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National Endowment for the Humanities: Summary Programs (1976): Report 01

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506



SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS
AND
REQUESTED APPROPRIATION
FOR
FISCAL YEAR 1976

The following pages summarize significant programs of the National Endowment for the Humanities, for which the Congress has been asked to make appropriations for the Fiscal Year 1976.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies is scheduled to hold hearings on this request on April 14-15, 1975. Its members are:

Sidney R. Yates (Illinois) (D) Chairman
K. Gunn McKay (Utah) (D)
Clarence D. Long (Maryland) (D)
Frank E. Evans (Colorado) (D)
John P. Murtha (Pennsylvania) (D)
Robert B. Duncan (Oregon) (D)
Joseph M. McDade (Pennsylvania) (R)
Ralph S. Regula (Ohio) (R)

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies has scheduled its hearings for April 17, 1975. Its members are:

Robert C. Byrd (West Virginia) (D) Chairman
John L. McClellan (Arkansas) (D)
Gale W. McGee (Wyoming) (D)
Joseph M. Montoya (New Mexico) (D)
Daniel K. Inouye (Hawaii) (D)
Lawton Chiles (Florida) (D)
Mike Mansfield (Montana) (D)
Ernest F. Hollings (South Carolina) (D)
Ted Stevens (Alaska) (R)
Milton R. Young (North Dakota) (R)
Roman L. Hruska (Nebraska) (R)
Mark O. Hatfield (Oregon) (R)
Henry L. Bellmon (Oklahoma) (R)

I. The Dimensions of the Budget

The NEH appropriations request for Fiscal Year 1976 proposes \$74.5 million in regular (or "definite") funds plus \$7.5 million to match gifts from the private sector. This total of \$82 million compares with the \$73.7 million in Federal funds appropriated for FY 1975 (\$67.2 million in regular and \$6.5 in matching funds).

While constituting an increase over 1975, the NEH request is below the authorized level and, even if approved by the Congress, will still leave the Endowment's total budget quite small compared with those of Federal agencies supporting research, development, and education in the sciences (total Federal funds for these purposes are projected at the \$21.7 billion level in 1976).

Grants from the Endowment result from a highly competitive application review process in which less than one fifth of the applications approved win out in the battle for limited funds. During the 12-month period ending June 30, 1974, the Endowment received 6,165 formal applications, requesting \$206 million. Specialist reviewers found more than half this number deserving of support, but because of limited funds, actual grants numbered only 1,293 and totalled \$60.2 million. Yet these grants aided individuals and institutions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Applications are expected to reach nearly 7,000 this fiscal year and 8,000 in FY 1976. The pending request will, therefore, permit the NEH to maintain its current level of responding to about 20% of the requests received.

II. The Endowment's Scope

The funding sought for next year will enable the Endowment to expand slightly its support for a broad range of humanistic activities carried out by educational institutions, museums, libraries, scholarly societies, public television stations and other cultural and civic organizations as well as individual scholars and other citizens. Examples of these can be seen in the current work of the Endowment:

- By the end of the present fiscal year every state in the union will have a fully operational State-based humanities program. These programs directly reached this past year over half a million adults (and via the media an additional 10 million people). It is expected that up to 15 million adults will be reached directly or indirectly during FY 1975, with projects engaging them in active and thoughtful examination of critical public issues of concern to their states.

- The American Issues Forum (AIF) was launched, promising to become the national framework for a Bicentennial activity for all social sectors. The Endowment is now aiding a number of academic and non-academic organizations to develop programs around the AIF calendar in order to provide their members and the broader public the opportunity to examine the course of American civilization.

- The nine-part version of War and Peace, shown twice over public television, attracted millions of viewers; (while complete figures are not available for the nation, one million households in New York alone tuned in); production was begun on the Endowment-backed "Adams Chronicles," the largest historical serial ever undertaken by American television; and, at the beginning of 1975 a television series examining Japan society was begun to inform the public about a country which has changed from war-time enemy to important economic partner but is still little known to most Americans.

- This past September over 200 newspapers began the second Course by Newspaper, "In Search of the American Dream," offering their 20 million readers a specially prepared course developed by leading American history scholars which can be taken for credit through a local participating college.

- Over 160 colleges and universities were directly aided in strengthening their instructional programs in the humanities; and a bold new venture was established, the first National Institute for the Humanities, which will draw together distinguished senior and promising junior teachers from various regions to undertake, on a systematic and sustained basis, the development of interdisciplinary American studies programs for the nation's colleges.

- Nearly 1,500 individual scholars and teachers received support for projects designed to increase the nation's stock of humanistic knowledge about ourselves, our institutions, our relations with the outside world, and about the development and contemporary problems of foreign societies (especially noteworthy was the \$581,874 awarded last year for China-related studies).

- As a result of the new Science, Technology, and Human Values program, created the previous year, the Endowment awarded over \$3 million to this area (more than double the previous year's level) in support of activities including humanities seminars for medical practitioners, ethics courses for students training for the health professions, humanistic courses for engineers, and museum exhibits and television programs on the social consequences of recent technological developments.

- The offer last year of over \$6 million in private gifts meant that for the fifth straight year the limit of the Endowment's matching authority was reached, bringing to over \$20 million the documentable level of private money generated by NEH during the eight years of its operating life.

III. General Emphases in FY 1976

The Bicentennial

In keeping with the major role assigned to the Endowment by the Domestic Council and in response to increasing public interest, over one-fourth of NEH funding is expected to support projects promising to aid all sectors of the American population during the 1975-76 period engage in a serious and thoughtful assessment of America's past, present and future.

Educational Institutions

The largest part of NEH funding will continue to flow to or through colleges and universities as these contain the nation's principal stock of trained personnel in the humanities and resources which are the essential components of Endowment sponsored activities-- the development of new knowledge, the transmission of knowledge to younger generations of Americans, the mounting of meaningful Bicentennial programs, and the many "public" activities-- whether carried out by educational institutions themselves or through museums, the media, or other organizations. To help institutions strengthen themselves, a new "technical assistance" activity is being initiated to provide consultants to colleges needing help in improving their humanities programs.

Cultural Institutions

The requested funds will also enable the Endowment to increase its support to sometimes underfunded and ill-used institutions like museums and libraries. While broadening its program of support for museum exhibitions, the Endowment will also encourage the development of museums and libraries as centers for community education, both school-related and for the adult interested in non-traditional study.

Public Programs

The Endowment will continue to promote the dissemination and use of humanistic knowledge among the general public by supporting film and television programs, museum exhibits, and projects conducted by state and local community organizations to effect a direct impact on the broad mass of American citizens. At the same time, popular histories for the general reader, educational programs in institutions more readily accessible than campuses, and fellowships for non-academic individuals will extend the opportunities for making the humanities a vital force in the lives of all Americans.

Research

The allocation of increased funds for the preparation of research tools, the editing of significant documents and the subvention of significant scholarly research will provide more effectively for an increase in humanistic knowledge and a sustaining of the nation's basic research capacity. Support to financially threatened research libraries

will be augmented to help these institutions during this period of severe dislocations.

IV. Programs of the Endowment

The specific programs the Endowment plans to conduct and the estimated funding for them are summarized below.

1. PUBLIC PROGRAMS

State-based humanities programs (\$15,100,000). The request forseees fully operating programs in all 55 states and territories, with each State-based Committee regranting an average total of \$275,000 for projects developed locally (by community organizations, colleges, libraries, historical societies, public television, business, labor and farm groups, and civic organizations) and involving millions of adults in discussions with historians, philosophers and other humanities scholars about public issues affecting their states during the seventies.

Film-TV programs (\$6,000,000). Production and acquisition of individual programs and series will be supported for eventual radio or television broadcasting and distribution, including series on George Washington and Thomas Jefferson; programs examining American history and the background and philosophical issues relating to contemporary societal problems; a joint U.S.-British series on the Revolution and its effects; and special programming for the Spanish-speaking and handicapped persons.

Museums and historical society programs (\$5,000,000). The requests will support special exhibitions--to be viewed by up to five million persons--drawn from major metropolitan and community museums' own collections, as well as 12 large-scale interpretive exhibitions, including traveling exhibitions illustrating the development of American culture and society and major exhibitions from abroad. Training will also again be offered for several hundred museum and historical society professionals and volunteers.

Program Development (\$4,100,000). Grants will be available for urban areas to mount community discussion programs relating to the American Issues Forum, for public libraries to design humanities programs directed at community residents, and for civic and cultural organizations to undertake experimental and innovative activities aimed at increasing public appreciation and use of humanistic knowledge.

2. EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Higher education institutional and project grants (\$10,650,000). Over 100 colleges and universities will be aided in order to update, revitalize and reform the teaching of the humanities in two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and universities. Support will also be available to integrate the humanities into the professional education provided to future doctors, scientists, lawyers, and business people.

Consultant grants (\$300,000). This program, being established in 1975, will be expanded to serve colleges and universities, particularly developing institutions, which need expert advice on how to plan and build effective humanities programs.

Humanities Institutes (\$3,000,000). Continued support will be available for national institutes bringing senior and junior scholars together to concentrate on the development of interdisciplinary research and curricula in new and emerging fields.

Elementary and secondary education (\$2,200,000). Support will also be maintained for the development of curriculum materials for high schools, especially in American history and culture, and for teacher training and other activities that will improve the teaching of the humanities.

Cultural institutions education program (\$900,000). This program, launched this year to develop libraries and other cultural institutions as centers for non-traditional study in the humanities which serve a variety of citizens, will continue to support additional experimental efforts around the country.

3. FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

Independent fellowships and summer stipends (\$3,200,000). The request will provide stipends to approximately 165 senior and younger humanists for up to one year, and to a further 200 scholars for a summer, for independent research which gives promise of making significant original contributions to humanistic knowledge.

College teacher fellowships (\$2,600,000). The funds requested will enable about 135 teachers from two-year and four-year colleges to pursue programs of research and guided study at major research universities during a full academic year.

Summer seminars (\$2,500,000). Up to 60 seminar programs covering all fields of the humanities will enable 732 college teachers from smaller institutions to undertake an organized program of study in their disciplines with distinguished university scholars.

Resident fellowships at advanced study centers (\$400,000). Funds will enable 10 centers for advanced study to provide

one-year residential opportunities for humanities scholars to engage in research and dialogue with colleagues from other disciplines.

Fellowships for the professions (\$1,650,000). The Endowment's programs which provide opportunities for study in the humanities to nearly 300 persons in the non-academic professions--journalism, law, medicine and other fields which have an important influence on society--will be further expanded to include both academic-year, summer, and short-term programs for practicing professionals.

4. RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAMS

Research and editing grants (\$5,000,000). Increased support is planned for American scholars seeking to advance knowledge in all fields of the humanities. Continued aid will be given for efforts to develop new research methodology and technology, to prepare the collections of American statesmen's papers, to illuminate foreign cultures and societies, and to apply humanistic knowledge to problems of contemporary concern.

Research tools (\$2,250,000). The program supporting the development of essential reference works--bibliographies, catalogues, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other "tools" which undergird basic humanities research in this country-- will be maintained at the present level to permit continued support of present projects and the planning of additional high-priority projects.

Research centers (\$1,660,000). Endowment aid to major research libraries and other centers with nationally important collections will be increased to help particularly those facilities which have been hard hit by rising costs and which may be forced to curtail essential services or reduce needed maintenance of their collections.

State history program (\$500,000). Continued support is planned for the long-term Endowment program designed to organize local and state historical archives, looking toward the eventual development of comprehensive and up-to-date, scholarly histories of every state of the Union.

Bicentennial programs (\$795,000). The budget request includes funding to assure completion of two programs instituted specifically in connection with the Nation's Bicentennial:

--The Bicentennial history program is aiding distinguished scholars (like Bruce Catton) to prepare a series of short, popular histories for each of the states, the District of Columbia, and the territories, aimed at helping general readers relate local history to that of the nation.

--The Endowment is providing partial aid to support a small number of international conferences and congresses bringing the world's outstanding historians, philosophers, and American studies experts to this country to discuss with their U.S. colleagues the meaning of the Bicentennial to this and other countries.

5. PLANNING AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Youth programs (\$650,000). The "Youthgrants" program supporting student and youth-initiated work in the humanities will be continued with particular emphasis on local history projects carried out by young people across the nation; funds will also be available to operate the Bicentennial Youth Debates program which will involve high school and college-age persons in every state in 1975-76, encouraging them to conduct research-debate activities focussing on American history and continuing national issues.

Planning and development projects (\$3,700,000). A variety of experimental projects will continue to be supported (1) to test non-traditional approaches to the study and dissemination of the humanities, including formal education via television, newspapers, and other media; (2) to focus scholarly attention on selected issues in American society, especially the humanistic implications of scientific and technological advances; and (3) to develop programs designed to increase participation in humanistic study by those groups in the population not usually reached by the humanities.

Evaluation and analytical studies (\$750,000). Increased funding will be available to aid in developing methodology for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of humanities programs and in determining the changing status and priority needs of the humanities in the United States.