

THE NEH FOSTERS LOCAL TOURISM ECONOMIES



The National Endowment for the Humanities boosts local tourism in cities and towns across the United States. NEH support helps small and midsize institutions create intellectually-engaging, high-quality exhibitions and public programming, turning them into attractive destinations for tourists in their region. Over time and with continued NEH funding, many of these organizations have grown from local institutions to world-class destinations, bringing in visitors from across the nation and world.

THE NEH HELPS REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CREATE THE HIGH-QUALITY EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS THAT BRING IN VISITORS FROM ACROSS THE STATE AND REGION.

NEH funding helped A-State Heritage Sites and the City of Dyess, Arkansas, transform dilapidated buildings into a model site for cultural tourism. The Historic Dyess Colony now features a museum interpreting the history of the New Deal and the restored Cash Homestead, the childhood home of Johnny Cash. Since opening in 2014, the site has attracted visitors from every state and 48 foreign countries to the 415-person town.

The High Desert Museum in Bend, Oregon, has used NEH funding to develop engaging, immersive exhibitions that interpret the history of the American Great Basin. Today, the High Desert Museum is the region's top-rated attraction on TripAdvisor.

REPEATED NEH SUPPORT OVER MANY YEARS HAS HELPED TURN REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS INTO WORLD-CLASS TOURIST DESTINATIONS.

Over several decades, the NEH has supported the development of new exhibitions at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. These grants have had an outsized impact on the local economy as Monticello has welcomed nearly 400,000 annual visitors. Ninety-three percent were from outside Virginia and 50% stayed in a hotel for at least one night, adding at least \$13.1 million to the local economy.

NEH FUNDING HELPS ORGANIZATIONS BUILD THE CAPACITY TO PRODUCE STRONG EXHIBITIONS AND ATTRACT TOURISTS ON THEIR OWN.

Traveling exhibitions programs like *NEH on the Road* provide professional development opportunities for museum, library, and historical society staff, helping them develop stronger exhibitions and humanities programming in the future. The Upcountry History Museum in Furman, South Carolina has included a rigorous traveling exhibition program, of which *NEH on the Road* is a substantial part, as a fundamental element of its business model. From 2013–2017, the museum increased attendance by 60%.



“Through a diverse and active changing exhibition schedule, as well as providing various opportunities to access the museum, our audience has moved from being small and narrowly defined to a broad and diverse one that reflects our collective community.”



— Dana Thorpe, Executive Director, Upcountry History Museum