

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Endowment for the Humanities, a leader in the nation's cultural and intellectual life, promotes knowledge of human history, thought, and culture and enhances the role of the humanities throughout the nation by

engaging new voices and perspectives in the humanities,

preserving and increasing the availability of cultural and intellectual resources essential to the people of the United States,

strengthening humanities teaching and learning in the nation's schools and colleges,

facilitating basic humanities research and original scholarship,

providing opportunities for Americans to engage in lifelong learning in the humanities, and

strengthening the institutional base of the humanities.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2001 - FY 2005

Goals, Objectives, Strategies

GOAL 1: TO ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING IN THE HUMANITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

Objective 1: Preserve and increase the availability of cultural and intellectual resources essential to the people of the United States.

Strategies:

- *Continue implementation of NEH's multi-year preservation plan to preserve brittle books, United States newspapers, and other historically significant materials with special emphasis on the preservation of recorded sound collections of American music and folklore.*
- *Continue implementation of NEH's multi-year plan to stabilize the condition of fragile material culture collections held by American museums, historical organizations, and other institutions.*
- *Support the creation of research tools and reference works of major importance to the humanities, with special emphasis on the creation of online encyclopedias of U.S. states, territories, and the District of Columbia.*
- *Support the development of standards and best practices for the use of digital technologies to preserve and provide access to humanities collections, with special emphasis on the development of standards and techniques for creating full text access to historical newspapers.*
- *Support the training of staff from the nation's cultural repositories in the appropriate procedures for preserving and enhancing access to the humanities collections for which they are responsible.*
- *Continue to extend the Endowment's reach to institutions in geographically underserved regions of the country by providing support for basic preservation services to small and mid-sized libraries, archives, museums, and historical organizations.*

Objective 2: Strengthen teaching and learning in the humanities in schools and colleges across the nation.

Strategies:

- *Encourage and invest in efforts of the nation's elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education to improve their students' knowledge and understanding of the humanities.*
- *Provide opportunities for teachers to renew and deepen their knowledge of the humanities, such as engaging in original research, working with primary sources, and working actively with scholars, specialists, and master teachers.*
- *Provide support for and encourage the use of digital information technologies in American classrooms.*
- *Increase support for education programming in areas of the country that have been underserved by NEH awards.*

Objective 3: Facilitate basic research and original scholarship in the humanities.

Strategies:

- *Provide support to individual scholars to enable them to devote a concentrated period of time to research and writing on significant subjects in all fields of the humanities.*
- *Invest in collaborative research projects that make significant intellectual resources available to scholars, teachers, students, and the general public.*
- *Augment humanities research programs offered by independent research centers and scholarly organizations.*
- *Support research applications of digital technologies in humanities disciplines and encourage humanities studies of advanced information technology.*
- *Invest in faculty research projects at institutions that have been historically underserved.*

Objective 4: Provide opportunities for Americans to engage in lifelong learning in the humanities.

Strategies:

- *Invest in substantive media presentations, exhibitions, reading and discussion programs, and other public projects in the humanities.*

- *Promote collaborations among cultural institutions to develop public humanities projects of broad scope.*
- *Support humanities projects that bring new technologies to bear on public humanities programming.*
- *Circulate smaller versions of NEH-funded, high quality interpretative exhibitions to mid- and small-sized museums nationwide.*
- *Create opportunities for digitally enhanced content for television programs in the humanities.*
- *Build the capacity of smaller, especially rural institutions as well as that of less experienced filmmakers and radio producers to implement humanities projects through consultation with outside experts.*

Objective 5: Strengthen the institutional base of the humanities.

Strategies:

- *Support efforts of cultural and educational institutions to increase nonfederal contributions for their humanities resources and activities.*
- *Encourage institutions to engage in long-range planning.*
- *Invest in efforts of institutions to enhance their humanities resources and activities over the long term.*
- *Continue implementation of NEH's initiative to establish regional humanities centers across the country.*

Objective 6: Maintain and strengthen partnerships with the state humanities councils.

Strategies:

- *Support efforts to develop locally initiated, substantive humanities programs for the people in each state.*
- *Encourage and invest in high quality council-conducted humanities programs in the various states.*
- *Make more effective use of digital technology to help strengthen the agency's partnership with state councils such as, for example, developing and maintaining a web-based database for reporting information to NEH.*

Objective 7: Establish collaborative partnerships with public and private institutions and organizations in support of the humanities.

Strategies:

- *Through the Office of Enterprise and other NEH offices and divisions, forge innovative partnerships that leverage new resources for the humanities and build new audiences for the Endowment's grant products.*
- *Develop and maintain comprehensive information on other federal and non-federal humanities activities.*
- *Enter new programming, funding, and administrative partnerships with other agencies, foundations, and organizations, both public and private.*
- *Make the NEH review process available to other federal agencies to evaluate humanities activities proposed for their support.*

Objective 8: Create new programs and initiatives that respond to emerging needs and opportunities in American society.

Strategies:

- *In cooperation with federal and nonfederal supporters of the humanities, systematically gather, analyze, and provide access to information on the state of the humanities in America.*
- *Promote broad-gauged initiatives that address important concerns and opportunities in the humanities such as, for example, the establishment of regional humanities centers, a special emphasis on programs and projects in the field of folklore, and My History is America's History.*
- *Nurture and develop agency-wide initiatives in key humanities areas, such as, for example, regional studies, international studies, and the intersection of the humanities, science, and technology.*

Objective 9: Stimulate third-party support for humanities projects and programs.

Strategies:

- *Provide offers of funds to match nonfederal contributions to meritorious projects and programs in the humanities.*
- *Support efforts of humanities projects and programs to raise nonfederal sources of funding.*

- *Leverage the contributions of the nation's businesses, foundations, and individuals on behalf of humanities projects and programs.*

GOAL 2: TO BROADEN PUBLIC AWARENESS OF, ACCESS TO, PARTICIPATION IN, AND SUPPORT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Objective 1: Increase public awareness of the value of the humanities in American life.

Strategies:

- *Develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan designed to publicize the importance of the humanities and the role NEH plays in advancing the humanities in America.*
- *Use the mass media and new information technologies, such as a monthly electronic newsletter, to communicate to a broader public.*
- *Communicate more effectively the importance of the humanities to influential figures in key areas of American society, such as educational leaders, corporate and foundation leaders, directors of professional associations, journalists, and local, state, and national political leaders.*
- *Exploit opportunities such as the Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities, the National Humanities Medal awards, submission of reports to Congress, etc., to publicize the importance of the humanities to the nation.*
- *Encourage grantees to convey to the public the importance of NEH's role in facilitating their work.*
- *Provide leadership in making the philanthropic and corporate communities more aware of the important role the humanities play in American society.*
- *Seek out innovative partnerships with academic and scholarly communities and public humanities organizations and institutions to enhance the role of the humanities in all aspects of our nation's life.*

Objective 2: Expand the availability of quality humanities programs to greater numbers of Americans through NEH grant programs and through collaborative efforts with the state humanities councils.

Strategies:

- *Place special emphasis on extending the reach of the Endowment to areas of the country, institutions, or individuals who have been historically underserved.*

- *Enhance NEH participation in government-wide Presidential directives concerned with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, educational excellence for Hispanic Americans, accessibility of federal resources for Tribal Colleges, and increasing participation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in federal programs where they may be underserved.*
- *Increase NEH outreach to and technical assistance for institutions and individuals that have been underserved by NEH awards.*
- *Increase support for education, research, preservation and access, and public humanities programming efforts in areas of the country that have been underserved by NEH awards.*
- *Collect and analyze data on the availability of quality humanities programming throughout the nation and identify areas of American society that could be better served by NEH.*
- *Make creative use of new information technologies to distribute publications and information describing NEH's grant programs, and its application procedures to broader segments of the American population.*

Objective 3: Extend the reach of the humanities by replicating and disseminating the results of NEH's programs and grant products and the programs and grant products of the state humanities councils.

Strategies:

- *Develop a system for tracking and reporting widely distributed or copied programs/grant products (e.g., library reading and discussion projects, traveling exhibitions, videos, etc.).*
- *Place increased emphasis in program guidelines on encouraging applicants to address, where applicable, how their project may be replicated by others or the results of their grants may be distributed widely.*
- *Use available electronic tools for replication and dissemination purposes (for example, by making systematic use of the Internet for distribution of curricular materials and other grant products useful to teachers).*

GOAL 3: TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF SERVICE AND EFFICIENCY OF OPERATIONS

Objective 1: Continue to streamline and improve the agency's operations to provide more effective and results-oriented service to the public.

Strategies:

- *Provide for systematic, ongoing oversight and evaluation of the agency's operations, with a particular focus on:*
 - *the application process*
 - *the merit review process*
 - *grants management*
 - *budget and financial management*
 - *program review process*
 - *information management*
 - *human resources*
- *In conformance with government-wide efforts to reduce or eliminate unnecessary paperwork, enhance the agency's ability to conduct greater proportions of its business electronically.*
- *Utilize internal and external customer surveys to identify ways to improve internal operations.*
- *Constitute teams of staff members from a cross section of the Endowment to focus on specific operations (based on survey results and other relevant information) and to make recommendations to management for improving these operations.*
- *Where appropriate, work in consultation with NEH members of AFGE Local 3403 to enhance quality of service and efficiency of operations.*

Objective 2: Recruit and retain a quality work force that reflects the diversity of the nation.

Strategies:

- *Enhance the diversity of the NEH workforce through outreach to under-represented groups.*
- *Continue to refine NEH's position classification structure so that it provides advancement opportunities for employees at all strata of the agency.*