

DOGE Terminates Federal Grants for the Study of American Music

\$363k in NEH Grants to the American Musicological Society (AMS) Summarily Cancelled

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, April 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On 2 April 2025 at 11:30pm ET, the American Musicological Society (AMS) received notice from Michael McDonald,

“

I am resolved to oppose these cuts and find alternative sources of funding for the affected programs.”

Siovahn A. Walker, Executive Director

Acting Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), that all four (4) of the American Musicological Society's (AMS) active NEH grants had been terminated, effective 1 April 2025. These grants were expected to account for more than \$363,000 in AMS income over the next two years. The money would have been used to support the following programs and projects:

1. Many Musics of America - A landmark event series that

spotlights the richness and diversity of America's musical traditions 250 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

2. Music of the United States of America (MUSA) - A series, begun in the 1980s, of more than forty scholarly editions featuring American musical works of exceptional artistic quality and historical significance.

3. Musics of the United States: Telling Our Stories - A two-week residential Institute for higher education faculty focused on updating the stories we teach about American music by incorporating new humanities research.

4. Music Means: A Digital Platform for Exploring Music and Meaning in America - A planning grant for the development of an interactive digital platform for teaching and learning about American music at all educational levels.

The four NEH grants supporting these programs were summarily cancelled along with all or almost all other NEH grants to both individuals and organizations. Moreover, [NPR reports](#) that 80% of the staff of the National Endowment for the Humanities, a 180-person agency, were immediately placed on administrative leave. This means that not only current NEH funding, but all pending and future grant awards are imperiled.

The AMS has a number of pending grant proposals under consideration by the NEH for a combined total of \$1.35 million dollars. In recent years, the Society has received at least 10% to 15% of its total annual funding from such grants.

On 3 April 2025, the R. F. Judd Executive Director of the AMS, Siovahn A. Walker, wrote a [public letter](#) to all AMS members and constituents announcing these grant terminations. In her letter, she wrote: "I am resolved to oppose these cuts and find alternative sources of funding for the affected programs." Pointing to the Music of the United States (MUSA) book series, a forty volume, forty-year effort, she added: "It is a deeply public-spirited project. It chronicles the contributions of people and communities that might otherwise be forgotten or overlooked. Without this project and others like it, a country and its people can easily lose their way."

The AMS is encouraging individuals and organizations that care about the study and performance of music to help address the funding shortfall and support the Society's efforts to contest the cancellations. The AMS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 1934 and committed to advancing our understanding of music and sound. To learn more about the affected programs or show your support, visit the [AMS website](#) and join, donate, or volunteer.

Siovahn A. Walker
American Musicological Society Inc.
+1 212-992-6340

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