **Your final rating for this project**

E, Excellent

### ***Evaluation from Panelist 3***

#### **1. Humanities significance and audience.**

**In what ways are the institution's current and proposed building, site, collections, activities and/or programs significant for the advancement of the humanities? Who are the identified audiences served, and how will they benefit from the outcomes of the capital project over the long term?**

#### **2. Long-term impact and institutional commitment.**

**How well is the proposed project aligned with and integrated into long-range institutional planning? How strong is the institution's commitment to the project and its expected outcomes? If partners are identified, are they appropriate and committed to the project?**

#### **3. Project plans.**

**Is the plan for the capital project advanced and thought through well enough to be realistic and feasible? Are the work plan and budget convincing? Has the compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations been taken into appropriate consideration?**

#### **4. Fundraising plans.**

**To what extent do the institution's organization, resources, and history of fundraising suggest that it will be able to conduct a successful campaign to meet the requirement to raise third-party non-federal gifts? Is the timeline and plan for fundraising realistic and aligned with the capital project? Are the prospective sources of funding promising and realistic?**

#### **5. Project and fundraising teams.**

**Does the project team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities? Does the fundraising team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities?**

#### **6. Project outcomes and their sustainability.**

**Are the proposed outcomes and deliverables reasonable and aligned with the budget and work plan? To what extent will the project, as described, help the applicant achieve its long-term goals for work in the humanities? How compelling are the institution's plans to sustain the project outcomes in the long term?**

This projects hits most of the marks for this challenge grant. Deep humanities connections, increased access to public gathering spaces for the community and partner community organizations. I like the inclusion of expanding storytelling of African-American community of Amherst. Project and fundraising plans and teams appear solid. This project looks like it is long overdue for a public library serving a diverse and historic community.

## **Your initial rating for this project**

VG, Very Good

## **Additional comments after reviewing fellow panelists' evaluations:**

I believe I graded this too harshly, especially as I heard from other panelists. This was one of my favorite of the projects.

## **Your final rating for this project**

E, Excellent

## ***Evaluation from Panelist 4***

### **1. Humanities significance and audience.**

**In what ways are the institution's current and proposed building, site, collections, activities and/or programs significant for the advancement of the humanities? Who are the identified audiences served, and how will they benefit from the outcomes of the capital project over the long term?**

### **2. Long-term impact and institutional commitment.**

**How well is the proposed project aligned with and integrated into long-range institutional planning? How strong is the institution's commitment to the project and its expected outcomes? If partners are identified, are they appropriate and committed to the project?**

### **3. Project plans.**

**Is the plan for the capital project advanced and thought through well enough to be realistic and feasible? Are the work plan and budget convincing? Has the compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations been taken into appropriate consideration?**

### **4. Fundraising plans.**

**To what extent do the institution's organization, resources, and history of fundraising suggest that it will be able to conduct a successful campaign to meet the requirement to raise third-party non-federal gifts? Is the timeline and plan for fundraising realistic and aligned with the capital project? Are the prospective sources of funding promising and realistic?**

### **5. Project and fundraising teams.**

**Does the project team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities? Does the fundraising team possess the appropriate expertise and cover all the necessary aspects of the proposed activities?**

### **6. Project outcomes and their sustainability.**

**Are the proposed outcomes and deliverables reasonable and aligned with the budget and work plan? To what extent will the project, as described, help the applicant achieve its long-term goals for work in the humanities? How compelling are the institution's plans to sustain the project outcomes in the long term?**

Excellent proposal with strong humanities content. Solid fundraising plan with an established team. The applicant has a solid plan to sustain the program and the project will have long-term impacts across the community. Only application to mention the importance of the Section 106 process.

**Your initial rating for this project**

E, Excellent

**Additional comments after reviewing fellow panelists' evaluations:**

**Your final rating for this project**

E, Excellent