

Support the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

“An advanced civilization must not limit its efforts to science and technology alone, but must give full value and support to the other great branches of scholarly and cultural activity in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present, and a better view of the future.”

– NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES ACT OF 1965

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress to support \$75 million in new funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, including: \$50 million for competitive grant programs and \$25 million for operating grants to state humanities councils.

NEH provides critical leadership for our nation’s research and education infrastructure. The requested increase will:

- address significant, unmet needs throughout NEH core programs: Research, Education, Preservation & Access, Challenge Grants, Public Programs, Digital Humanities, and the Federal/State Partnership
- help offset severe economic pressures on the academic workforce and humanities institutions
- enable NEH to introduce or expand current support for:
 - » global perspectives
 - » innovative use of digital technologies
 - » graduate education and research
 - » data collection and dissemination of information on the state of the humanities

Funding Overview

NEH is funded at \$155 million in the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act (pending enactment). Historically, NEH has demonstrated the capacity to operate at much higher funding levels. In 1994 (prior to severe budget cuts), NEH was funded at \$260 million when adjusted for inflation. At its peak in 1979, NEH was funded at \$431 million in 2008 constant dollars.

Unmet Needs

Demand for humanities project support, as demonstrated by NEH application rates and feedback from the field, far exceeds funding available. In FY 2008, applications for NEH grants represented about \$420 million in requested funds. Approximately 16% of competitive, peer-reviewed project proposals were funded. This compares to a 26% funding rate for merit-reviewed projects at the National Science Foundation (NSF), an agency close to the NEH in its mission to strengthen education and research at all levels in its sector. Examples of critical, underfunded NEH programs include:

- fellowships for college/university faculty and independent scholars
- classroom curriculum and materials development
- preservation of historically-significant collections and resources
- digital humanities workshops for teachers and faculty
- public media projects in film, radio and television
- capacity-building challenge grants to humanities institutions

NEH grants support strengthened institutional capacity, jobs, and professional development for thousands

of scholars, educators, curators, librarians, public historians, museum professionals, filmmakers and others around the country.

Investing in the Humanities

- **ADVANCEMENT IN THE HUMANITIES IS CRITICAL TO OUR NATION’S WELL-BEING AND CONTINUED STATUS AS A WORLD LEADER.** Rapid globalization, economic crisis, and new challenges to our national security have heightened the need for a broadly educated citizenry.
- **THE HUMANITIES IMPART PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED BY ALL AMERICANS,** including reading, writing, language proficiency, critical thinking, moral reasoning, effective communication, historical knowledge, civic awareness, and cultural literacy.
- **THE HUMANITIES ARE INNOVATIVE.** Humanities scholars are using digital technologies to generate new knowledge, enhance access to works of enduring value, and improve classroom education at all levels of learning.
- **A RELATIVELY SMALL INVESTMENT THROUGH NEH YIELDS HIGH RETURNS.** NEH awards seed money for high-quality projects that leverage millions of dollars in non-federal support every year.

What are the humanities?

The humanities are those fields of study concerned with human experience, thought, and creativity. They span the subjects of history, languages, literatures, philosophy, the arts, religion, anthropology, and others. The humanities help us understand ourselves and the world we live in. They are prerequisites for vocational mobility, personal growth, and civic participation.

Background

Created as an independent federal agency by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Humanities is today the largest single funder of the humanities in the U.S. Awards go to nonprofit cultural institutions, such as colleges, universities, museums, archives, libraries, public television, and radio stations; and to individual scholars. NEH extends its reach through annual operating grants to state humanities councils located in every state and U.S. territory. NEH is funded through the Interior Appropriations bill.

National Endowment for the Humanities Annual Appropriations, FY 94 to Present (in millions of dollars)

FISCAL YEAR	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
Budget Request	177.5	177.5	182.0	136.0	136.0	136.0	150.0	150.0	120.5	126.9	152.0	162.0	138.1	141.0	141.4	144.4
Appropriation	177.5	172.0	110.0	110.0	110.7	110.7	115.3	120.0	124.5	124.9	135.3	138.1	140.9	141.1	144.7	155.0*

*NEH is funded at \$155 million in the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act (pending enactment).

NATIONAL HUMANITIES ALLIANCE Members & Supporters 2009

African Studies Association
 American Academy of Arts and Sciences
 American Academy of Religion
 American Anthropological Association
 American Association for State and Local History
 American Association of Museums
 American Association of University Professors
 American Comparative Literature Association
 American Council of Learned Societies
 American Dialect Society
 American Folklore Society
 American Historical Association
 American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works
 American Musicological Society
 American Numismatic Society
 American Philological Association
 American Philosophical Association
 American Political Science Association
 American Society for Aesthetics
 American Society for Theatre Research
 American Sociological Association
 American Studies Association
 Arizona State University
 Association for Asian Studies
 Association for Documentary Editing
 Association for Jewish Studies
 Association of American Colleges and Universities
 Association of American Law Schools
 Association of American Universities
 Association of American University Presses
 Association of Art Museum Curators
 Association of Art Museum Directors
 Association of Research Libraries
 Boston University Humanities Foundation
 Center for Research Libraries
 Center for the Humanities (University of Miami)
 Center for the Liberal Arts (East Carolina University)
 Coalition for Networked Information
 College Art Association
 Columbia University
 Cornell University
 Community College Humanities Association
 Council of American Overseas Research Centers
 Council of Independent Colleges
 Council on Library and Information Resources
 Dartmouth College
 Drew University
 Duke University
 Dictionary Society of North America
 Doreen B. Townsend Center for the Humanities (University of California, Berkeley)
 Federation of State Humanities Councils
 German Studies Association
 Hall Center for the Humanities (University of Kansas)
 Harvard University

Heritage Preservation
 History of Science Society
 Imagining America (Syracuse University)
 Independent Research Libraries Association
 Institute for the Arts & Humanities (Penn State University)
 Institute for the Humanities (University of Michigan)
 Institute for the Medical Humanities (University of Texas Medical Branch)
 Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts (University of Notre Dame)
 Linguistic Society of America
 Medieval Academy of America
 Middle East Studies Association
 Minnesota Humanities Center
 Modern Language Association of America
 National Association of State Universities & Land-Grant Colleges
 National Coalition for History
 National Communication Association
 National Council of Teachers of English
 National Humanities Center
 Northeast Document Conservation Center
 Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture
 Organization of American Historians
 Phi Beta Kappa Society
 Popular Culture Association
 Regional Alliance for Preservation
 Shakespeare Association of America
 Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies (Princeton University)
 Simpson Center for the Humanities (University of Washington)
 Sixteenth Century Society and Conference
 Society for Cinema and Media Studies
 Society for Ethnomusicology
 Society for Music Theory
 Society for the History of Technology
 Society of Architectural Historians
 Society of Biblical Literature
 Society of Christian Ethics
 Stanford Humanities Center
 Syracuse University
 Texas A&M University
 The Council of the Humanities (Princeton University)
 The Franke Institute for the Humanities (University of Chicago)
 University at Buffalo (SUNY) Humanities Institute
 University of California, Santa Barbara
 University of California, Santa Cruz
 University of Iowa
 University of Maryland
 University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 University of Oregon
 University of Richmond
 University of Southern California
 Virginia Foundation for the Humanities

National Humanities Alliance

