

STATE HUMANITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE

P. O. BOX 230

MUNCIE, INDIANA 47305

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ABOUT THE PROPOSED

FEDERATION OF PUBLIC PROGRAMS IN THE HUMANITIES

THESE QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE INTERIM COMMITTEE AS WELL AS BY CHAIRPERSONS OF STATE-BASED COMMITTEES WHO HAVE WRITTEN CONCERNS OR DISCUSSED THEIR CONCERNS WITH COMMITTEE MEMBERS. THE ANSWERS CANNOT BE DEFINITIVE, BUT THEY REPRESENT THE BEST JUDGMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABOUT THE WAY THE FEDERATION WOULD WORK AND THE POTENTIAL OF THE FEDERATION FOR STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE HUMANITIES IN THE SHAPING OF PUBLIC POLICY.

1. WHY SHOULD A STATE-BASED HUMANITIES COMMITTEE JOIN THE FEDERATION?

- o The Federation will offer a number of needed services to strengthen the state-based committees. These are services which neither the National Endowment staff nor the separate committees can now provide.
- o The Federation will promote an increased recognition nationally of the proper role of the humanities in the formulation of public policy.
- o The Federation will be able to speak for the state-based committees in situations in which the various committees have authorized joint action.
- o The Federation will help ensure the continued acceptance and development of the state-based humanities committees by providing a clearinghouse of information about them and by developing a consistent and coherent articulation of the concepts under which they operate.

2. WHAT SERVICES CAN THE FEDERATION PROVIDE?
(Immediate possibilities)

- o Data Bank: develop information on the activities of state-based committees; projects funded, budgeting procedures; general policies and special resources.
- o Mailing lists: develop and maintain current lists of staff, committee members, scholars, government officials, etc.
- o Newsletter: publish a newsletter at least bimonthly and send to all committee members, staffs and others deemed suitable.
- o Staff benefits: make available to Federation and state-based committee personnel group medical coverage, liability insurance, retirement and other fringe benefits, a credit union, etc.
- o Index of resources: list publications, films, tapes and other materials available from grant projects.
- o Special reports: issue periodic reports containing information concerning developments affecting either the humanities or the state-based program.

- o National meetings: organize needed meetings of committee members and staffs.
- o National assembly: organize the annual public event of the Federation.

(Long-range possibilities)

- o Assist state-based committees in developing regional projects.
- o Provide workshops for staff.
- o Develop brochures and other informational programs for the public aimed at increasing national understanding and support.
- o Provide information to help evaluate re-grants.
- o Act as a fund-raising agency to benefit member committees.

3. WHY CAN'T THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES PROVIDE THESE SERVICES?

- o The National Endowment for the Humanities is a grant-giving organization whose mission, as defined by Congress and the Bureau of the Budget, does not include the provision of such services. Consequently, even though NEH personnel may see the clear need for these services, the Endowment has not been given the money and staff for the work required.

4. WHAT ARE THE DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF A MEMBER COMMITTEE?

- o Pay annual dues.
- o Provide data.
- o Send member delegates and staff to meetings.
- o Work for the common good of all state-based committees.

5. WHAT WILL THE FEDERATION COST?

Expenses will, of course, depend upon the services authorized by member committees. The Interim Committee estimates a minimum annual budget of between \$150,000 - \$200,000 providing:

- o Salary for an executive director of some national stature.

- o Salary for an assistant director, a person qualified to act for the director as needed.
- o Secretarial/clerical, at least two staff people.
- o Office rental in a large city plus costs of starting up an office and keeping it running.
- o Mail, telephone and travel expenses for maintaining contact between the Federation and the state-based committees.
- o Services authorized by member committees.

6. HOW WILL THE FEDERATION BE FUNDED?

The basic operation of the national office will be funded by dues from member committees. In order for these dues to cover the federation expenses, they will have to be on the order of from \$3,000 - \$4,000 from each state. The original determination will be made by the Interim Committee, while subsequent determination will be made by the Federation at the annual meeting. Additional funds for special projects for the Federation may be obtained by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities or from private or public sources.

The Annual Assembly of the Federation would not be financed through state dues but we believe federal and private assistance will be available for such a meeting.

The Federation has three potential sources of funding: dues, grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and grants from other public or private sources.

- o Basic operational costs should be paid by dues from member committees. Based on budget estimates, these will probably have to be between \$3,000 and \$4,000 annually. Initial dues assessment will be made by the Interim Committee. All subsequent dues will be approved by the Federation's annual meeting.
- o Additional funds for specific projects can be sought by grant from the NEH or other private or public funding sources.
- o As demands on the Federation grow, service fees from state-based committees may be required for services not provided to all member committees.

7. IS THE FEDERATION TO BE A LOBBYING ORGANIZATION?

- o No advocacy role will be undertaken by the Federation. However, as needed and requested the Federation will aid in the exchange of information with legislative and executive leaders in government.
- o Promotion on behalf of the state-based humanities program will remain the voluntary responsibility of private individuals from the state-based committees who can best know and describe the value of their projects.
- o The Federation will be able to provide information on request to the member committees to assist them in describing the program, its purposes, and its accomplishments to governmental agencies.

8. IS NOT THE FEDERATION AN UNNECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE LAYER, ANOTHER LEVEL OF BUREAUCRACY, WHICH WILL HINDER THE WORK OF STATE-BASED COMMITTEES?

No. The Federation is the logical response to identified and expressed needs for service to the state-based committees. Its function will be limited by state-based committee mandate, and monitored and redirected annually by state-based committee review.

- o The Federation's defined purpose is to assist state-based committees.
- o A majority of state-based committees must agree to form the Federation.
- o Two-thirds of the membership must be present in the Federation's House of Delegates for the organization to function.
- o By facilitating cooperation at regional and national levels the continued involvement with NEH is clearly implied.

9. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE STAFF OF STATE-BASED PROGRAMS IN THE FEDERATION?

- o The Federation will call a national meeting of executive directors (which NEH cannot now do).
- o Information available to staff will improve.

- o Insurance and other group benefit programs will be possible.
- o The Federation will not intervene between state staff and NEH field personnel in any way.
- o Coordination of data requested from state staff should ultimately ease communication demands as well as increase the useful data available to staff.

10. WHERE WILL THE FEDERATION BE LOCATED?

It will be centrally located in a major city, easily accessible to all member state-based committees. The present thinking of the Interim Committee is that Washington would not be the city.

11. IS THE AUTONOMY OF THE STATE-BASED COMMITTEES JEOPARDIZED BY THE FEDERATION?

No. State-based committee membership is voluntary, and the active participation of the state-based committees will ensure that the Federation does only what the state-based committees desire.

The Interim Committee has been particularly sensitive to the question of autonomy. Each of the fifteen state-based committee chairpersons elected at Seattle to the Interim Committee is persuaded that our state committees can be helped by the formation of this Federation. The word "Federation" is significant and was chosen with care. We sensed the need for unity and cooperation but we did not wish to forego self-reliance and individuality.

12. WHY IS THE FEDERATION NECESSARY TO THE CONTINUED GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATE-BASED PROGRAMS?

The state-based programs have grown to the point where their continued strength and development require an expanded support system. They need to be able to capitalize on the unique experience of each member state as well as to communicate with the public at large in a coherent manner. The proposed federated structure will allow that growth through cross-fertilization of resources and ideas between its members as well as provide the way in which their collective experience can be expressed.