

Nebraska Humanities Council
Strategic Plan 2009-2013

Goal #1: Make high quality relevant and affordable humanities programming available to all Nebraskans				
<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Task</i>	<i>Benchmark/Short Term Goals</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Committee/Staff Responsible</i>
I. Continue to provide outreach and advice to organizations to encourage grant proposals for good public programs in the humanities	A. Develop and implement focused outreach to American Indian organizations	1) Number of applications received from/awarded to American Indian organizations/ programming grows annually	2008 - 4 2009 - 6 2010 - 2	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager, Erika Hamilton, Kristi Hayek
	B. Develop and implement focused outreach to organizations in the western third of Nebraska	1) Number of applications received from/awarded to organizations in western third of state grows annually.	2008 - 6 2009 - 8 2010 - 7	
II. Encourage Nebraskans to use the humanities in exploring and discussing public policy issues	A. Continue to publicize the availability of support for programs related to the demographic changes facing Nebraskans - New Nebraskans, Rural—Urban—Suburban, and Aging.	1) Number of applications received/ awarded related to New Nebraskans and Rural—Urban—Suburban initiatives is sustained; two applications per year are received/awarded for Aging initiative.	2009 - NN yes 2009 - RUS yes 2009 - Aging 2/0 2010 - NN yes 2010 - RUS yes 2010 - Aging 8/6	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager, Erika Hamilton, Kristi Hayek
	B. Meet with the UNL Public Policy Center, Heartland Center for Leadership Development, UNO's College of Public Affairs and Community Service, and others to explore strategies and possible partnerships to encourage public policy discussions and the feasibility of locally based civic discussions.	1) Design a strategy to foster locally based civic discussion.	Completed	
		2) Implement the strategy on a limited trial basis.	2011	
		3) Roll out the locally based civic discussion programming.	2012	
		4) Design, issue, and publicize an RFP for grant proposals exploring public policy issues.	2012	
5) Design, implement and/or bundle appropriate program offerings through the Speakers Bureau and other programming.	2012			

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<i>II. Encourage Nebraskans to use the humanities in exploring and discussing public policy issues (con't)</i>	C. Explore possible partnerships with other lecture series in the state that would benefit the Humanities Council	1) Identify other lecture series.	2009 - Completed	<i>Program Committee, Program Staff (con't)</i>
		2) Determine the nature of these partnerships.	2010 - pending	
		3) Contact potential partners.	2010 - pending	
III. Encourage Nebraskans and others to explore possible partnerships and program offerings related to cultural tourism opportunities in the state.	A. Meet with Division of Travel & Tourism, Game & Parks, State Historical Society, Center for the Book, Cooperative Extension, Nebraska Rural Initiative, Center for Great Plains Studies, and others to explore possible partnerships.	1) Develop and implement strategies for fostering cultural tourism.	2012	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager, Erika Hamilton, Kristi Hayek
		2) Design, issue, and publicize an RFP for grant proposals on cultural tourism.	2013	
		3) Design, implement and /or bundle appropriate program offerings through the Speakers Bureau and other programming.	2013	
IV. Reevaluate existing NHC partnership with the Nebraska Book Festival.	A. Develop evaluation criteria to assess the Nebraska Book Festival.	1) 50% of attendees are general public, not presenters nor exhibitors, in 2009 with 5% growth each year.	2009 - 73% 2010 - no festival	Program Committee, Staff: Erika Hamilton
		2) Number of exhibitor applications meets or exceeds number of available spots	2009 - 32/32 2010 - n/a	
		3) 90% or more participating writers agree that the Book Festival is valuable to them.	2009 - 93% 2010 - n/a	
		4) 90% or more participants rate the Book Festival as good or above.	2009 - 94% 2010 - n/a	
	B. Assess the cost/benefit of continuing support of the Nebraska Book Festival.	1) Assessment made based on above criteria; if met, consider long-term criteria.	2010	

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V. Re-evaluate existing NHC partnership with E.N. Thompson Forum Simulcasts.	A. Work to strengthen and enhance the E.N. Thompson Forum Simulcasts.	1) Strategies developed to engage more of the college and local community members.	2009 - Completed and continuing	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager
	B. Develop evaluation criteria to assess the E.N. Thompson Forum Simulcasts.	1) Attendance numbers average 20 attendees per site, per lecture.	2009 - 18 2010 - 25	
		2) 90% of the local coordinators rate the event good or better.	2009 - 93% 2010 - 94%	
	C. Assess the cost/benefit of continuing support of the E.N. Thompson Forum Simulcasts.	1)Assessment made based on above criteria; if met, consider long-term criteria.	In progress	
VI. Maintain core Council programming that is funded through contracts and/or presented by the Council.	A. Capitol Forum	1) 80% or more participating students feel informed and think the Forum will have long term impact on their lives.	2009 - 91% felt informed, 86% long-term impact 2010 - 89% felt informed, 80% long-term impact	Program Committee, Staff: Kristi Hayek
		2) Number of teacher applications meets or exceeds the number of spots.	2009 - 26 apps/25 spots 2010 - 30 apps/25 spots	
		3) At least 25% of applications are from teachers new to Capitol Forum.	2009 - 23% 2010 - 13%	
		4) 90% or more participating teachers and students rate Capitol Forum good or above.	2010 - 88% (students) Revising teacher survey to measure benchmark	

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<p><i>VI. Maintain core Council programming that is funded through contracts and/or presented by the Council.</i></p>	<p>B. Chautauqua</p>	<p>1)Number of community applicants each year meets or exceeds number of spots.</p>	<p>2009 - yes 2010 - had to recruit 1 site</p>	<p>Program Committee, Staff: Kristi Hayek</p>
		<p>2) Total and youth audience numbers at each site meets or exceeds expectations based upon host community size.</p>	<p><u>2009</u> - Total = 3241, Youth = 71 <u>2010</u> - Total = 4178, Youth = 383</p>	
		<p>3) 90% community and participant satisfaction based on evaluations.</p>	<p>2009 - yes 2010 - yes</p>	

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<i>VI. Maintain core Council programming that is funded through contracts and/or presented by the Council (con't)</i>	C. Humanities Desk	1) Coverage of humanities topics of broad interest.	2009 - yes 2010 - yes	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager
		2) Promotion of Chautauqua and Governor's Lecture.	2009 - yes 2010 - yes	
		3) Coverage of both Council sponsored and grant funded programs.	2009 - yes 2010 - yes	
		4) Sustain audience numbers.	2009 - yes 2010 - yes	
	D. Humanities Resource Center—Speakers Bureau, scholars in residence, cultural encounter kits, etc	1) Number of applications grows at 5% per year.	2009 - 14% 2010 - 0%	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager
		2) Good distribution across the state.	2009 - yes 2010 - yes	
		3) Audience numbers average 90 attendees per program.	2009 - 87 2010 - 92	
		4) 90% of project directors rate programs good or better.	2009 - 98% 2010 - 98%	
	E. Museum on Main Street	1) Number of applications each tour meets or exceeds number of spots.	2009 - yes	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager
		2) Good distribution across the state.	2009 - yes	
		3) 50% of sites are first-time MOMS participants.	2009 - 100%	
		4) Number of exhibition visitors at each site meets expectations based on numbers projected by each site.	2009 - 2 sites with 60% increase in visitors	
		5) Site involvement with other local organizations.	2009 - yes	
6) Site engagement with NHC following participation in MOMS.		Annual		
7) Use of speakers bureau in conjunction with exhibition.		2009 - 4 of 6		

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VI. Maintain core Council programming that is funded through contracts and/or presented by the Council (con't)	F. Prime Time	1) 74% or more families report they: a) spend more time reading together, b) have changed the way they read and discuss books, and c) have changed attitudes towards the library	2009 - a) 90% / 85% b) 88% / 82% c) 75% / 73% 2010* - a) 89%; b) 83% c) 68% in library; 57% outside library	Program Committee, Staff: Erika Hamilton * 6 out of 12 sites reporting for 2010
		2) 51% or more families have NOT participated in Prime Time previously.	2009 - 60% 2010* - 53%	
		3) 90% or more families rate the books and facilitators as good or above.	2009 - books 100% facilitators 97% 2010* - books 93% facilitators 94%	
		4) Develop Native American program.	In progress	
	G. As appropriate, continue to link NHC programming to State Education Standards.	1) State education standards identified for all programs for which school participation is desired.	Annual	Program Committee, Staff: Erika Hamilton, Mary Yager, Kristi Hayek
VII. Consider programs in the future that have particular promise for addition to council-conducted programming.	A. Develop a strategy and criteria for considering programs for addition to council-conducted programming including identification of potential sources of additional funding.	1) Strategy developed by 2010.	Completed	Program Committee, Staff: Erika Hamilton, Mary Yager, Kristi Hayek, Chris Sommerich

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Goal #2: Build a strong base of private financial support for a statewide program				
<p>I. Increase individual Major Gifts (\$1,000 or more) through personalized approaches tailored to the donor's interests, capacity to give, and connection to us.</p> <hr/> <p>BENCHMARK: Increase number of donors by 5% annually</p> <p>STATUS: Annual</p>	A. Begin the fiscal year with a Board Campaign to identify board members who can increase Major Gifts by their example and ensure 100% giving of every board member at some level.	1) 100% of board and staff will give	2010: 100% staff; 100% of veteran board pledged as of August (new started in April)	Development Committee, Staff: Heather Thomas, Chris Sommerich
	B. Identify alumni members who can increase Major Gifts from alumni by their example.		Alumni donors listed in Alumni & NHC newsletters	
	C. Identify, cultivate, and solicit major donors with the Major Gift committee taking the lead on overall strategies.	2) 50 personal visits for requests of \$1,000 and over	2010: more than 50 visits to date with prospects, but not all asks yet.	
	D. Encourage board members to host "friendraisers" in their communities to cultivate major donors.	1) 1 to 4 'Friendraisers' (of any size), hosted by board members, per year	2 in 2009 (Peru/Neb. City, Omaha to promote National Conference)	
	E. Use the 2009 National Humanities Conference to build our base of major donors in Omaha			
<p>II. Continue building the Annual Campaign primarily through mail appeals.</p> <hr/> <p>BENCHMARK: \$100,000 by 2011</p> <p>STATUS: 2011</p>	A. Board members submit names and sign letters for the spring Sower Campaign.	1) 100% of all board members participate	35 members (78%) participated in 2010	Development Committee, Staff: Heather Thomas, Chris Sommerich
	B. Renewal requests to annual donors	2) Donor retention rate of at least 65% annually; and 75% give within two years.	66% retention FY08; 57% in FY09	
	C. Acquire new donors through mailings to program attendees and individuals involved in programs such as project directors, scholars, etc., and outside list rentals.	3) 20% new donors annually	20-22% new donors each of past 4 years	

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II. Continue building the Annual Campaign primarily through mail appeals (con't)	D. promote online giving through print and electronic communication.	1) 10% growth in online donors	400% growth in 2009 (due to online GL tickets)	Development Committee, Staff: Heather Thomas, Chris Sommerich (con't)
	E. Promote our membership in Community Services Fund to increase donations via worksite giving programs.	1) Increase CSF funding by at least 5% annually	Decreased 21% from 2008 to 2009	
III. Continue to enlarge the pool of potential foundation and corporate grants for a consistent source of support. BENCHMARK: \$125,000 STATUS: Annual	A. Maintain a grant calendar for request and report deadlines and other relevant information.		51% decrease in grant funding in 2009 due to economy	Development Committee, Staff: Heather Thomas, Chris Sommerich
	B. Update research on foundation prospects in 2009	1) Grant funding increase 5% by 2011		
	C. Seek advice and advocates for grant requests from entire board.			
IV. Continue a successful annual Governor's Lecture in the Humanities STATUS: Annual	A. Bring a nationally known speaker to Nebraska for an outstanding public humanities lecture.		80% of income from sponsorships in 2009; new records in income past two years.	Governor's Lecture Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich, Heather Thomas, Julie MacDonald
	B. Host a successful benefit dinner prior to the free public lecture	1) Raise 70% or more through sponsorship solicitations		
		2) Raise remaining income through individual ticket sales		
		3) Achieve a capacity turn-out for benefit dinner		
	C. Build a good working relationship with the governor.			
D. Increase public visibility for the Council and its programs.				

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V. Coordinate with the Nebraska Cultural Endowment on major donors and prospects to promote the annual needs of the Council and the importance of the NCE to our long-term stability.			Regular communication with NCE director	Staff: Chris Sommerich
VI. Continue working closely with the Program team to develop compelling cases of support for our programs (including quantitative and qualitative approaches).			Program benchmarks and results used regularly in fundraising	Development Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich, Mary Yager, Erika Hamilton, Kristi Hayek
Goal #3: Increase the visibility of the Council's work				
I. Increase awareness of the Nebraska Humanities Council and its programs among unreached audiences.	A. Reassess how we market to 20- to 40-year-olds.	1) Organize a panel discussion for January 2009 board meeting (program content, presentation, branding, advertising).	Completed	Public Relations Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich, Heather Thomas, Mary Yager, Erika Hamilton, Kristi Hayek
		2) Research and determine priorities for Council's approach	2009-2010	
		3) Design a marketing and programmatic approach to reach 20- to 40-year-olds.	2010	
		4) Implement a marketing and programmatic approach to reach 20- to 40-year olds.	2011	

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<i>I. Increase awareness of the Nebraska Humanities Council and its programs among unreached audiences (con't)</i>	B. Develop a segmented public relations plan including youth, donors, elected officials, etc.			<i>Public Relations Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich, Heather Thomas, Mary Yager, Erika Hamilton, Kristi Hayek (con't)</i>
	C. Develop and implement community based relationships for marketing (ESUs, chambers of commerce, churches, alumni, libraries, etc.)			
	D. Conduct a study following the 2009 National Conference to determine the Council's visibility in Omaha and develop a strategy to address its recommendations.		Feb 2010 - PR Cte decided not to do a formal visibility survey	
	E. Contact Board/Alumni when key press releases are sent to media. Ask Board/Alumni to forward key press releases to contacts in the community.		Annual	
Goal #4: Sustain and enhance state and federal support for the Council's work				
<i>I. Sustain and increase state funding for NHC</i>	A. Continue education of state senators and Governor about Council's work	1) Board and staff invite senators to programs in their districts	Annual	ad hoc Government Relations Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich
		2) Host a legislative event to introduce work of Council and Foundation		
		3) Meet with key senators on Appropriations Committee	Annual	
	B. Educate newly elected senators and new candidates for Legislature	1) Determine which board members know each senator and candidate	2009, 2011	
		2) Board and staff meet with candidates and/or new senators prior to and during session to demonstrate NHC's work in their district	2010	

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<i>I. Sustain and increase state funding for NHC (con't)</i>	C. Seek increase in state support for new program in 2011-12 session	1) Determine strategy to gain Governor's support	2010	<i>ad hoc Government Relations Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich (Con't)</i>
		2) Meet with Appropriations Committee members prior and immediately after session begins	2010	
	D. Pass legislation improving and extending EndowNebraska	1) Board and staff contact senators as determined by EndowNebraska leadership	Completed	
	E. Pass any legislation necessary to Nebraska Cultural Endowment	1) Board and staff contact senators as determined by NCE	Completed	
<i>II. Sustain and increase federal support of NHC</i>	A. Work with Federation to make coordinated case to Congress for increased funding for state humanities councils	1) Participate in Humanities on the Hill using board members with close contacts to delegation.	Annual	<i>ad hoc Government Relations Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich</i>
		2) Work with Sen. Nelson's office on key legislation as determined by Federation	Annual	
	B. Continue to educate congressional delegation about NHC's work	1) Board and staff invite delegation to programs in their district	Annual	
		2) Board members contact delegation about support for NHC at key times	Annual	
	C. Work with Federation to respond to changes on the national level occasioned by the new administration			

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Goal #5: Ensure effective and appropriate use of the Council and Foundation's staff and resources.				
I. Maintain Organization's Continuity Plan	A. Develop board and staff policies as needed to reflect best practices			NHC/NFH Executive Committees, Staff: Chris Sommerich
	B. Continue to update board and staff procedure manuals	1) Review board procedure book against minutes for 2007-8	2010	
	C. Develop executive director transition plan	Have a new Ex. Dir. in place by Jan. 1, 2011	Completed	
II. Revise Information Technology Plan	A. Implement Omaha Treasures webpage		Completed	Public Relations Committee
	B. Develop e-application for grants and speakers bureau	1) E-application used by 100% of grant applicants and available for speakers bureau	Completed	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager
	C. Develop e-newsletter to compliment traditional newsletter	1) Collect member and donor email addresses	2009-2010	NHC/NFH Executive Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich
		2) Acquire necessary software	2010	
		3) Design e-newsletter	2011	
	D. Explore interactive technology in programming			
	E. Update software as needed			
F. Update computers as needed				

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III. Determine effective use of and compensation for staff	A. Determine appropriate level of staffing to implement Council's plan	1) Hire/train staff for IT needs		NHC/NFH Executive Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich
	B. develop staff benefit plan that is fair, competitive, and affordable	1) Minimal staff turn-over	Completed Sept. 2009	
	C. Continue to set salary ranges every three years to remain a competitive employer	1) Minimal staff turn-over		
	D. Support staff development to enhance professional performance			
IV. Monitor Expenditures	A. Monthly staff review	BENCHMARK: NHC Operates in the black	Annual	Finance Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich, Marijane Hancock
	B. Quarterly review by Council and Foundation treasurers			
	C. Finance committee review prior to board meetings			
	D. Board review at spring, fall, and winter meetings			
Goal #6: Assess Council and Foundation's performance and structures				
I. Evaluate progress annually on strategic plan	A. Committees responsible for various sections of plan assess progress annually and report to full board at winter meeting		Annual	NHC/NFH Executive Committees, Staff: Chris Sommerich
	B. Council and Foundation annually revise plan			

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II. Evaluate NHC/NFH structure per NEH recommendation	A. Create ad hoc Restructuring Committee	1) Create less cumbersome structure 2) Reduced number of board members		ad hoc Restructuring Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich, Mary Yager
III. Recruit board members who meet needs of the Council and Foundation	A. NHC and NFH membership committees meet prior to Fall board meeting to assess needs of Council and Foundation.		Annual	
	B. Board and alumni recruit nominees based on committees' recommendations; public invited to nominate Council members based on recommendations.		Annual	<i>NHC/NFH Membership Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich</i>
	C. Following January board election of new members, board and staff meet with particularly promising potential board members who emerged during nomination process but were not slated for future board service.			
IV. Evaluate Program Impact	A. Determine data to be collected, method for collecting, and format for compiling, assessing, and presenting information	1) Use short and long term goals to assess for programmatic, development and advocacy purposes	Annual	Program Committee, Staff: Mary Yager, Erika Hamilton, Kristi Hayek, Chris Sommerich

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V. Review of staff performance	A. Executive Director evaluates staff in December		Annual	NHC/NFH Executive Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich
	B. NHC Executive Committee evaluates Executive Director in December and receives report on staff evaluations			
	C. Executive Committee's evaluation of Director presented to Council and Foundation at Winter board meeting		Annual	<i>NHC/NFH Executive Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich</i>
VI. Develop a 3-5 year strategic plan for 2014-2018	A. Develop strategy for planning in 2013		2013	NHC/NFH Executive Committee, Staff: Chris Sommerich
	B. Implement strategy in 2013-14		2013-14	