

National Endowment for the Humanities

**State-Based Program
Principles and Standards**

PREFACE

This statement of "State-Based Program Principles and Standards" was developed by the Program Advisory Committee* of state-based committee chairmen with the assistance of the Washington staff of the state-based program. The Committee was aware of an often-expressed need for such a document on the part of their state committees and others nationally. The Program Advisory Committee therefore began to develop a statement in November, 1974 at a meeting in Springfield, Missouri.

The statement was drafted and revised at several subsequent meetings of the Committee and was circulated and commented upon at the national meeting of state chairmen in April, 1975 and at the national meeting of state-based committee staff in June, 1975.

The statement of "State-Based Program Principles and Standards" consists of two parts. The first part is a list of program *principles*. These *principles* have been part of the program since its inception and represent the essential and irreducible core around which the program in the states is made. The principles represent the policy of the National Council on the Humanities and are based upon the intent of the Congress.

The second part is the enumeration of program *standards* which, in the judgement of the Program Advisory Committee, are implied by the principles of the program when put into action. The *standards* do not represent Endowment policy but instead express the best judgement of the Program Advisory Committee as modified by the advice of other chairmen, committee members, and staff.

The state-based program and the Division of Public Programs take pleasure in making the statement widely available and consider it to be a useful and informative document, likely to be of considerable help to the state committees as they plan for and evaluate their programs.

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I

HUMANITIES

PRINCIPLE:

The humanities should be central to all aspects of the committee's program.

STANDARDS:

A. The committee should require that each project involve one or more of the following disciplines:

- (1) modern and classical languages;
- (2) linguistics;
- (3) literature;
- (4) history;
- (5) jurisprudence;
- (6) philosophy;
- (7) archeology;
- (8) comparative religion;
- (9) ethics;
- (10) history and criticism of the arts;
- (11) those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods.

B. The committee should make aggressive efforts to insure that over a period of time it has made grants to projects which, when considered as a group, have involved a large number of humanities disciplines.

C. The committee should make aggressive efforts to encourage projects that involve more than one humanities discipline.

D. The committee should not support projects that Congress has determined are the responsibility of the National Endowment for the Arts, or that are the responsibility of other Federal or state agencies.

E. The committee should continually review its activities under all seven principles of the program to insure centrality of the humanities to the entire program.

II

SCHOLARS IN THE HUMANITIES

PRINCIPLE:

Scholars in the humanities should be involved centrally in each project funded by the state committee.

STANDARDS:

- A. The committee should insure that scholars in the humanities are involved centrally in the planning of each project.
- B. The committee should insure that scholars in the humanities are involved centrally in the implementation of each project.
- C. The committee should make clear to all applicants that the humanities scholar should function in each project as a professional in his discipline. The scholar is expected to follow the accepted principles of academic freedom, which include: (a) the freedom to discuss all aspects of a subject while at the same time exercising care not to introduce matter into the discussion which has no relation to the subject and, (b) the responsibility to show due respect for the opinion of others in the exchange of criticism and ideas.
- D. The committee should work to increase the number of humanities scholars (both in higher education and in other institutions which employ professional humanists) aware of and involved in its program.
- E. In addition to involvement in individual projects, the committee's overall program should show explicit, planned efforts to achieve understanding and acceptance of the program concept by scholars in the humanities.

III

PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

PRINCIPLE:

All grants of a state committee should support projects dealing with public policy issues.

STANDARDS:

- A. The committee should take steps to insure that each member of the committee understands that, for the purposes of the state-based program, the Endowment defines a public policy issue as an issue which is factually the subject of address by the executive, legislative, or judicial branches of local, state, or federal governments. Each project will move beyond the specific as the humanities scholars and others explore the broad implications of the issue and of its parts, but the specific issue should remain the anchor and final point of reference for the program.
- B. The committee should take steps to insure that each project involves a clearly-stated public policy issue.
- C. The committee should develop guidelines that require evidence from applicants indicating that each issue is one which affects a broad spectrum of the public.
- D. The committee should take steps to insure that each project provides ample opportunity for diverse points of view and that no project is characterized by advocacy, bias, or dogmatic assertion.
- E. The committee should require that no project be action-oriented; that is, no project should promote a specific solution to a problem, present a single resolution of an issue, or exhort the audience to a particular course of action.

IV STATE THEME

PRINCIPLE:

The committee should have a carefully chosen state theme, and the theme should be central to each project.

STANDARDS:

A. The committee should adopt a theme to which public policy issues can be related (see III, c).

B. The committee should develop guidelines that require each applicant to provide an explicit explanation of the relationship of the project to the state theme.

C. The committee evaluation process should include assessment of the success of each project in addressing the state theme.

D. The committee should reconsider the state theme periodically and thoughtfully to insure that the theme is in fact based on current public interest priorities in the state.

E. The committee should evaluate the state theme periodically and thoughtfully in terms of its efficacy in achieving program objectives.

V ADULT PUBLIC

PRINCIPLE:

Projects should involve the adult, out-of-school public.

STANDARDS:

A. The committee should fund projects planned for an adult, out-of-school public.

B. The committee should not make grants that support course work for academic credit.

C. Committee activities should show efforts to reach beyond those segments of the adult public traditionally comfortable with and involved in conventional adult education.

D. The committee should typically fund projects which provide ample opportunity for dialogue among all of the participants. Committees may wish to experiment occasionally with media or other formats which do not always involve dialogue.

VI GRANTS

PRINCIPLE:

The committee objectives should be achieved by making grants.

STANDARDS:

- A. The final responsibility for grant-making rests with the entire committee.
- B. The final fiscal responsibility for grant funds rests with the entire committee.
- C. The committee should be prudent with its funds, but it is expected that those funds will be used to the greatest extent possible, reflecting the fact that the funds were provided by Congress in expectation of extensive humanities programming.
- D. The committee should make every effort to raise funds from all sources available to it in order to support committee grant activity.
- E. The committee should have evaluation techniques which enable it to assess with reasonable objectivity its granting techniques and the projects themselves.
- F. The committee should seek to make grants to an expanding number of institutions and organizations in the state over a period of time, and should seek to stimulate applications from organizations and institutions not traditionally involved in humanities programming.
- G. The committee should annually evaluate its staff in terms of committee grant-making goals.

VII THE COMMITTEE

PRINCIPLE:

The first six principles of the state-based program can best be achieved by a representative and volunteer state committee made up of scholars in the humanities, institutional administrators, and members of the public.

STANDARDS:

- A. The committee should give first priority to developing and maintaining high standards of intellectual excellence in their programs. No program of any committee can be justified on other grounds.
- B. The committee should play an active role in the preparation of its proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities.
- C. The committee should shape the policies of its program, giving continuing thought to its role and future.
- D. The committee membership should reflect a balance among its constituents: scholars in the humanities, members of the public, and institutional administrators.
- E. The committee should continuously search out and implement new means of increasing public understanding and use of the humanities.
- F. The committee has responsibility for rooting the program more firmly in the state by such means as seeking locally for additional sources of funding and by making its program efforts known to its political representatives.

(more)

G. The committee should develop rules, policies, and procedures necessary to the efficient operation of the program, including a detailed and practical schedule for the regular rotation of officers and committee membership.

H. The committee should appoint a staff qualified in the humanities and appropriate support personnel to accomplish committee program goals.

I. The committee should oversee and systematically review the work of its staff in order to make periodic personnel decisions.

J. The committee should obtain a responsible and qualified fiscal agent while retaining continuing policy concern with the financial operations of the program.

K. The committee should develop record-keeping methods and analytical techniques sufficient to aid in permitting careful evaluation of program effectiveness.