

1. Who is the North Carolina Humanities Council?

The North Carolina Humanities Council is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The North Carolina Humanities Council is neither a state nor a federal program, but rather a nonprofit whose mission is to serve as an advocate for lifelong learning and thoughtful dialogue about what it means to be human and facilitate the exploration and celebration of the many voices and stories of North Carolina's cultures and heritage. Each year we fund programs for museums, libraries, colleges and universities, and other educational and cultural organizations across the state.

2. What are the humanities?

As the founding legislation of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) states, "Democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens." Humanities disciplines, according to the NEH, include but are not limited "to the study and interpretation of language, both modern and classical; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; and those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods."

Humanities programs encourage reflection about values and ideas through interdisciplinary programs. All people hold beliefs and assumptions which shape the way they see the world, whether it is a contemporary issue or an understanding of an historical event. A humanities program makes audiences more aware of the connection between their values and the views that expressed in public and private life. It also encourages people to understand the values of others and how their views may differ.

A good humanities program makes people think in new ways and questions our previously held assumptions. Humanities programs should also presents the different points of view about an issue or a topic. A humanities program moves beyond facts and information (what, where, and when) to questions of interpretation and analysis (i.e., "What is the meaning of this story?" or "How can we learn from it?" or "Which version of the story is convincing and why?").

Although the particular focus of how people understand human experience may differ from discipline-to-discipline, what is consistent is the necessity of rigorous inquiry to connect meaning to audiences in relevant ways. Humanities projects incorporate how understanding gained from the study of such disciplines helps people reflect on and give meaning to "diverse heritage, traditions, histories, and the current conditions of national life."

For further discussion and clarification of how the North Carolina Humanities Council interprets the humanities and its application to public programs, please feel free to contact our staff.



Road Scholar Guidelines and General Information

3. What is the Road Scholars speakers' bureau program?

The "Road Scholars" program is a scholars' bureau which provides scholarly lectures free of charge to public audiences. The scholars who are a part of this program speak on a variety of topics, all of which are grounded in the humanities. The North Carolina Humanities Council encourages scholars to select topics that are specific but would be accessible to diverse audiences. Creative presentations involving North Carolina's diverse populations, communities, and cultures are especially encouraged. A comprehensive list of Road Scholar cohort members and their presentations and are available at <http://nchumanities.org/programs/road-scholars>.

4. Who is eligible to apply for the program?

North Carolina humanities scholars who hold an advanced degree -- Masters or higher -- in one of the humanities disciplines are welcome to apply. A wider interpretation could also include lay scholars, such as community elders with special expertise in the lifeways, traditions, and worldviews of particular cultures. Affiliation with a college or university is typical, but not required. Scholars may be retired or on temporary leave from a professional position. Applicants must be genuinely interested in addressing public audiences.

5. How do I apply to become a Road Scholar program?

Applications are reviewed semi-annually. Prospective scholars can apply by completing the New Scholar Application form and submitting a copy of their CV and outline of their proposed presentation topics. The application form can be found on our website at: <http://nchumanities.org/content/road-scholars-forms>. Please send all materials to the Program Coordinator via email at cpatton@nchumanities.org or via mail to:

North Carolina Humanities Council
320 East 9th Street, Suite 414
Charlotte, NC 28202

6. The North Carolina Humanities Council cannot support presentations which advocate specific political perspectives, social policy, or public policy stances.

Lectures may, of course, examine different political, historical, or philosophical perspectives of any given issue, but the scholar should be an unbiased presenter and the lecture should be rooted firmly in the humanities scholarship (not just social or public policy). All presentations should provide audiences with a balanced consideration of the issues.



MANY STORIES, ONE PEOPLE

Road Scholar Guidelines and General Information

7. What should a scholar keep in mind when preparing a talk for “Road Scholars”?

Lectures should assume little, if any, prior knowledge of the subject on the part of the audience. Regardless of the category, scholars will be talking to a general audiences of diverse educational and social backgrounds. Presentations should be *30 to 45 minutes* in length with about *15 minutes for general discussion*. Question and answer sessions are encouraged as they allow for direct engagement between audiences and the scholar. Road Scholar presentations typically occur in libraries, museums, small auditoriums, and similar community spaces. The North Carolina Humanities Council strongly requires that all sponsoring organizations publicize the event 6 weeks prior to the date in order to draw and audience of least 25 persons.

8. Does a scholar have to speak to every group that requests a presentation?

No. Groups requesting presentations are always reminded that programs are scheduled at the scholar’s convenience. The North Carolina Humanities Council understands that scholars’ schedules and the distances to some requested events will sometimes limit participation. In addition, scholars may specify the regions they are willing to travel to within the state (see the map <http://nchumanities.org/content/road-scholar-travel-regions>). These travel region preferences are listed with the scholar’s biography so that community groups have this information available when planning their program.

Scholars generally average three lectures per year, although some may well speak many more times than that. **There is a limit of 10 programs per year¹ per scholar.**

9. How do organizations find out about presentations?

All programs are catalogued with descriptions on the North Carolina Humanities Council’s website. Scholars are welcome to notify people and groups about their own presentations as well, however groups interested in utilizing the Road Scholars program must still complete and submit an application to the North Carolina Humanities Council’s Program Coordinator **at least 60 days in advance** of the desired program date.

10. How is the program administered?

General guidelines and requirements for organizations interested in applying to host a Road Scholar lecture are listed here: <http://nchumanities.org/content/requesting-program-faqs>. Groups requesting presentations are instructed to contact the Humanities Council first to verify their eligibility.

- Once the North Carolina Humanities Council receives and application from an eligible

¹ The North Carolina Humanities Council operates on a November 1st to October 31st fiscal year.



Road Scholar Guidelines and General Information

- organization we contact the scholar with the requested date, time, location and program topic.
- If the scholar indicates that they are available the Program Coordinator confirms the date and approves the application.
 - Once the local project director from sponsoring organization is notified of approval they will contact the scholar within one week and send them the Scholar Confirmation form which included logistical and group specific information. **Please note:** It is the responsibility of the scholar and local project director to maintain communication and confirm details prior to the event date. If there are any issues or questions that arise, please do not hesitate to contact the Program Coordinator at the North Carolina Humanities Council who will be able to provide support.

11. How is a scholar paid?

Scholars receive a stipend directly from the North Carolina Humanities Council. Payment is made after each engagement once the Program Coordinator receives the completed and **signed** scholar's Invoice and Evaluation form (we request that this be submitted within one week of the program).

As some underserved areas in North Carolina are not as readily accessible as others, if there are special circumstances the North Carolina Humanities Council's Executive Director may authorize a supplemental travel expense payment.

12. How are scholars chosen?

The North Carolina Humanities Council receives many more scholar applications than can be accommodated. Taken into consideration in choosing scholars are the applicant's academic background and expertise and the diversity they would bring to our scholar catalogue.