

Humanities Policy Priorities

FY 2021



National
Humanities
Alliance



Federal funding for the humanities provides essential support to colleges, universities, cultural organizations, and state humanities councils across the country. It supports efforts to preserve and explore local history and traditions; promote understanding among diverse communities; and foster a sense of our common ideals, enduring civic values, and shared cultural heritage.

This booklet outlines our funding and policy priorities for the agencies and programs that enable innovative humanities work across the country.

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SUPPORT THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH)

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress to provide no less than \$170 million in FY 2021 funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities and to forcefully reject any efforts to eliminate the agency. *The NEH is funded under the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.*

FUNDING OVERVIEW

For the past five years, the NEH has received small, but steady increases in funding. Even still, when adjusted for inflation, the NEH's funding has decreased by more than 15 percent since 2010.

NEH Annual Appropriations, FY 2010 to Present (in millions of dollars)

FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
167.5	154.7	146	138	146	146	147.9	149.8	152.8	155	162.25

ABOUT THE NEH

The NEH's mission is to strengthen our nation by supporting high-quality projects and programs in the humanities and by making the humanities available to all Americans. The NEH fulfills its mandate by:

- Providing training for thousands of K-12, college, and university teachers;
- Reaching tens of millions of Americans through high-quality television and radio documentaries, museum exhibitions, and reading and discussion programs in museums and libraries across the nation; and
- Supporting, in partnership with the Library of Congress, efforts in every state to digitize and make accessible over 11 million pages of historic American newspapers, with many millions more to follow.

THE FEDERAL INTEREST IN THE HUMANITIES

With a modest federal investment, the NEH plays an outsized role in:

Cultivating an informed citizenry

The NEH was established in 1965 in recognition of the unique role the humanities play in helping U.S. citizens develop the wisdom, vision, and knowledge required to participate in a thriving democracy.

Bridging divides

NEH programs encourage communities across the nation to engage in civic dialogue. From Alaska to Maine, conversation programs help citizens confront difficult issues, voice their perspectives, and learn from others.

Supporting veterans

Through its *Dialogues on the Experience of War* programs, the NEH brings together veterans and civilians to reflect on powerful literature and art. Across five programs assessed in 2019, 96 percent of respondents indicated that humanities materials helped them better understand their experiences. 79 percent of veteran respondents indicated that their program made them more likely to seek help if they need it.

Preserving cultural heritage

Without investments to preserve and make accessible artifacts and documents from our past, key components of our cultural heritage would be lost. And through a partnership with the National Science Foundation, the Documenting Endangered Languages program helps record and protect the languages of Native American tribes throughout the U.S.

Supporting programs of national importance

NEH funding supported the archaeological rediscovery of Jamestown and Plymouth. Funding for scholarly editions and translations ensures that the writings of notable Americans, from the Founding Fathers to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, are accessible either digitally or in print.

THE NEH CATALYZES PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN LOCAL ECONOMIES

A modest amount of federal investment catalyzes private, local support for the humanities. NEH grantees are often able to leverage their awards for greater, local investment. In addition, NEH's investments in museums and historic sites around the country have played a key role in developing local tourist economies.

- Since its inception in 1977, grants made through the NEH Challenge Grants program have leveraged federal funds at a ratio of 3:1, raising more than \$3 billion in private support for humanities projects. Since 2015, the NEH has awarded more than \$43 million in challenge grant funding.
- State councils leverage \$5 for every dollar of federal investment. In 2016, 55 state councils supported 2,419 exhibitions, 280 preservation projects, and 1,612 local history programs, attracting a total audience of 5.5 million people.
- Grantees in the Media Projects program in the Division of Public Programs leveraged NEH awards to raise an estimated \$16,221,684 in funds or donations between 2008 and 2014. This is eight times the amount of the NEH awards, or an 8:1 ratio for NEH funds.



SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION— TITLE VI AND FULBRIGHT-HAYS

ACTION NEEDED

Appropriations

For FY 2021, we urge Congress to provide at least \$106.1 million in funding for the Department of Education’s Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs, including \$95.7 million for Title VI and \$10.4 million for Fulbright-Hays. *Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are funded under the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.*

Reauthorization

We urge Congress to support the Advancing International and Foreign Language Act, which would reauthorize Title VI of the Higher Education Act by extending six currently funded Title VI programs and streamlining other programs to better address 21st century needs.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Deep cuts implemented in FY 2011 severely eroded our international education and foreign language infrastructure. These cuts resulted in 25 percent fewer resource centers, 18 percent fewer undergraduate and doctoral fellowships, fewer training opportunities for students and teachers, and fewer outreach activities to government and business. Title VI and Fulbright-Hays have still not recovered from those reductions and have seen their capacity further eroded.

Title VI & Fulbright-Hays Annual Appropriations, FY 2010 to Present (in millions of dollars)

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Title VI	110.3	68.3	66.6	63.1	65.1	65.1	65.1	65.1	65.1	65.1	68.1
Fulbright-Hays	15.6	7.5	7.5	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	8.1
Total	125.9	75.8	74.1	70.2	72.2	72.2	72.2	72.2	72.2	72.2	76.2

ABOUT TITLE VI AND FULBRIGHT-HAYS

Title VI of the Higher Education Act (HEA) was first authorized in the National Defense Education Act of 1958. Fulbright-Hays is permanently authorized under the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961. Together they are the two pillars of international and foreign language education in the U.S. education system. These programs are crucial to addressing the critical need for expertise in foreign languages and deep knowledge of all world regions.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION IS CRUCIAL FOR PRODUCTIVE GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Confronting global challenges

Many of our most pressing challenges at home and abroad are global in nature: from climate change, pandemics, and refugee crises, to food security and threats to communications, transportation, and financial systems. These challenges require a workforce with international, cultural, and language skills in science, agriculture, medicine, nursing, engineering, law, cyber security, aviation administration, and more.

Effective military and diplomatic engagement

In recent years, unexpected upheavals and armed conflicts around the world revealed our shortfalls in required regional and language expertise. The U.S. Department of Defense reported in one hearing that only 28 percent of military positions with language requirements were filled with personnel at the required proficiency level.

Civic and cultural competency

In our ever more interconnected world and diverse homeland, cross-cultural competencies, knowledge of world regions, and the ability to speak other languages are crucial skills. These abilities provide insight into the complexities of global and regional issues, including differences in values, perspectives, and priorities.

Economic competitiveness

Trade represents a great and growing share of our economy, with the value of U.S. exports doubling to more than \$3 trillion annually from 2004 to 2014. In a 2014 survey of 850 U.S. corporations, 85 percent reported that with more international expertise on staff their business would increase.

TITLE VI AND FULBRIGHT-HAYS EFFECTIVELY SERVE NATIONAL NEEDS

Produce deep expertise

Title VI and Fulbright-Hays strengthen our nation's knowledge about all world regions and expertise in over 200 foreign languages. Studies have shown that Title VI National Resource Centers account for 59 percent of undergraduate and 81 percent of graduate enrollments in the least commonly-taught languages of strategic interest.

Fill high-skill positions

90 percent of Fulbright-Hays DDRA recipients and 71 percent of FLAS recipients work in careers that directly utilize their foreign language and area studies expertise. Many graduates, such as former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, go on to careers in the government including at the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and USAID.

Promote broad global competencies

Title VI grantees regularly conduct outreach activities to educational institutions, businesses, government, the media, and underrepresented populations. They ensure that a wide range of faculty and teachers have the resources to teach foreign languages and the histories and cultures of all world regions. Title VI supported the development of more than half the textbooks now in use for teaching "less commonly taught" languages.

Stimulate economic growth and job creation

Title VI spearheads nationwide internationalization of business education by funding Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBERs). From 1987–2009, nearly 250,000 students graduated from a CIBER university with a concentration in international business and nearly 300,000 executives, many associated with small- and medium-sized businesses, have been trained by CIBERs.



SUPPORT THE INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS)

ACTION NEEDED

For FY 2021, we urge Congress to provide full funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services, including \$42.7 million for the Office of Museum Services and \$206 million for the administration of the Library Services and Technology Act. *The IMLS is funded under the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.*

FUNDING OVERVIEW

IMLS funding has not yet recovered from sequestration, though it has benefitted from modest funding increases in recent years. In 2018, Congress passed the Museum and Library Services Act to reauthorize the IMLS until Fiscal Year 2025 and authorized increased funding for both museum and library services.

IMLS Annual Appropriations, FY 2010 to Present (in millions of dollars)

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Museum Services	35.2	31.6	29.5	27.9	28.7	30.1	31.2	31.7	34.7	34.7	38.5
Library Services	213.5	189	184.7	175	180.9	180.9	182.7	183.5	189.3	189.3	195.5

ABOUT IMLS

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The mission of the IMLS is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Its Office of Museum Services (OMS) awards grants that support museums in their efforts to educate students and preserve and digitize collections. The IMLS also administers the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), which consolidates federal library programs while expanding services for learning and access to information resources.

IMLS SERVES NATIONAL NEEDS

- Museums support more than 726,000 jobs and contribute \$50 billion to the U.S. economy per year.
- Museums are an essential part of the nation’s educational infrastructure, spending more than \$2 billion a year on education and lifelong learning.
- One in six adults (or about 36 million) in the U.S. have low literacy skills—libraries provide learning opportunities for adults who are no longer part of the K–12 educational system, including adults who face economic and other challenges.
- Libraries and museums build the civic strength of their communities and provide opportunities for public engagement.
- IMLS grants are awarded in every state and congressional district, but current funding has allowed the agency to fund only a small fraction of the highly-rated grant applications it receives.

SUPPORT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (NARA)

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress to provide no less than \$395 million in FY 2021 funding for the operating expenses of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), including at least \$7 million for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the grant-making arm of the agency. *The National Archives is funded under the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill.*

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Increased federal spending for the National Archives is necessary to manage, preserve, and make accessible the federal government's records. NARA's budget was decreased the last two years even as its responsibilities have grown. The NHPRC's budget has seen small increases in recent years, but its capacity is nearly 60 percent below its FY 2010 level in inflation-adjusted dollars.

NARA and NHPRC Annual Appropriations, FY 2010 to Present (in millions of dollars)

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
NARA	339	339	373	353	370	365	372	380.6	384.6	373	359
NHPRC	13	10	5	4.75	4.5	5	5	5	6	6	6.5

ABOUT NARA AND NHPRC

Congress established the National Archives in 1934 to preserve and make accessible to the public the records of the U.S. Government. American citizens rely on access to immigration, naturalization, and census records held by the National Archives to provide proof of citizenship and conduct genealogical research. Veterans and their families rely on military records (held by NARA) to gain access to their benefits. NARA coordinates the declassification of federal records and ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act. It is also holds the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, and Bill of Rights. NARA now has over 40 facilities nationwide, including 14 presidential libraries.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) promotes the preservation and use of the American documentary record. It supports publication projects of national significance, such as the Ratification of the U.S. Constitution project, the Papers of George Washington, the Frederick Douglass Papers, and the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers. NHPRC grants support a wide range of activities to preserve and increase access to historical records. These grants leverage state, local, institutional, foundation, and other private funding by requiring 50 percent cost sharing.

NARA'S FUNDING HAS STAGNATED WHILE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE INCREASED

- The federal government's transition to electronic records, including email, has dramatically increased the number of records NARA needs to process and catalog.
- Each new presidential library created and placed under NARA's care adds new staff, maintenance, and records management costs.
- NARA's responsibilities in facilitating declassification and FOIA compliance have increased at a time of diminishing resources, creating large backlogs.
- Forced to do more with less funding, NARA has had to reduce hours at its research rooms and limit the number of materials individuals can access at one time, expanding the time required to conduct research.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library of Congress is the largest and most comprehensive legislative and national library in the world. Created and sustained by Congress through every period of the nation’s history, the Library of Congress is America’s oldest federal cultural institution. It stands as both a symbol and a working institution fundamental to our knowledge-based democracy—preserving and making available vital resources for scholars, educators, students, policymakers, and individual citizens.

ACTION NEEDED

For FY 2021, we urge Congress to appropriate at least \$800 million to the Library of Congress. The acquisition, management, and preservation of digital collections is an enormous task and the Library must have adequate funds to manage and provide access to digitized and born-digital content. *The Library of Congress is funded under the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill.*

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Library of Congress Appropriations, FY 2014 to Present (in millions of dollars)

FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
579.0	590.9	599.9	631.9	669.9	696.1	719.4

HISTORY AND CIVICS

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, signed into law in December 2015, includes funding for K–12 history and civics education—the first dedicated funding lines for these subjects since “Teaching American History Grants” were eliminated in FY 2012. One funding line supports a grant program that promotes evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative American history, geography, and civics instruction. These grants emphasize programs that benefit low-income students and underserved populations. Another funding line goes to “Presidential and Congressional Academies for American History,” intensive academies for teachers and students to learn more about civics.

ACTION NEEDED

For FY 2021, we urge Congress to provide the fully authorized amount of \$6.848 million for the U.S. Department of Education’s history and civics programs, including \$5 million for American History and Civics Education Grants and \$1.8 million for American History and Civics Academies. *History and Civics are funded under the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.*

FUNDING OVERVIEW

History and Civics Appropriations, FY 2016 to Present (in millions of dollars)

	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
History and Civics Academies	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8
American History and Civics Education Grants	0	1.7	1.7	3	3

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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 200 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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