



The National Endowment for the Humanities



National Humanities Alliance

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) was established in 1965 in recognition of the unique role the humanities play in fostering the wisdom, vision, and knowledge required to participate in a thriving democracy. To this day, the NEH is the only entity, federal or otherwise, charged with bringing the humanities to all Americans.

With divisions dedicated to Education, Preservation and Access, Public Programs, Challenge Programs, and Digital Humanities, the NEH protects our cultural heritage, supports lifelong learning, and fosters civic education. Through direct grants and partnerships with the state humanities councils, the agency reaches Americans in every congressional district.



Here, we offer examples of four crucial impacts the NEH has on our educational and cultural landscapes: supporting K–12 education, providing humanities access, preserving our cultural heritage, and strengthening communities.

These impact areas are illustrated through select NEH-funded programs, each representing a broader body of extraordinary work carried out by humanities communities across the country with the support of the NEH.



To learn more about select NEH-funded projects in your state, visit NEHforAll.org.

This page: From left to right: (1) Auburn University's *Dialogues on the Experience of War* programs encouraged reflection on wars past and present. Image courtesy of Auburn University. (2) PRIME TIME programs bring reading and discussion programs to children and their families. Image courtesy of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. (3) A family visits the Walter Anderson Museum of Art. Image courtesy of the Walter Anderson Museum of Art. (4) The Mastheads used NEH funding to bring cultural programs to Pittsfield, MA. Photo Credit: Westside Riverway.

Cover: Clockwise from right-hand corner: (1) Participants in a story exchange hosted by the University of Scranton discuss immigration and citizenship. Image courtesy of the University of Scranton. (2) Educators in summer professional development program visit the Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial. Image courtesy of Delta State University. (3) Myoung-Ja Hwa, Justin Kalanial'i'i Stoleson, and Larry Kimura digitize Kimura's 1970s radio show *Ka Leo Hawai'i*. Image courtesy of Kani'āina. Photo Credit: Clara Hagan. (4) Participants in a *Dialogues on the Experience of War* program visit Washington, D.C. Image courtesy of Jefferson Community College. (5) A work crew recovers elements of a stone barge at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Image courtesy of Vizcaya. (6) Visitors explore an exhibition on the history of Clarissa Street, an African American community in Rochester, New York. Image courtesy of Teen Empowerment. Photo Credit: Elizabeth Lamarck. (7) Participants in a Clemente Course program for Veterans visit the Rhode Island Museum of Art. Image courtesy of the Clemente Course.



(Left) Participants in a professional development workshop learn archaeological skills. Image courtesy of Crow Canyon Archaeological Center. (Right, Top) Educators visit Dockery Farms in the Mississippi Delta. Image courtesy of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University. (Right, Bottom) Participants in “Teaching Native American Histories” visit the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and learn from tribal leaders. Image courtesy of Five Colleges, Inc.

Enriching K–12 Education

Whether teachers are accessing online lesson plans or attending a summer professional development program, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) provides teachers of all disciplines with the tools to create rich educational experiences for their students. And the NEH’s commitment to youth extends outside of the classroom: it supports extracurricular education through exhibition funding and grants for youth programming.

“Anything that allows students to dig into powerful texts where they can use their voices, use their pens, and write their own stories, is so profound ... the courses that have the humanities at the core really result in some moving experiences.”

– TERRI GREENE HENNING,
Education Specialist, Saint Anselm College

The NEH helps teachers bring high-quality humanities learning to their classrooms.

- With more than 2 million unique visitors per year, the NEH’s educational website—EDSITEment—makes lesson plans and digital resources developed from NEH-funded projects accessible to K–12 teachers.
- National History Day, an NEH-funded initiative, encourages meaningful history and civic engagement for 600,000 students and 20,000–30,000 teachers per year in each state and territory. A 2011 study showed that these students outperformed their peers on state standardized tests.
- *The Roadmap to Educating for American Democracy*, published by iCivics in 2021 and funded by the NEH in partnership with the Department of Education, proposes robust history and civics education structured around seven themes that can be integrated into K–12 education. *The Roadmap* is the product of a collaboration between over 300 scholars, teachers, and parents with different political leanings and suggests techniques and practices that can support a robust exploration of American history.



(Left) Participants in “Teaching Native American Histories” take part in a lecture. Image courtesy of Five Colleges, Inc. (Right) Participants in “The Most Southern Place on Earth” stand next to a cotton field. Image courtesy of the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University.

The NEH supports professional development opportunities for K–12 teachers across the country.

- Nationally, professional development programs for K–12 educators provide teachers with a deeper understanding of history and culture while helping them develop new teaching methods. Since 2012 alone, these programs have reached more than 11,000 teachers, ultimately enriching the classroom experience for an estimated 2 million students.
- Programs such as “From Mesa Verde to Santa Fe: Pueblo Identity in the Southwest,” offered by Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, and “American Women in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars,” offered by the New-York Historical Society, offer deep dives into underrepresented American histories.
- Landmarks Workshops such as “The Most Southern Place on Earth: Music, History, and Culture of the Mississippi Delta” and “The Transcontinental Railroad: Transforming California and the Nation” explore the history of iconic American places while instructing teachers in place-based learning techniques they can use to explore their home towns and cities.

“ Being able to take my experience of being in another part of the U.S., and making connections with the history there, is priceless when I can share that with my students.”

– PARTICIPANT,
Professional Development Program for K–12 Educators

The NEH ensures that students from all backgrounds have access to high-quality extracurricular programs.

- NEH funding helped the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities expand its PRIME TIME Family Reading and Preschool programs to underserved communities nationwide. The programs promote literacy and foster conversation about big ideas.
- With NEH support, St. Anselm College’s Access Academy developed humanities courses for refugee, immigrant, low-income, and first generation high school students in Manchester, New Hampshire. The programs help students move toward graduation while exploring topics like “Writing for Identity and Freedom.”

In 2019, the National Humanities Alliance partnered with 14 NEH summer professional development programs for teachers to document their impact. Surveys were administered before, immediately after, and one year after the programs.

100%
of participants reported experiencing professional growth as a result of the program.

98%
of respondents said that they would recommend participating in an NEH workshop to a colleague.

86%
of respondents reported sharing resources from the program with other teachers at their school.



(Left) NEH funding helped the Chippewa Valley Museum develop *Changing Currents: Reinventing the Chippewa Valley*. Image courtesy of the Chippewa Valley Museum. (Middle) Curtis Zunigha of the Lenape Center delivers a lecture on the forced removal of the Lenape people at the University of Scranton. Image courtesy of the University of Scranton. (Right) NEH support helped the Walter Anderson Museum of Art weather the COVID-19 pandemic while providing educational access to its community. Image courtesy of the Walter Anderson Museum of Art.

Providing Humanities Access to All Americans

From groundbreaking documentaries and exhibitions to community conversations, heritage festivals, and early literacy programs, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) supports projects that bring the humanities to Americans in small rural towns and large cities alike.

The NEH supports innovative exhibitions at cultural institutions throughout the United States.

- With NEH funding, museums large and small create exhibitions that incorporate the best of humanities scholarship, giving Americans the opportunity to learn about and reflect upon their history and culture.
- Exhibitions such as *Farm Life: A Century of Change for Farm Families and Their Neighbors* at the Chippewa Valley Museum in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, showcase local histories within the context of national perspectives—in this case putting local farmers' experiences in conversation with the history of American agriculture. Exhibitions such as *Emmett Till & Mamie Till-Mobley: Let the World See*, developed by the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, provide new insights into significant American figures and events—these exhibitions often travel to other locations, bringing large audiences to host institutions.

The NEH supports the production of world-class documentaries and podcasts, ensuring access to new perspectives on our history and culture.

- NEH funding supports the creation of podcasts and radio programs that are grounded in humanities research. These include *Lost Highways*, which showcases the history and culture of the Rocky Mountain West; *Subtitle*, a series on the history of language; and *American Routes*, a podcast and radio program on American music.
- Documentaries such as *Hillbilly*, *College Behind Bars*, *The Vote*, *Shakespeare Uncovered*, and *Asian Americans* are screened on local PBS stations and used in school classrooms throughout the country—often alongside NEH-supported curricula. Many are available on streaming devices, including through Kanopy, which provides free access to library cardholders.



(Left) With NEH funding, the University of Scranton hosted a story exchange on immigration and citizenship. Image courtesy of the University of Scranton. (Middle) A school group visits the Chippewa Valley Museum. Image courtesy of the Chippewa Valley Museum. (Right) NEH funding helped Auburn University bring *Dialogues on the Experiences of War* programs to Veterans in rural Alabama. Image courtesy of Auburn University.

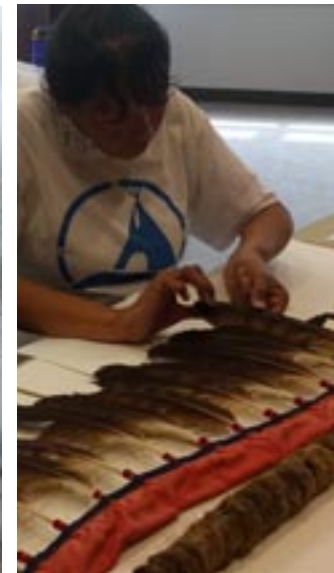
“For forty years I have been looking for words to describe my experience and I finally found them right here in this ancient book [*The Odyssey*].”

– VETERAN PARTICIPANT, *Dialogues on the Experience of War*

96% of respondents across nine *Dialogues* programs agreed that resources used in their programs raised issues relevant to their experiences.

The NEH brings facilitated conversations, lectures, panels, and other programs to communities throughout the United States.

- *Dialogues on the Experience of War* programs provide Veterans and their communities with opportunities for reflection and discussion. Veterans gain new insight into their experience by engaging with rich humanities resources, build connections with others, and form networks of support.
- With an NEH grant, the University of Scranton created a series of discussions, tours, and other programs that addressed local history within the context of broader U.S. history and social movements. And NEH support helped the International Storytelling Center bring the “Freedom Stories: Unearthing the Black Heritage of Appalachia” virtual discussion program to an audience of more than 15,000.
- NEH funding has helped the American Library Association support programs at more than 1,800 libraries over the past decade. One of these programs, Great Stories Club, brings reading and discussion programs to at-risk youth throughout the country, including youth in juvenile detention centers.
- Virtual programs funded by the NEH during the COVID-19 pandemic helped communities stay connected. The Walter Anderson Museum of Art’s “Southern Art/Wider World” series featured seven live-streamed dialogues exploring themes such as the blues in the Mississippi Delta and the foodways of the Gulf Coast. Eighty-eight percent of survey respondents agreed that participating in this event enhanced their sense of connection to their community. And the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation—which interprets the site of a World War II internment camp—created podcasts, videos, and online exhibitions that helped the organization connect with its members, most of whom are former incarcerated and their descendants.



(Left) Workers salvage submerged portions of the historic barge at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens. Image courtesy of Vizcaya. (Middle) National Heritage Responder Robert Herkovitz visits a mold-infested institution in Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria in 2017. Image courtesy of the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation. (Right) Conservators from the Midwest Art Conservation Center offer workshops on the conservation of Indigenous collections. Image courtesy of the Midwest Art Conservation Center.

Saving Our Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage—including presidential letters, works of art, community archives, and even the languages we speak—are vulnerable to a wide range of threats. The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) works to ensure that our heritage is preserved for generations to come by providing grants to preserve local heritage, offering emergency support to institutions following disasters, and funding the revitalization of Indigenous American languages.

A 2019 report produced by the Institute of Museum and Library Services found that only **42%** of collecting institutions in the United States have a disaster plan for their collections.

NEH funding helps cultural organizations preserve their collections for the future.

- With regional partners such as the Midwest Art Conservation Center, the Northeast Document Conservation Center, and the Conservation Center for Art and Historic States, the NEH ensures that staff from small organizations throughout the United States can undertake emergency preparedness and conservation training.
- Grants for small and mid-sized institutions have a particular impact in areas of the country such as Appalachia and the Gulf South, where a great deal of our cultural heritage is held by small organizations without in-house preservation staff. With one such grant, the Fort Fairfield Public Library preserved more than 2,000 genealogical volumes, establishing a center for historical and genealogical research in northern Maine.

The NEH supports professional development programs that help institutions prepare for disasters, as well as emergency grants to institutions in regions affected by large-scale disasters.

- With the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC), the NEH supports the Alliance for Response: community networks from Seattle to the Mississippi Gulf Coast that build cooperative partnerships and ensure that vulnerable regions are prepared for disasters before they happen.



(Left) A participant in a photo documentation lab scans an image. Image courtesy of the Midwest Art Conservation Center. (Middle) NEH funding helped the Fort Fairfield Public Library assess and preserve its historical collections. Image courtesy of Fort Fairfield Public Library. (Right) A Haida Language participant viewing an archived photo during the National Breath of Life Archival Institute Module 1 at National Anthropological Archives, Suitland, MA. 2017. Photo Credit: Karen L. Baldwin.

- Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, the NEH awarded more than \$2 million in emergency relief to cultural institutions in the region. And following Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria in 2017, the NEH awarded nearly \$2 million to organizations throughout the Gulf South and Puerto Rico.

NEH funding helps Native American communities and their partners document and revitalize endangered languages, supporting a vital aspect of Indigenous culture and identity.

- The University of Hawai'i at Hilo's Kani'āina project digitized and transcribed audio recordings of Ka Leo Hawai'i, a Native Hawaiian language radio program from the 1970s and 80s that was a vital part of early language revitalization efforts.
- The Myaamia Center at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, builds the capacity of community-based language revitalization efforts through its Breath of Life institutes, which offer training in the archival methods necessary to revitalize the most endangered languages.
- A 2017 partnership with the First Nations Development Institute helped the NEH distribute \$2.1 million in funding, building the capacity of Indigenous language revitalization programs from Mashpee, Massachusetts, to Chickaloon, Alaska.

NEH funding helps make nationally-significant collections accessible to the public.

- NEH grants help preserve and make accessible collections of national importance. For instance, the American Foundation for the Blind used NEH support to create the online Helen Keller Archive, making more than 160,000 materials related to Keller's life available to the public. The groundbreaking project is accessible to blind, deaf, and deafblind audiences.
- The University of South Carolina Moving Image Research Collections digitized more than 8,000 newsreel films recorded by the Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. The films document American and world history between 1919 and 1944, including the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and are available online.
- NEH funding supports the digitization and publication of the papers of prominent Americans, including John and Abigail Adams, Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain, Willa Cather, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

143
of the 216
languages
spoken in the
United States
are
endangered.



(Left) A group from the Baber AME Church visits the Clarissa Uprooted exhibition in Rochester, New York. Image courtesy of Teen Empowerment. Photo Credit: Jennifer Bannister. (Right) NEH funding helped Linda Wood interview Muskogee Elders, creating Documenting Spoken Muskogee, a language archive and cultural resource. Photo Credit: Jack Martin.

Building Strong Communities

By offering crucial financial support to humanities institutions, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funding helps communities honor their histories and cultures and engage in dialogue, building bridges across differences and strengthening our communities.

“ I was inspired by the approach of engaging youth and elders in the process of creating community-curated public history projects.

— COMMUNITY PARTNER,
Clarissa Uprooted

NEH funding helps communities celebrate and honor their diverse histories and cultures.

- Teen Empowerment in Rochester, New York, created an exhibition dedicated to the history of Clarissa Street—a once-flourishing African American community in the city. Eighty-seven percent of respondents to an exhibition survey agreed that they encountered new perspectives on Rochester’s history and that they were able to see connections between the history shown in the exhibition and issues facing Rochester today.
- NEH support for the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum has proven transformative for the museum, which celebrates West Virginia’s contributions to U.S. labor history by telling the story of the region’s struggle to unionize the Southern coalfields. The museum has hired staff, engaged with local partners and stakeholders, and created public events that center the perspective of miners and their families.
- The University of Las Vegas, Nevada undertook an oral history project to document the Latinx impact on Southern Nevada’s educational systems, business sectors, politics, and cultural life. With the local public radio station, the project team produced a podcast called *Latinx Voices Unveiled* and hosted a range of public events featuring live interviews and food from the cultures being documented by the project.
- NEH funding helps Native American communities preserve and revitalize endangered Indigenous American languages. With NEH funding, the Documenting Spoken Muskogee project was able to hire a videographer to film interviews of 25 Elders conducted in Muskogee by Seminole Nation employee Linda Wood, a Muskogee speaker. These interviews—which covered a variety of traditional topics—were recorded and transcribed and are now online.



(Left) The Masthead's summer lecture series brings the Pittsfield community together to celebrate local history and culture. Image credit: Westside Riverway. (Right) NEH funding helped the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center continue its programs at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Image courtesy of the B.B. King Museum.

NEH funding brings communities together to engage in conversations about history, culture, and local issues, helping build bridges across differences.

- Hosted by the International Storytelling Center in Jonesborough, Tennessee, the "Freedom Stories: Unearthing the Black Heritage of Appalachia" program featured discussions by Black storytellers, scholars, and community leaders. Ninety-three percent of respondents to a post-program survey indicated they were "motivated to listen to the stories of people whose background was different from their own after participating in this program."
- The Mastheads, a humanities organization in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, offered a series of community conversations on the region's rich and diverse past, including a lecture from local historian Dr. Frances Jones-Sneed titled "Black Artists Who Found Their Voices in the Berkshires." In survey responses, 95 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that "the program enhanced [their] appreciation of Pittsfield's history."
- *Dialogues on the Experience of War* programs help bridge the divide between Veterans and civilians. At public programs held by Ohio University, 85 percent of survey respondents agreed that the "program gave [them] opportunities to see connections between those who have served and those who have not." Ninety-seven percent felt "more confident about taking part in thoughtful discussions about war."

NEH funding through the COVID-19 pandemic provided crucial support for vulnerable institutions, enabling them to continue serving their communities and setting them up for success in a post-pandemic landscape.

- NEH funding helped humanities institutions weather the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to support their communities. Through the CARES Act, the NEH distributed \$75 million to vulnerable organizations, while the ARP Act provided an additional \$135 million.
- NEH-funded pivots to new program formats helped sustain rural organizations and communities. In Homer, Alaska, the Pratt Museum used an NEH CARES grant to offer outdoor, physically-distanced tours, develop a 12-part radio series, and reach community members through online conversation programs. And on Maine's Monhegan Island, the Monhegan Museum developed a digital exhibition, "World War II: On Island and Abroad."
- Grantees built new skill sets, organizational capacities, and audiences that will continue to be a resource for years to come. The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, located in Powell, purchased equipment and produced podcasts, videos, and online exhibitions with NEH support. And the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola, Mississippi, made updates to its website and purchased software for online programming.

THE NATIONAL HUMANITIES ALLIANCE (NHA) is a nationwide coalition of organizations advocating for the humanities on campuses, in communities, and on Capitol Hill. Founded in 1981, NHA is supported by over 250 member organizations, including: colleges, universities, libraries, museums, cultural organizations, state humanities councils, and scholarly, professional, and higher education associations. It is the only organization that brings together the U.S. humanities community as a whole.



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