



# The National Endowment for the Humanities: Providing Humanities Access to All Americans

From groundbreaking documentaries and exhibitions, to community conversations, heritage festivals, and early literacy programs, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) supports projects that bring the humanities to Americans in small rural towns and large cities alike.

“ [NEH funding] has allowed us to do projects that we would not have been able to do locally... We simply cannot do them on our operating budget.”

– CARRIE RONDANDER,  
Chippewa Valley Museum

## The NEH supports innovative exhibitions at cultural institutions throughout the United States.

- With NEH funding, museums large and small create exhibitions that incorporate the best of humanities scholarship, giving Americans the opportunity to learn about and reflect upon their history and culture.
- Exhibitions like *Farm Life: A Century of Change for Farm Families and Their Neighbors* at the Chippewa Valley Museum in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, showcase local histories within the context of national perspectives—in this case putting local farmers’ experiences in conversation with the history of American agriculture. Temporary exhibitions like *Leonard Bernstein: The Power of Music*, developed by the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, provide new perspectives on iconic American figures and events in American history—these exhibitions often travel to other locations, bringing large audiences to host institutions.
- *NEH on the Road* ensures that the best of NEH-funded exhibitions reach all parts of the country. To date, *NEH on the Road* exhibitions have traveled to 285 communities in the United States, reaching more than 2 million adults and children.





NEH  
for  
ALL

Of the 48 NEH-funded documentary films completed between 2012 and 2018,

**47**  
received nationwide distribution.

**Thirty-six**  
were broadcast on the national PBS schedule, while an **additional eight** were distributed to local PBS stations through services like PBS Plus and American Public Television.

The NEH supports the production of world-class documentaries, ensuring access to new perspectives on our history and culture.

- NEH-funded films include Ken Burns's *The Civil War* and *The Vietnam War*, the *Created Equal* film series, *Hillbilly*, and *Shakespeare Uncovered*.
- NEH funding ensures that Americans have access to high-quality educational television and film, regardless of their annual incomes. These documentaries are screened on local PBS stations and used in school classrooms through the country—often alongside NEH-supported curricula. Many are available on streaming devices, including through Kanopy, which provides free access to library cardholders.

The NEH brings facilitated conversations, lectures, panels, and other programs to communities throughout the United States.

- With an NEH grant for *Revisiting the Founding Era*, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is bringing discussion groups, lectures, and resources to more than 100 rural libraries. And through funding for *States of Incarceration: A National Dialogue of Local Histories*, the Humanities Action Lab is inviting communities throughout the United States to contribute their perspectives on incarceration to a traveling exhibition and conversation project.
- NEH funding helped WETA promote public programming related to *The Vietnam War* throughout the United States. Eighty-one programming grants to local stations from Conway, Arkansas, to Anchorage, Alaska, supported public screenings, panels, lectures, oral history collecting, exhibitions, and writing and art projects. Seventy-five percent of respondents to a participant survey, collected from multiple programs, indicated that they “increased their knowledge of the Vietnam War.”

The NEH supports programs for rural and at-risk youth, ensuring that they have the tools to succeed in school and in life.

- NEH funding has helped the American Library Association support programs at more than 1,800 libraries over the past six years. One of these programs, *Great Stories Club*, brings reading and discussion programs to at-risk youth throughout the country, including youth in juvenile detention centers.
- With funding from the NEH, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities brings PRIME TIME Family Reading programs to children and their guardians in rural Louisiana and in Kentucky, Nebraska, Georgia, and Michigan. Since it was founded, PRIME TIME programs have been hosted in 40 states, serving more than 40,000 families in communities with high-needs schools.