



Frequently Asked Questions

Fall 2020

Q1: What are the most important elements in a Cornerstone program? Is there a specific Cornerstone model that Teagle would like to see?

Grants made under the Teagle/NEH partnership are intended to foster: (1) a common intellectual experience anchored in transformative texts and (2) a pathway through general education that helps students connect the humanities to their professional aspirations. These elements may be translated into a variety of curricular structures/formats with an eye to ensuring that students have a substantive experience in the humanities regardless of their desired major or professional aspirations.

The Cornerstone program model pioneered at Purdue University is adaptable and can work in a range of institutional settings. Wherever possible, we encourage institutions to take advantage of curricular structures that already exist. For example, some institutions could adapt an existing first-year seminar requirement so that it serves as the basis for providing a meaningful share of incoming students with a common intellectual experience. Such institutions may benefit from grant resources to build out such a structure along with developing a pathway through general education. Others may choose to embed transformative texts in other parts of the general education curriculum to allow for a more intensive core experience while also developing thematic clusters to help students connect the humanities to problems of practice in various professional domains. Still other institutions, in order to incentivize students to participate, may choose to develop a certificate program whose requirements may be satisfied with general education courses. See this [toolkit](#) for more insight into adapting the Cornerstone program model in your setting.

Q2: Is there a definition of “transformative texts” for Cornerstone programs? Is a list of transformative texts a requirement for a grant proposal?

We are committed to an expansive notion of transformative texts: texts from a variety of traditions that have transformed the world and transform individual lives. While images, films or music may be considered, we place a strong emphasis on works of literature and philosophy, and those works are expected to make up the

majority of texts.

A list of transformative texts is not a requirement of a grant proposal. One purpose of a Teagle/NEH planning grant is to provide time/space for faculty to arrive at a consensus list—and a *living* list as it will need to be continually renewed—of works that they are interested in teaching and that they feel prepared to make accessible and engaging for their students. However, it would be helpful to share examples of texts that you have in mind in concept papers, and if invited, in proposal narratives.

Q3: If a college or university already has a program based on transformative texts, what opportunities exist to apply to the Teagle/NEH Cornerstone grant initiative?

Institutions may consider whether their existing course sequences or programs that emphasize transformative texts could be scaled to serve a larger proportion of the undergraduate student body and whether there are opportunities to create more coherent pathways and/or certificate programs. How the program model will adapt depends on the curricular structures and culture at your institution.

Q4: How does the Cornerstone program model work with dual enrollment or AP credits?

Our hope is that a Cornerstone program incentivizes students to take humanities courses anchored in transformative texts, even if they enter college with general education credits from dual enrollment or other programs.

Q5. Do the PIs have to be tenure-track (for settings that do not have traditional tenure)?

The intent behind the expectation that tenure-track faculty lead Cornerstone grants is to ensure that there is faculty buy-in for curricular change and that such changes can be institutionalized as they are carried out by committed faculty. Given that Teagle-NEH initiative welcomes the participation of a diverse array of institutions—community colleges, liberal arts college, regional comprehensive institutions, and research universities—the grant program is open to institutions that do not offer traditional tenure, with the understanding that revised curricula can still be sustained by faculty on renewable multi-year contracts.

Q6: Am I able to apply for grant funding from both the Teagle Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)?

While Teagle typically does not award multiple active grants to a single institution because we wish to distribute the Foundation's resources as widely as possible, current Teagle grantees may apply for the Cornerstone grant program co-sponsored with NEH.

NEH will consider requests from institutions participating in the Cornerstone initiative as long as they are for different programs/purposes currently supported by NEH grants; in other words, no overlapping costs for programs are permitted, but applications for distinct activities or different phases of the same project are allowable.

Additionally, individual fellowships funded under Cornerstone cannot be awarded to those who already are receiving fellowship support from NEH.