



FEDERAL/STATE PARTNERSHIP

Federal/State Partnership is the liaison between the National Endowment for the Humanities and the nonprofit network of 56 state and jurisdictional humanities councils.

The NEH Federal/State Partnership is a model of American federalism in action. This collaborative effort dedicated to the study and enjoyment of the humanities links a national federal agency with fifty-six state and jurisdictional humanities councils. Federal/State Partnership helps the Endowment realize its two primary strategic goals: (1) to advance knowledge and understanding of the humanities, and (2) to increase public awareness of, access to, and support for the humanities in the United States. The Partnership makes humanities education and lifelong learning readily available at the local level, tailored to local interests and needs and drawing upon local resources, traditions and heritage.

State humanities councils are nonprofit 501(c) (3) organizations governed by volunteer boards of directors. They operate in each of the fifty states as well as in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Amerika Samoa. The councils were established to fulfill the requirement in the agency's enabling legislation—National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965, as amended—that the Endowment support humanities programs “in each of the several states.”

In addition to the general operating support grants they receive from NEH, councils are eligible to apply for any other NEH grant opportunities. Many councils have diverse funding, seeking support from their states as well as from foundations, corporations, and individual donors. The primary work of Federal/State Partnership is providing and overseeing annual general operating support grants to the state and jurisdictional humanities councils and collecting information about councils' work through annual compliance reporting. It works with councils on self-assessments, site visits, and review which are conducted on a five-year cycle.

Federal/State Partnership also oversees the grants made to councils through NEH's We the People initiative. The Federal/State Partnership network includes the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Federal/State Partnership office at NEH, and the state humanities councils. The Federation of State Humanities Councils is the councils' membership organization. State humanities councils have two major ways to support the humanities in their jurisdictions: They grant a portion of their funds on a competitive basis to locally initiated programs, and they develop and carry out their own programs. In their grantmaking role, they act as foundations from which eligible organizations and individuals seek funding; in their program-generating role, they are nonprofit service providers drawing on their own resources and looking to the public to support the benefits they offer. Schools, libraries, historical societies, museums, filmmakers, literacy programs, teachers, researchers, writers, and storytellers are among the people and organizations with which the state humanities councils work. Council activities may include the following:

- grant programs
- civil society: programs and discussions that help to engage citizens with their communities
- development of electronic resources

- reading & discussion programs
- reading & literacy programs, including book festivals and family reading programs
- cultural & heritage tourism
- multi-media programs
- publications speakers bureaus
- teacher institutes
- chautauqua: living history presentations and discussions
- research fellowships