



Digital Content & Newsletters

Whether your project has a dedicated website or the ability to publish content to a partner or institution's website, regular digital updates are a valuable part of your communications output. Posting news stories, blogs, and press releases not only updates your audience on your project's progress but also provides an easy way for your message to be shared on other channels and more broadly by media, stakeholders, and the public.

While social media makes sharing and finding information easier, character and caption limits on popular platforms like Instagram and Twitter/X makes telling a complete story or providing important details difficult. Sharing links and excerpts on these channels ensures the full story is available to your followers and the networks of accounts that may reshare your posts, including NEH. Newsletters, as you'll read below, can be used to send your recent digital content directly to subscribers and drive website traffic.

Digital Content Suggestions

In addition to blog posts and news stories providing general project updates, below are digital content ideas that can be included in your communications plans and samples from NEH and our partners.

Press Releases

After sending press releases to media outlets when you announce project news, they should be posted to your project or institution website. This can be posted as copy directly on the website or as a PDF, but all PDFs must be ADA accessible. For more information on ADA accessible PDFs, [click here](#).

Press releases can then be shared on social media platforms or in newsletters, and a link can be sent to partners to extend its reach. Sample press release posts on the NEH website can be [found here](#).

Press Round-Ups

If your project, team, or final grant products are covered in the press or on blogs/websites, gathering that content and reposting it to your website makes finding the latest coverage, interviews, and appearances easy for your audience.

These posts do not need to be long; an excerpt from the story or a clip from an interview will suffice, but we recommend including a link to the complete coverage with credit. This content is engaging for the public and valuable for stakeholders. Sample press round-up posts on the NEH website can be [found here](#).

Interviews and Q&As

In addition to learning about your project, your audience will be interested in the team behind the work and the partners you may be collaborating with to complete it. Conducting interviews, or informal Question and Answer (Q&A) sessions, with those working on the project gives your coverage a more personal perspective and is a way to generate content when you don't have project updates to share just yet.

Examples on the NEH website include "[A Q&A with NEH Summer Stipend Recipient Allison Lange](#)" and "[A Q&A with NEH-JUSFC Fellow Dennis J. Frost on the History of the Paralympics](#)." In 2020, NEH announced a partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the [HBCU Cultural Heritage Stewardship Initiative](#) – the Trust ran an excellent Q&A series for the initiative with posts on [Stillman College](#), [Tuskegee University](#), and more.

Media Recommendations

Another option for periods when you don't have project updates to share but want to connect with your audience is a media recommendation post. Collecting the books, resources, films and documentaries, articles, and podcasts that influenced the project, are of interest to team members, or relate to the project can generate interest as the project continues to develop. These posts are also a way to establish your team as a knowledgeable source on your topic and connect your social media accounts with those of influential figures in your field when you tag them in your social posts with the content.

NEH maintains Virtual Bookshelves of funded projects, gathering media to celebrate nationally recognized heritage and commemorative months – examples like [Women's History Month](#), [Black History Month](#), and [Disability Pride Month](#) can be models for media recommendation posts.

Newsletters

Email newsletters are one of the most impactful digital communications tools you can use. While social media posts can rely on algorithms and busy newsfeeds to reach your audience, newsletters go directly to your subscribers' inboxes and can build a readership that engages with your work and takes action to support it.

Newsletter Platforms

Below are platforms that offer free accounts for sending out email newsletters. Each platform includes premade templates that can be customized by users. For more information on creating graphics for newsletters, see the Communications Resources portion.

- [Mailchimp](#): This platform offers free accounts that include 1,000 monthly sends with premade templates, analytics, and a sign-up landing page.
- [Sender](#): This platform offers free accounts that include up to 2,500 subscribers, 15,000 email sends per month, and Google Analytics capabilities.
- [Mailjet](#): This platform offers free accounts that include 6,000 emails per month and/or 200 per day, unlimited contacts, and statistics.

Timing

When determining the timing and frequency of your email newsletter outreach, here are some general tips to consider:

- **Send Dates:** Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday are the best days to send newsletters (Source: [Campaign Monitor](#)).
 - Friday through Sunday is generally the worst time to send newsletters as many people step away from their inboxes for the weekend.
 - In a 2021 user survey, the platform [HubSpot](#) found that 9 a.m. through 12 p.m. Monday – Wednesday was the best time of day for sends.
- **Cadence:** Determine email frequency—weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc. —before launching your newsletter. You can always send special updates when there are important project developments, but readership improves when your subscribers know when to expect your newsletter and check their inboxes.

Content Suggestions & NEH Newsletter Examples

NEH sends a monthly newsletter, reaching more than 50,000 subscribers on the last Tuesday of each month. NEH newsletters include a variety of content, which can be included in your materials as well:

- Media coverage and interviews with NEH staff/leadership
- Event and webinar registration
- Press releases
- News stories and blog posts
- Social media posts, YouTube videos, and account links
- Application details and grant/professional development opportunity deadlines

Graphic Design & Photography

While it's encouraged to share photos directly from your project, they may not always be available. Below are tools for finding public domain images and creating graphics that can stand alone or be used alongside original photography and video on social media, in newsletters, on websites, and in print materials or presentations.

Images

- **[Library of Congress \(LOC\)](#):** The LOC maintains a robust database of photos, prints, and other works of art that are free to use in communications. You can search the full collection or use the thematic sets covering topics like [athletes](#), [farm life](#), and [nursing](#).
- **[Wikimedia Commons](#):** A searchable database of photos, maps, art, and more. Verify the license before using, which is listed at the bottom of each entry.
- **[Flickr Creative Commons](#):** Provided by the photography website Flickr, this tool features images uploaded by users under a Creative Commons license. You can search by subject and license type to be sure an image can be used how you intend.
- **[Unsplash](#):** This website hosts over 3 million images that are free to download and use.
- **Government Agencies:** Photographs produced by government agencies are in the Public Domain and can be used without copyright, permission, or payment. In rare cases, images may be copyright protected and will be clearly marked if so. Sources include:
 - [NASA](#)
 - [National Parks Service Digital Assets](#) and [History Collection](#)
 - [NIH National Library of Medicine](#)
 - [National Science Foundation](#)

Graphic Design Tools

- [Canva](#): Canva is a popular tool across industries for creating original graphics for social media, slide decks, newsletters, and press kits. Canva has pre-loaded, customizable templates for a range of projects and can be used as a collaborative tool, with the ability to save brand assets like fonts, colors, and logos for each project. Canva is an ideal tool for those with little-to-no graphic design experience.
- [Adobe Express](#): Adobe Express tool makes the most frequently used features by marketers available to users of all experience levels for free in an accessible format. This includes PDF, video, and image editing, in addition to providing templates for social media posts, print collateral, and more. Adobe Express can be used as a collaborative tool.
- Use [this guide](#) from Hootsuite to find current social media specs for formatting photos, videos, and graphics to fit each platform.

You can register to receive the NEH newsletter and other Office/Division newsletters [at this link](#) and review samples here: [March 2023](#), [January 2023](#), and [November 2022](#).