NEH's Strategic Plan
Fiscal Year 2007 - Fiscal Year 2012

NEH Mission Statement: Because democracy demands wisdom, the National Endowment for the Humanities serves and strengthens our Republic by promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies

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

Objective 1: Facilitate basic research and original scholarship in the humanities.

Strategies:

- Provide support to enable scholars--both those affiliated with educational institutions and those working independently--to devote a concentrated period of time to research and writing on significant subjects in all fields of the humanities.

- Foster significant research and scholarship on American history and culture, as well as on world cultures, societies, and languages.
- Encourage collaborative research projects that develop significant intellectual advances and resources for scholars, teachers, students, and the general public.

- Support the preparation and, where possible, online publication of authoritative and annotated editions of significant historical, literary, philosophical, and other primary documents and materials of value to humanities scholars and general readers.

- Support overseas research in the humanities by American scholars and, where appropriate, encourage international collaboration in research on significant topics in the humanities.

- Provide support for humanities scholarship by faculty members at Historically Black, Hispanic-serving, and Tribal colleges and universities.

Objective 2: Strengthen teaching and learning in the humanities in elementary and secondary schools and higher educational institutions across the nation.

Strategies:

- Provide opportunities for teachers to renew and deepen their knowledge of the humanities.

- Support efforts to develop new teaching and learning resources, particularly in digitized forms, to improve students' knowledge and understanding in the humanities.

- Provide opportunities for faculty at all levels to acquire digital skills and resources for teaching the humanities.
- Provide special grant opportunities to strengthen the teaching and learning of American history, culture, and principles in the nation's schools and institutions of higher education.

- Support humanities education programming in Historically Black, Hispanic-serving, and Tribal colleges and universities across the country.

Objective 3: Preserve and increase the availability of cultural and intellectual resources essential to the American people.

Strategies:

- Support the creation of research tools and reference works of major importance to the humanities.

- Support the preservation of and expanded access to historically significant collections of books, journals, newspapers, manuscripts and archival materials, maps, still and moving images, sound recordings, and objects of art and material culture.

- Encourage the digitization and dissemination of significant collections that support research, education, and public programming in the humanities.

- Work in partnership with other institutions, such as the Library of Congress, to digitize and make more accessible historic U.S. newspapers.

- Support the stabilization of fragile collections held by American museums, libraries, archives, historical organizations, and other cultural institutions.
- As appropriate, support emergency programs for collections of endangered humanities materials.

- Support the development of technical standards, best practices, and tools for preserving and enhancing access to humanities collections.

- 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.

- Extend the Endowment's reach to institutions across the country by providing support for basic preservation activities to small and mid-sized libraries, archives, museums, and historical organizations.

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

**Strategies:**

- Support interpretive exhibitions and educational materials at museums and historical organizations that convey significant humanities themes and topics to public audiences

- Support significant projects and programs that interpret the humanities collections of libraries and archives and circulate those projects to libraries throughout the nation.

- Support substantive media presentations that advance public understanding of the humanities.
- Support projects that use creative formats and diverse venues to provide opportunities for lifelong learning in the humanities.

- Support local, regional, and national projects that encourage audiences to explore significant events and ideas in the nation's history and culture, especially through the interpretation of America's historic places.

- Support the use of digital technologies to convey the humanities to the American public.

- Extend the Endowment's reach by building the capacity of smaller institutions to implement humanities projects through consultation with outside experts.

- Circulate smaller versions of NEH-funded, high quality interpretative exhibitions to small- and mid-sized museums.

**Objective 5:** Strengthen the institutional base of the humanities.

**Strategies:**

- Support efforts of institutions to enhance their humanities resources and activities over the long term.

- Encourage cultural and educational institutions to engage in long-range planning for the financial and intellectual strengthening of their humanities programs.

- Support efforts of cultural and educational institutions to increase nonfederal contributions for their humanities resources and activities.
- Support the strengthening of cultural and educational institutions with excellent programs that enhance understanding of United States history, institutions, and culture.

- Support the strengthening of cultural and educational institutions' ability to deploy, in innovative ways, digital technologies in their humanities activities.

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 high quality council-conducted humanities programs in the various states.

- Enhance efforts of the state humanities councils to expand Americans' knowledge and understanding of the nation's history and culture.

- Encourage state humanities councils to create and support humanities-rich Web sites and digital projects.

- Support state humanities councils in ongoing collaborations with colleges and universities, museums, libraries, and other institutions.

Objective 7: Enhance the teaching, study, and understanding of the nation's history, culture, and principles.

Strategies:
- Provide opportunities and resources for teachers to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the nation's history and culture.

- Encourage improved course offerings in American history and culture.

- Foster the creation and wide dissemination of scholarly works and resources on American history and culture.

- Engage public audiences of all ages and in all states of the nation to explore topics in American history, and culture.

- Support institutions' efforts to enhance their long-term capacity to advance knowledge of how the founding principles of the United States have shaped American history and culture.

Objective 8: Develop collaborative partnerships with individuals and institutions in support of the humanities.

Strategies:

- Forge partnerships that leverage resources and expand audiences for the humanities.

- Develop 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 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, AND SUPPORT FOR THE HUMANITIES

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

Strategies:

- Use NEH's national visibility and stature to communicate the importance of the humanities to all Americans.

- Where appropriate, increase international understanding of the United States by communicating the connection between the humanities and the American role in the world.

- Use opportunities such as the Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities, the National Humanities Medal awards, Coming Up Taller awards, reports to Congress, etc., to demonstrate the importance of the humanities.
Effectively publicize NEH programs and activities and the accomplishments of NEH grantees.

Work independently and in partnership with other national organizations to collect, analyze, and provide access to data and information on the state of the humanities in the United States.

Objective 2: Extend the reach of the humanities.

Strategies:

- Conduct outreach and place special emphasis on expanding access to NEH programs and activities.

- 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 the participation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in federal programs.

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

Objective 1: Provide effective and results-oriented service to the American people.

Strategies:

- Oversee and periodically review the agency's operations, particularly
  - the application process
  - the merit review process
- grants management
- budget and financial management
- information management
- human resources

- Work to implement key elements of the President's Management Agenda:
  - expanded electronic government
  - strategic management of human capital
  - competitive sourcing
  - improved financial performance
  - budget and performance integration

- As needed, constitute teams of staff members from a cross section of the Endowment to consider ways to improve agency operations and procedures.

- 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 diverse and results-oriented work force.

Strategies:

- Maintain a diverse and results-oriented workforce that is deployed appropriately in support of the agency's core functions.

- Ensure that the NEH workforce has the education, skills, and training needed to advance the mission of the agency.