



Humanities MONTANA

**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
2023 - 2025**

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Introduction

Diverse community partnerships. Original and cutting-edge humanities programming. Dedicated and extraordinary board leadership. A talented and passionate staff. Statewide reach and relationships.

This 50-year legacy of serving Montana’s multicultural communities through stories and conversation allowed Humanities Montana to adeptly pivot in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This response was exemplified by innovations in virtual programming and intensive grant-making to support Montana’s cultural infrastructure through CARES Act and American Rescue Plan funds.

As we emerge from the pandemic and reflect on our recent 50-year anniversary in 2022, this three-year strategic framework sets the direction for continued opportunities for Humanities Montana to work in service of the humanities and the people of Montana.



Over the next three years, Humanities Montana will focus our energy and resources around four priority areas in order to:

 Re-Energize Grantmaking	 Realign Programs
 Refine Outreach and Development	 Enrich Organizational and Board Culture

The attached strategic framework (pages 7-8 of this document) outlines the desired outcomes for each of these four priority areas, and specific strategies for Process, IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and access), and Resources over the next three years. To remain nimble and adaptable, each year the Humanities Montana Board of Directors will review and approve an annual Action Plan that will allow the board and staff to operationalize the desired outcomes of this strategic framework.

This is a time for Humanities Montana to ensure the vibrancy and essential work of the humanities in our Montana communities. And it is a time to build on and continue our 50-year history of bringing communities, stories, and conversations together for the public good.

A blue-tinted photograph of a mountain range with a barn in the foreground. The mountains are covered in snow and partially obscured by clouds. The barn is a large, dark structure with a gabled roof, situated in a field. The overall scene is serene and rural.

About Humanities Montana

Humanities Montana is a nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, one of fifty-six independent councils across the United States. Established in 1972, we were created in order to better infuse the humanities into public life.

Mission and Vision

Humanities Montana serves Montana's multicultural communities through stories and conversation. We offer experiences that nurture imagination and ideas by speaking to Montanans' diverse history, literature, and philosophy.

To achieve our goal, Humanities Montana —

- provides programs that tell our diverse stories
- facilitates conversations about the most pressing issues
- supports Montana's cultural institutions through grants and partnerships
- offers humanities such as history, literature, and philosophy to nurture memory, imagination, and ideas

Humanities Montana Commitment to IDEA:

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access for all People

Embracing the intrinsic value and full humanity of all persons, Humanities Montana provides programs and experiences that nurture imagination and ideas through the diverse histories, literatures, cultures, and philosophies reflective of Montana's diverse communities. While attending to racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, ableism, and other systemic inequities, we make a particular commitment to Montana's Indigenous Peoples, rural communities, and youth.

HUMANITIES MONTANA COMMITS TO:

- Conducting regular review of programs and offerings – with data compilation, community outreach, evaluation, and expected accountability across the organization – to better realize IDEA.
- Collaborating with state, national, Indigenous and other organizations working on IDEA to develop partnerships and mutual opportunities that address these values.
- Ongoing training and engagement on IDEA for board, staff, and others representing Humanities Montana.
- Prioritizing IDEA values in organization initiatives and strategic planning.
- Providing and developing programs and grants for partners using an IDEA lens, to support diverse representation among program leaders, project organizers, scholars, keynote speakers, conversation leaders, and panelists across sponsored events and offerings.
- Promoting IDEA through all of our communication platforms.
- Studying and exposing systematic oppressions and discrimination, efforts that are crucial to humanistic inquiry

Approved by Humanities Montana Board of Directors, October 1, 2022

Humanities Montana Strategic Framework, 2023-2025

PRIORITY ONE: RE-ENERGIZE GRANTMAKING

Desired Outcomes	Process Strategy	IDEA Strategy	Resource Strategy
Grow grantmaking resources, capacity, and accessibility to support Montana's humanities infrastructure.	Evaluate grantmaking categories and evaluation processes. Enhance grantmaking outreach, impact, and assessment.	Reduce barriers and increase access to Humanities Montana grantmaking resources.	Prioritize grantmaking in annual operating budget.

PRIORITY TWO: REALIGN PROGRAMS

Desired Outcomes	Process Strategy	IDEA Strategy	Resource Strategy
Right-size and streamline current programs; create capacity for stronger impact and opportunities for innovation.	Evaluate and refine current programs. Increase program effectiveness, assessment, and evaluation.	Boost program access and outreach to underserved Montana communities.	Build on established successes and core programs.

PRIORITY THREE: REFINE OUTREACH AND DEVELOPMENT

Desired Outcomes	Process Strategy	IDEA Strategy	Resource Strategy
Consciously align outreach and development initiatives; strategically increase visibility of grantmaking, programming, and fundraising opportunities.	Advance and evaluate components of our development approach and initiatives. Intensify communications, outreach, and visibility.	Appeal to diverse audiences to ensure access to Humanities Montana resources.	Allocate resources and staff capacity for enhanced communications and strategic fundraising.

PRIORITY FOUR: ENRICH ORGANIZATIONAL AND BOARD CULTURE

Desired Outcomes	Process Strategy	IDEA Strategy	Resource Strategy
Create policies and procedures to live our mission within the organization; build internal accountability for the outcomes of this strategic plan.	Document accountability for this strategic plan with regular board reporting, annual Action Plans, and staff work plans. Professionalize organizational and board policies, procedures, and governance documents.	Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive workplace environment. Foster a welcoming and inclusive board environment.	Apportion resources for organizational health and fulfilling this strategic plan.

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