



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

December 12, 2018

Jon Parrish Peede, Chairman
Members of the National Council on the Humanities
National Endowment for the Humanities
Washington, DC 20506

Dear Chairman Peede and Members of the National Council on the Humanities:

I am pleased to provide you with the Office of Inspector General's Semiannual Report to Congress for the second half of fiscal year 2018. This report is submitted in accordance with the *Inspector General Act of 1978*, as amended. Section 5 of the Act requires that you submit this report, with your Report of Final Action, to the appropriate committee or subcommittee of the Congress within 30 days of its receipt. The report provides a summary of the activities of the Office of Inspector General during the six-month period ended September 30, 2018.

During this reporting period, we completed one internal review, one internal audit, and desk reviews of single audit reports issued by non-Federal auditors for seven state humanities councils. We also monitored planning and interim testing activities of the independent auditors engaged to conduct the audit of the NEH financial statements for fiscal year 2018.

We received one actionable "Hotline" complaint during this reporting period and we received over 243 communications from individuals targeted by the internet-based scam(s) purporting to represent NEH financial assistance opportunities.

I greatly appreciate your continued support and look forward to working with you and Agency staff to further our common purpose of assuring the effectiveness, efficiency and integrity of NEH's vital contributions to the humanities in the United States.

Sincerely,

Laura Davis
Inspector General



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

Office of Inspector General

**SEMIANNUAL
REPORT TO
CONGRESS**

For the Period April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018

Report No. 59

**“Democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens”
National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965**

THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

serves American taxpayers
by investigating reports of waste, fraud,
mismanagement, abuse, integrity violations or
unethical conduct involving Federal funds.

To report any suspected activity
concerning NEH programs, operations, or employees/contractors

Contact the OIG Hotline

1 (877) 786-7598

Mailing Address

Office of Inspector General — Hotline
National Endowment for the Humanities
Constitution Center
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506

Fax

(202) 606-8329

Electronic Mail — Hotline

oig@neh.gov

OIG Hotline Complaint Form

www.neh.gov/about/oig

Government employees are protected from reprisal

Contacts may remain anonymous

Information is treated as Confidential

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Semiannual Report to Congress highlights the activities of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) — Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the period April 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018, and has been designed to respond to enhanced reporting requirements established by the *Inspector General Empowerment Act of 2016*. OIG activities completed during this reporting period assessed (1) NEH's compliance with government-wide mandates; and (2) the quality of single audit reports issued by non-Federal auditors concerning NEH grant recipients. We also monitored the activities of independent auditors engaged to conduct the audit of the NEH financial statements for fiscal year ended September 30, 2018.

During the six-month period ended September 30, 2018, we reported on NEH's compliance with the *Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010* concerning fiscal year 2017 and the *Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014*. We also completed desk reviews of single audit reports issued by non-Federal auditors for seven NEH grant recipients. As of September 30, 2018, we have several reviews in process, the results of which we anticipate including in our semiannual report for the period ending March 31, 2019.

We engaged the services of Leon Snead & Company, P.C. to conduct the audit of the NEH financial statements for fiscal year ended September 30, 2018, as required by the *Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002*. During this semiannual reporting period, we monitored the planning and interim testing activities of the independent auditors to ensure compliance with applicable Federal requirements.

No investigations were initiated by the NEH-OIG during this semiannual reporting period. We received one actionable Hotline complaint, which was still open as of September 30, 2018.

We continue to receive a steady volume of communications from individuals who have been targeted (and in some instances victimized) by an internet scam purporting to represent an NEH financial assistance opportunity.

OIG staff participated in several activities within the Federal accountability community to include a Single Audit Roundtable and the conference, *Building on 40 Years of Excellence in Independent Oversight*, which was organized by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the *Inspector General Act of 1978*. We also engaged in various outreach activities to promote awareness of the mission and responsibilities of the NEH-OIG and to promote compliance with administrative requirements applicable to NEH grant awards.

The NEH-OIG endeavors to strengthen our capability to perform effective independent oversight and to foster mutually beneficial working relationships with NEH leadership and management, the Congress, other stakeholders (both public and private), and our colleagues within the Inspector General community.

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

In order to promote progress and scholarship in the humanities and the arts in the United States, Congress enacted the *National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965*. This Act established the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as an independent, grant-making agency of the Federal government to support research, education, and public programs in the humanities. According to the Act, “The term ‘humanities’ includes, but is not limited to, the study of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism, and theory of the arts; those aspects of social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history, and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life.”

The NEH is directed by a Chairman, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate, for a term of four years. Advising the Chairman is the National Council on the Humanities, a board of 26 distinguished private citizens who are also appointed by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. National Council members serve staggered six-year terms.

NEH grants are awarded through four divisions - Research Programs, Education Programs, Preservation and Access, and Public Programs -- and three offices - Challenge Grants, Digital Humanities, and Federal/State Partnership.

The humanities can play a vital role in advancing an understanding of the human experience. In recognition of the importance of the humanities both in helping Americans to understand the experiences of service members and in assisting veterans as they return to civilian life, the NEH instituted a special initiative entitled, *Standing Together: The Humanities and the Experience of War*. Through this Endowment-wide initiative, grant projects explore war and its aftermath, promote discussion of the experience of military service, and support returning veterans and their families.

THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

The NEH Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established April 9, 1989, in accordance with the *Inspector General Act Amendment of 1988*, (Public Law 100-504). In this legislation, Congress established Offices of Inspector General in several departments and in thirty-three agencies, including the NEH. The NEH Inspector General (IG) is appointed by the Chairman of the National Council on the Humanities. The independence of the IG is a critical aspect of the *Inspector General Act*, (the IG Act). For example, the IG: cannot be prevented from initiating, carrying out, or completing an audit or investigation, or from issuing any subpoena; has access to all records of the Agency; reports to the National Council on the Humanities, and can only be removed by the National Council on the Humanities, which must give Congress 30 days notice of the reasons for the removal; and reports directly to Congress.

The IG Act states that the OIG is responsible for (1) conducting audits and investigations; (2) reviewing legislation; (3) recommending policies to promote efficiency and effectiveness; and (4) preventing and detecting fraud, waste, and abuse in the operations of the NEH. The Inspector General is responsible for keeping the Head of the Agency and the Congress fully and currently informed of problems and deficiencies concerning NEH programs and operations.

NEH-OIG staff currently consists of the Inspector General and two auditors. The Deputy Inspector General position is vacant. The OIG has a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration detailing the procedures for the NEH-OIG to be provided legal services. Investigations are handled by the Inspector General.

AUDIT AND REVIEW ACTIVITIES

LIST OF REPORTS ISSUED

The NEH-OIG is responsible for external and internal audits, inspections, and reviews. External activities include on-site grant audits, limited-scope desk audits, accounting system surveys, desk reviews of single audit reports, and on-site quality control reviews of workpapers prepared by non-Federal auditors during performance of single audit engagements. Internal activities include audits, inspections/evaluations, and reviews of NEH administrative and program-related activities, inclusive of the NEH information security program. The NEH-OIG is also responsible for monitoring the work of the independent public accountant (the "IPA") engaged to conduct the annual audit of the NEH financial statements, as required by the *Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002*, and examining the IPA's audit workpapers and draft reporting deliverables to ensure compliance with applicable requirements.

Below is a list of reports issued by the NEH-OIG during the six-month period ended September 30, 2018. The *Inspector General Act of 1978* (as amended) requires the Inspector General to report on the "Total Dollar Value of Questioned Costs" (including a separate category for the "Dollar Value of Unsupported Costs") and the "Dollar Value of Recommendations that Funds Be Put to Better Use" [see Tables II and III on page 13].

	<u>Report Number</u>	<u>Date Issued</u>
<u>INTERNAL REVIEW</u>		
National Endowment for the Humanities ~ Compliance with the <i>Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010</i> — Fiscal Year 2017	OIG-18-01 (IR)	05/15/2018
<u>INTERNAL AUDIT</u>		
National Endowment for the Humanities ~ Compliance with the <i>Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014</i>	OIG-18-01 (IA)	07/18/2018
<u>SINGLE AUDIT DESK REVIEWS</u>		
Desk Review of the Single Audit Report for Year Ended December 31, 2016 — Humanities Tennessee	OIG-18-03 (DR)	04/20/2018
Desk Review of the Single Audit Report for Year Ended October 31, 2017 — Florida Humanities Council	OIG-18-04 (DR)	06/25/2018
Desk Review of the Single Audit Report for Year Ended October 31, 2017 — New Mexico Humanities Council	OIG-18-05 (DR)	07/27/2018
Desk Review of the Single Audit Report for Year Ended June 30, 2017 — Connecticut Humanities	OIG-18-06 (DR)	08/06/2018
Desk Review of the Single Audit Report for Year Ended October 31, 2017 — Oregon Humanities	OIG-18-07 (DR)	08/21/2018
Desk Review of the Single Audit Report for Year Ended October 31, 2017 — Maine Humanities Council	OIG-18-08 (DR)	08/29/2018
Desk Review of the Single Audit Report for Year Ended October 31, 2017 — Colorado Humanities	OIG-18-09 (DR)	09/28/2018
REVIEW OF SINGLE AUDIT FINDINGS	— See Page 6 —	

AUDIT AND REVIEW ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY OF REPORTS ISSUED

INTERNAL REVIEW

National Endowment for the Humanities

Compliance with the *Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010* — Fiscal Year 2017 OIG-18-01 (IR); May 15, 2018

The *Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010* (IPERA) requires the head of each agency to periodically review and identify all programs and activities it administers that may be susceptible to significant improper payments, based on guidance provided by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). For each program and activity identified, the agency is required to produce a statistically valid estimate of improper payments and include such estimate in the agency's annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) or Annual Financial Report (AFR). The agency is further required under IPERA to prepare a report on actions taken to reduce improper payments for programs or activities with significant improper payments. With respect to improper payments identified in recovery audits required by IPERA, the agency must report on all actions taken to recover such improper payments.

Additional guidance issued by OMB specifies that each agency's Inspector General should review improper payment reporting in the agency's annual PAR or AFR to determine whether the agency complied with IPERA.

I determined that the NEH was compliant with IPERA concerning fiscal year (FY) 2017. Specifically:

- ◇ The Agency published a PAR for FY 2017 and posted the report and accompanying materials required by OMB on the NEH website.
- ◇ NEH management conducted risk assessments for improper payments in accordance with the steps outlined in the revised OMB Circular A-123, Appendix C, Part I. The FY 2017 risk assessments covered the NEH definite grant program and payroll payments. Agency management determined that non-payroll administrative activities, (i.e., employee travel and other employee payments, vendor payments, panel activities, and credit card purchases) and the NEH matching grants program do not meet the criteria specified in OMB Circular A-123, Appendix C for susceptibility to significant improper payments. Therefore, these activities were not included in the FY 2017 risk assessments.
- ◇ NEH management randomly selected and reviewed a sample of individual grant payments associated with the agency's definite grant program during FY 2017, which resulted in an error rate of zero percent. NEH management performed an additional review, outside of the scope of the risk assessment, and identified three (3) duplicate payments to three different grant recipients totaling \$137,365. All of the duplicate payments have been recovered. This information was also reported in the PAR.

Furthermore, nothing came to the attention of the OIG during FY 2017 that would indicate the programs administered by the NEH and the activities in which the agency engages in support of its programs are susceptible to significant improper payments.

AUDIT AND REVIEW ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY OF REPORTS ISSUED

INTERNAL AUDIT

National Endowment for the Humanities Compliance with the *Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014* OIG-18-01 (IA); July 18, 2018

The *Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014* (DATA Act) aims to make information on Federal expenditures more easily accessible and transparent. The goal of the law is to improve the ability of Americans to track and understand how the government is spending their tax dollars. In May 2015, the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published Government-wide financial data standards and required all Federal agencies to report financial and award data in accordance with these standards for DATA Act reporting, beginning in January 2017. The data are displayed on USASpending.gov¹ for taxpayers and policy makers.

The DATA Act requires the Inspector General of each Federal agency to review a statistically valid sample of the spending data submitted by its agency and to provide to Congress a publicly available report assessing the completeness, timeliness, accuracy, and quality of the data and the agency's implementation and use of the Government-wide financial data standards. Completeness is measured in two ways, (1) all transactions that should have been recorded are recorded in the proper reporting period and (2) as the percentage of transactions containing all applicable data elements required by the DATA Act. Timeliness is measured as the percentage of transactions reported within 30 days of quarter end. Accuracy is measured as the percentage of transactions that are complete and agree with the systems of record or other authoritative sources. Quality is defined as a combination of utility, objectivity, and integrity. Utility refers to the usefulness of the information to the intended users. Objectivity refers to whether the disseminated information is being presented in an accurate, clear, complete, and unbiased manner. Integrity refers to the protection of information from unauthorized access or revision.

We completed an audit of spending data submitted by the NEH for publication on USASpending.gov for the second quarter of FY 2017. The objectives of our audit were to assess (1) the completeness, timeliness, quality, and accuracy of the financial and award data submitted; and (2) NEH's implementation and use of the Government-wide financial data standards established by OMB and Treasury. Based on the results of our audit, we concluded that the quality of the information submitted by the NEH for publication on USASpending.gov for the second quarter of FY 2017 is directly proportional to the agency's efforts to develop and maintain comprehensive policies and procedures concerning the reporting of such information to the related external systems and the compilation of the required DATA Act files. Consequently, flawed policies and procedures negatively impacted the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of spending data certified as part of the agency's DATA Act submission for the second quarter of FY 2017. We identified specific issues related to the various DATA Act files.

We recommended that NEH management design and implement procedures to ensure alignment and consistency between data and information reported to external systems (pursuant to the applicable reporting requirements) and data maintained in the agency's financial management system. We further recommended that procurement-related transactions are coded (or identified) in the agency's financial management system in a manner that facilitates complete and accurate reporting pursuant to DATA Act requirements.

The NEH leadership team agreed with the OIG recommendations and asserted that appropriate action would be taken to address the specific findings.

1. The *Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006* requires that Federal contract, grant, loan, and other financial assistance awards greater than \$25,000 be displayed on a publicly accessible and searchable website to give the American public access to information on how their tax dollars are being spent. **USASpending.gov** is the official source for spending data for the U.S. Government. Its mission is to show the American public what the Federal government spends every year and how it spends the money.

AUDIT AND REVIEW ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY OF REPORTS ISSUED

SINGLE AUDIT DESK REVIEWS

Subpart F of Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (2 CFR Part 200) establishes audit requirements for state and local governments, colleges and universities, and non-profit organizations receiving Federal awards. All non-Federal entities that expend \$750,000 or more a year in Federal awards must undergo an annual organization-wide audit that includes the entity's financial statements and compliance with Federal award requirements. The audits are conducted by non-Federal auditors, such as public accounting firms and state auditors.

During the six-month period ended September 30, 2018, we issued a letter to governance officials for seven state humanities councils, communicating the results of our desk review of their organization's single audit reporting package. The objectives of the desk reviews were to (1) determine whether the audit report is acceptable based on the reporting requirements of 2 CFR Part 200; (2) identify any quality issues that warrant follow-up work and/or revisions to the audit report; (3) identify audits for potential quality review (QCR) of the independent auditor's workpapers; and (4) identify issues that require the attention of NEH management. We used the *Guide for Desk Reviews of Single Audit Reports* (2016 Edition), as issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, to determine whether the audit reports meet the core reporting requirements stipulated by 2 CFR Part 200. We can assign a rating of *Pass*, *Pass with Deficiencies*, or *Fail* to the organization's single audit reporting package based on the results of our review. Audit reports assigned a *Fail* rating require corrective action.

We assigned a *Pass* rating to two reporting packages; a *Pass with Deficiencies* rating to two reporting packages; and a *Fail* rating to three reporting packages.

REVIEW OF SINGLE AUDIT FINDINGS

We receive communications from other Federal agencies concerning the results of single audit desk reviews (primarily the National Science Foundation OIG) and single audit findings identified for resolution by the NEH. We also routinely perform queries of the Federal Audit Clearinghouse to determine the reporting of single audit findings applicable to NEH programs. Occasionally, we receive single audit reports directly from NEH grant recipients.

During the six-month period ended September 30, 2018, we reviewed single audit report communications concerning seven NEH grant recipients. No findings that pertain to NEH programs were noted.

AUDIT AND REVIEW ACTIVITIES

WORK IN PROGRESS/REPORTS TO BE ISSUED (as of September 30, 2018)

Inspection ~ Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) — Fiscal Year 2018

The *Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002* (FISMA) requires each agency to develop, document, and implement an agency-wide information security program. Each year, the OIG conducts an independent evaluation of the NEH information security program, pursuant to the requirements of FISMA.

Limited Audit ~ OUR L.A.

The principal objectives of this limited audit are to determine whether (1) expenditures related to NEH grant award TR-50453-13 were made in accordance with applicable provisions of NEH's *General Terms and Conditions for Awards* and the specific terms of the grant award; and (2) the recipient implemented proper controls over the administration of the NEH award in accordance with minimum standards prescribed in OMB Circulars A-110 (2 CFR Part 215) and A-122 (2 CFR Part 230).

Limited Audit ~ Virginia Union University

The principal objectives of this limited audit are to determine whether (1) expenditures related to NEH grant award AB-226623-15 were made in accordance with applicable provisions of NEH's *General Terms and Conditions for Awards* and the specific terms of the grant award; and (2) the recipient implemented proper control over the administration of the NEH award in accordance with minimum standards prescribed in 2 CFR Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*.

INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITIES

BACKGROUND

The *Inspector General Act of 1978* (as amended) provides the authority for the Office of Inspector General to investigate possible violations of criminal or civil laws, administrative regulations, and agency policies that impact the programs and operations of the NEH. In the past, in order to fully execute this mandate, we have obtained assistance from other OIGs, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Postal Inspection Service, or other investigative entities.

Over the years, the NEH-OIG has received allegations through the OIG Hotline and did not have sufficient resources to initiate an investigation. To address this inherent challenge, we continue to inquire of other OIGs concerning their willingness and ability to assist us on an “as needed” basis under a reimbursable agreement. A few OIGs have responded that they would consider performing work for us on a case-by-case basis, contingent upon the availability of their staff. However, this assistance would only be for criminal cases, with no guarantee that investigative staff would be available when needed.

INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITIES

No investigations were initiated by the NEH-OIG during the six-month period ended September 30, 2018.

MATTERS REFERRED TO PROSECUTIVE AUTHORITIES

No matters were referred to the U.S. Department of Justice during the six-month period ended September 30, 2018.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITY

Number of Investigative Reports Issued	0
Number of Persons Referred to the Department of Justice for Criminal Prosecution	0
Number of Persons Referred to State and Local Prosecuting Authorities for Criminal Prosecution	0
Number of Indictments and Criminal Informations that Resulted from Prior Referral to Prosecuting Authorities	0

HOTLINE ACTIVITIES

We maintain a toll-free Hotline number and a dedicated Agency e-mail address to provide confidentiality for individuals bringing matters to the attention of the NEH-OIG. We also have an interactive, web-based template to facilitate the submission of complaints to the NEH-OIG. The complaint template is accessible through the OIG homepage, (www.neh.gov/about/oig). The toll-free Hotline number, facsimile, web-based complaint form, e-mail address, and ground mail services are efficient and effective means for NEH employees and contractors, recipients of NEH awards, and the general public to communicate complaints and allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and misconduct concerning NEH programs/operations to the OIG.

When the NEH-OIG receives a complaint or allegation of a criminal or administrative violation, preliminary research is conducted to inform the decision regarding the appropriate action to take. This decision could result in the initiation of an investigation or an audit; referral of the matter to an NEH office/division or another Federal agency; or no further action. Upon determining that a matter represents a criminal violation, we seek assistance from another Federal Inspector General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), or the United States Department of Justice.

There were no Hotline matters open as of April 1, 2018. We received one complaint during this semiannual reporting period that was still open as of September 30, 2018.

We also received over 243 communications from individuals targeted by a scam purporting to represent an NEH financial assistance opportunity. This scam is generally initiated through the internet via Facebook Messenger; however, individuals have reported being contacted through other social media platforms or directly through text messaging and telephone calls.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF HOTLINE ACTIVITY

Open as of April 1, 2018	0
Matters brought to the OIG during the six-month period ended September 30, 2018	1
Total Number of Matters Communicated via OIG Hotline	1
Matters closed, referred, or no action deemed necessary	0
Open as of September 30, 2018	1

OTHER ACTIVITIES

REGULATORY AND LEGISLATIVE REVIEWS

The *Inspector General Act of 1978* (as amended) requires the Inspector General to review proposed legislation and regulations. The reviews should be designed to assess whether proposed legislation and/or regulations (1) affect the economy and efficiency of agency programs and operations; and (2) contain adequate internal controls to prevent and detect fraud and abuse.

No legislative reviews were required concerning the NEH during the six-month period ended September 30, 2018.

WORKING WITH THE AGENCY

OIG staff attended various NEH meetings – panel meetings (where grant applications are reviewed by outside consultants), a meeting of the National Council on the Humanities (July 2018), and monthly senior staff meetings. OIG staff occasionally contribute to the discussions, but the OIG does not participate in policymaking.

The Inspector General presented information about the mission, responsibilities, and activities of the NEH-OIG during a Project Directors’ meeting convened by the NEH Division of Education — *Dialogues on the Experience of War* (June 2018). The Inspector General also participated in an orientation session organized by NEH Federal/State Partnership leadership and staff for new state humanities council executive directors (May 2018).

PARTICIPATION ON THE COUNCIL OF THE INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY

The *Inspector General Reform Act of 2008* (Public Law 110-409) amended the *Inspector General Act of 1978* and established the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). CIGIE is comprised of all Inspectors General whose offices are established by the *Inspector General Act of 1978* (and subsequent amendments) — those that are Presidentially-appointed/Senate-confirmed and those that are appointed by agency heads.

During the six-month period ended September 30, 2018, the Inspector General regularly attended monthly CIGIE meetings, provided responses to various CIGIE inquiries, participated in the 2018 CIGIE Annual Conference (May 2018), and attended one meeting of the CIGIE subgroup representing the “Smaller OIGs” (June 2018).

The Inspector General also participated in the CIGIE conference, *Building on 40 Years of Excellence in Independent Oversight*, which was organized to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the *Inspector General Act of 1978* (July 2018).

PARTICIPATION IN OTHER ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMUNITY

The Inspector General participated in the Single Audit Roundtable (SART) held in May 2018. The purpose of the SART is to provide a venue for an exchange of ideas, problems, solutions, and best practices related to the single audit process. The SART involves audit and accountability representatives from the non-Federal audit community, and Federal and State government communities.

The Inspector General also participated in the 2018 Federal Audit Executive Council (FAEC) Annual Conference held in September 2018. The FAEC is a subgroup established by CIGIE to discuss and coordinate issues affecting the Federal audit community, with special emphasis on audit policy and operations of common interest to FAEC members.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

OIG INTERNET

OIG reports and Semiannual Reports to Congress are posted on the internet. The reports are accessible through the OIG homepage on the NEH website (www.neh.gov/about/oig).

To promote awareness and understanding of the OIG mission and responsibilities, we provide hyperlinks to other Federal agency websites, such as the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency [IGNET] and the Government Accountability Office [FraudNet].

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Throughout this reporting period, OIG staff provided technical help to NEH staff, recipients of NEH awards, and independent public accountants about various non-profit accounting and compliance-related matters. We are generally consulted about matters related to the implementation of Federal audit requirements.

“AUDIT READINESS” AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The OIG executes an email-based “Audit Readiness” awareness campaign, which corresponds with NEH grant award cycles. The objective of the campaign is to proactively promote accountability and to disseminate guidance that would assist NEH grant award recipients in their efforts to preclude unfavorable outcomes should the organizations’ NEH awards be selected for audit. The email communication emphasizes the value of each recipient’s understanding of the terms and conditions specific to their NEH grant award and the administrative requirements applicable to all Federal awards. We remind recipients that they are stewards of Federal funds and therefore must comply with Uniform Administrative Requirements (2 CFR Part 200) and the terms and conditions of NEH grant awards. We highlight in the communications, specific areas wherein problems are commonly identified during audits of NEH grant awards and include hyperlinks to appropriate guidance materials and resources. We also discuss the importance of effective internal control. The email communications are sent directly to project directors and institutional grant administrators identified for all organization-based awardees.

During the six-month period ended September 30, 2018, we sent email communications as noted below. We have reasonable assurance that all of the awardees received a copy of the “Audit Readiness” communication.

NEH Division/Office	Number of Awardees	Total Value of Awards
Office of Challenge Grants	32	\$ 12,247,517
Division of Preservation and Access	64	\$ 11,291,946
Division of Education Programs	81	\$ 9,166,047
Division of Public Programs	42	\$ 8,842,422
Division of Research Programs	36	\$ 7,303,154
Office of Digital Humanities	21	\$ 3,410,315

TABLE I

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The *Inspector General Act of 1978* (as amended) specifies reporting requirements for semiannual reports. The requirements are listed and cross-referenced to the applicable pages in this report.

<u>IG Act Reference</u>	<u>Reporting Requirements</u>	<u>Page</u>
Section 4(a)(2)	Regulatory and Legislative Reviews.....	10
Section 5(a)(1)	Significant Problems, Abuses, and Deficiencies.....	*
Section 5(a)(2)	Recommendations for Corrective Action	5
Section 5(a)(3)	Prior Significant Recommendations Unimplemented.....	*
Section 5(a)(4)	Matters Referred to Prosecutive Authorities.....	8
Section 5(a)(5)	Instances Where Information Was Refused or Not Provided.....	*
Section 5(a)(6)	List of Reports Issued.....	3
Section 5(a)(7)	Summary of Reports Issued.....	4 - 6
Section 5(a)(8)	Audit Reports - Questioned Costs.....	13
Section 5(a)(9)	Audit Report - Funds To Be Put to Better Use.....	13
Section 5(a)(10)	Prior Audit Reports — Unresolved.....	14 - 15
Section 5(a)(11)	Significant Revised Management Decisions.....	*
Section 5(a)(12)	Significant Management Decisions with which OIG Disagreed.....	*
Section 5(a)(14-16)	Peer Review Results.....	Appendix A
Section 5(a)(17-18)	Investigation Statistics.....	8
Section 5(a)(19)	Investigations Involving Senior Government Employees.....	*
Section 5(a)(20)	Instances of Whistleblower Retaliation.....	*
Section 5(a)(21)	Instances of Agency Interference with OIG Independence.....	*
Section 5(a)(22)	Description of Reports Not Disclosed to the Public.....	*

* None this reporting period

**TABLE II
INSPECTOR GENERAL-ISSUED REPORTS
WITH QUESTIONED COSTS**

	Number of Reports	Questioned Cost	Unsupported Cost
A. For which no management decision has been made by the commencement of the reporting period.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
B. Which were issued during the reporting period.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
Subtotals (A+B)	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period.			
i. Dollar value of disallowed costs.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
ii. Dollar value of costs not disallowed	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
iii. Dollar value of costs not disallowed based on the "Value of Services Received."	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
D. For which no management decision has been made by the end of the reporting period.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
E. Reports for which no management decision was made within six months of issuance.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -

**TABLE III
INSPECTOR GENERAL-ISSUED REPORTS
WITH RECOMMENDATIONS THAT FUNDS BE PUT TO BETTER USE**

	Number of Reports	Dollar Value
A. For which no management decision has been made by the commencement of the reporting period.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -
B. Which were issued during the reporting period.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -
C. For which a management decision was made during the reporting period.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -
i. Dollar value of recommendations that were agreed to by management.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -
ii. Dollar value of recommendations that were not agreed to by management.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -
D. For which no management decision was made by the end of the reporting period.	- 0 -	\$ - 0 -

PRIOR AUDIT REPORTS — UNRESOLVED

Reports with Unimplemented Recommendations	Number of Unimplemented Recommendations	Dollar Value of Aggregate Potential Cost Savings
Report Number: OIG-15-03 (I) <i>Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) Reporting Document: Inspector General Section — Fiscal Year 2014</i> Date of Report: August 15, 2015	4	The recommendations concern FISMA-related matters and we are unable to quantify the total potential cost savings to the NEH.

SUMMARY OF UNIMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Information Security Continuous Monitoring

Finding: The NEH issued new policy guidance concerning information security continuous monitoring during FY 2012. However, written continuous monitoring plans (CMPs) for each of the Agency’s major IT systems have not been drafted, as required under this policy.

Recommendation: The NEH must draft continuous monitoring plans for each of the Agency’s major IT systems.

Implementation Status: Open/Unimplemented. The NEH plans to create CMPs during the next accreditation for each system, as required by the *NEH Security Program and Risk Management Policy*. The accreditations have been put on hold due to budget constraints.

2. Homeland Security Presidential Initiative – 12 (HSPD-12)

Finding: HSPD-12 applies to Federal employees and contractors and requires (1) completion of background investigations; (2) issuance of standardized identity credentials; (3) use of the credentials for access to Federal facilities; and (4) use of the credentials for access to Federal information systems. The NEH has successfully completed requirements (1) through (3). Concerning logical access, the NEH continues to utilize eTokens (an alternative commercial product) for multi-factor authentication purposes. Before the NEH replaces eTokens with PIV credentials, various technical issues must first be resolved.

Recommendation: The NEH must implement a personal identification verification (PIV) system for logical access, as required by HSPD-12.

Implementation Status: Closed/Unimplemented. In FY 2015, the NEH performed a detailed assessment of the impact of implementing HSPD-12 for logical access. While technically feasible, many usability and management issues were identified. Due to these issues, NEH management decided not to move forward with implementation of HSPD-12 for logical access. NEH continues to require two-factor authentication for full remote access. The Agency is cognizant of the need for two-factor authentication for access to important data and is continuing to work toward full implementation where needed.

PRIOR AUDIT REPORTS — UNRESOLVED

SUMMARY OF UNIMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS (con't.)

3. Contingency Planning

Finding: Due to competing priorities, neither the Agency-wide continuity of operations (COOP) exercise nor the prescribed divisional exercise, to be led by Emergency Response Team (ERT) members, were conducted in FY 2013. Furthermore, the master COOP document was not updated to incorporate/address issues identified in the prior year after-action report. The OIG also noted that several Emergency Operations Team (EOT) and ERT team members were either unable to access the COOP-related documents on the secured OMB CyberScope site or did not have access to the most current version of the master COOP document.

Recommendation: The NEH must reinstate annual continuity of operations training exercises and update COOP-related documents maintained on the secured OMB Cyberscope platform.

Implementation Status: Open/Partially Implemented. The master COOP document has been updated to incorporate/address issues identified in the FY 2012 after-action report. However, a continuity of operations training exercise has not been conducted since FY 2012.

4. Risk Management

Finding: The NEH transitioned to Microsoft 365, a cloud-based version of Outlook (email, calendar, etc.) during the latter part of FY 2013. Although the network architecture was updated to reflect this change, the Agency was unable to provide written documentation demonstrating that new risks posed by this migration to the cloud were formally considered and addressed through the adoption of new policies/procedures, (as necessary). According to the Agency's top-level IT security guidance pertaining to the NEH General Support System (GSS), the "GSS shall go through the process of certification and accreditation when a major change to the system occurs...which includes moving critical services to the cloud."

Due to cost/benefit considerations, the Agency's security officer planned to address this topic and update the security documentation associated with the overall GSS, of which "Outlook" represents a subset, after the Agency's relocation in FY 2014. In a similar fashion, a wholesale risk analysis of the other two core IT systems are planned.

Recommendation: The NEH must complete a full security evaluation of the Agency's major IT systems.

Implementation Status: Open/Unimplemented. The Accreditation and Authorization process is currently on hold due to budget constraints.

GLOSSARY OF AUDIT TERMINOLOGY

Questioned Cost: A cost that is questioned by the OIG because of (1) an alleged violation of a provision of law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement or document governing the expenditure of funds; (2) a finding that, at the time of the audit, such cost is not supported by adequate documentation; or (3) a finding that the expenditure of funds for the intended purpose is unnecessary or unreasonable.

Unsupported Cost: A cost that is questioned by the OIG because, at the time of the audit, such cost is not supported by adequate documentation.

Disallowed Cost: A questioned cost that management, in a management decision, has sustained or agreed should not be charged to the Government.

Funds Be Put To Better Use: A recommendation by the OIG that funds could be used more efficiently if management of an establishment took actions to implement and complete the recommendation, including (1) reductions in outlays; (2) deobligation of funds from programs or operations; (3) withdrawal of interest subsidy costs on loans or loan guarantees, insurance, or bonds; (4) costs not incurred by implementing recommended improvements related to the operations of the establishment, a contractor or grantee; (5) avoidance of unnecessary expenditures noted in preaward reviews of contract or grant agreements; or (6) any other savings which are specifically identified.

Management Decision: The evaluation by the management of an establishment of the findings and recommendations included in an audit report and the issuance of a final decision by management concerning its response to such findings and recommendations, including actions concluded to be necessary.

Final Action: The completion of all actions that the management of an establishment has concluded, in its management decision, are necessary with respect to the findings and recommendations included in an audit report. In the event that management concludes no action is necessary, final action occurs when such management decision has been made.

Source: Excerpt from Section 5(f) of the *Inspector General Act of 1978* (as amended)

APPENDIX A

PEER REVIEW RESULTS

The following information is provided pursuant to the requirements of Section 989C of Public Law 111-203 (July 21, 2010), the *Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act*, amending the *Inspector General Act of 1978* (the IG Act), 5 U.S.C. App. This appendix complies with Section 5(a)(14 - 16) of the IG Act of 1978, as amended.

(14)(A) Peer Review of the Audit Function. On December 27, 2016, the Postal Regulatory Commission - Office of Inspector General (PRC-OIG) issued a System Review Report on the audit organization of the NEH - OIG in effect for the year ended March 31, 2016. The PRC-OIG found that the system of quality control for the audit organization of the NEH-OIG had been suitably designed and complied with to provide reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with applicable professional standards in all material respects. Federal audit organizations can receive a rating of *pass*, *pass with deficiencies*, or *fail*. The NEH-OIG received a peer review rating of *pass*.

(15) Outstanding Recommendations from any Peer Review of the NEH-OIG. There are no outstanding recommendations from any peer review of the NEH-OIG, as conducted by another Office of Inspector General, that have not been fully implemented.

(16) Peer Review Conducted by the NEH-OIG. On March 29, 2017, the NEH-OIG issued a System Review Report on the audit organization of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission - Office of Inspector General (CPSC-OIG) in effect for the year ended September 30, 2016. We found that the system of quality control for the audit organization of the CPSC-OIG had been suitably designed and complied with to provide CPSC-OIG with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with applicable professional standards in all material respects. The CPSC-OIG received a peer review rating of *pass*.