



**ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT
FOR STATE AND JURISDICTIONAL HUMANITIES COUNCILS:
THE 2012-2016 REVIEW CYCLE**

The National Endowment for the Humanities asks state and jurisdictional humanities councils to assess themselves for this reason: to enable councils to analyze their present work and to lay out their future plans. NEH's founding legislation requires councils to produce a work plan that NEH approves. But in addition, each council assesses its work in order to address its role in its state or jurisdiction, its attempts to serve its audiences, its efforts to promote and support the humanities, and the means by which it organizes its resources. The self-assessment report should be written analytically, succinctly, and candidly, embodying the values of transparency and accountability.

Councils can efficiently couple self-assessment with their regularly scheduled strategic planning. Each council is encouraged to attach its current strategic plan to the Self-Assessment Report.

The Self-Assessment Report consists of three parts: (A) a snapshot of the council, (B) an analysis of how the council works and how it plans for the future, and (C) supplemental materials. Section B is the narrative heart of the Self-Assessment Report. This section addresses the overall context in which the council works, the council's humanities programs, and its organizational effectiveness and management. Below we offer guidance for developing the Self-Assessment Report. We include the form for the council snapshot and a template to use for presenting the actual expenses for each of the past two fiscal years and the budget for the current fiscal year. The Self-Assessment Report, along with the site visitors' report, will be used by the council to prepare its interim report, submitted June 1st of the third year after the site visit.

The humanities are at the heart of a humanities council's work and must be at the heart of the Self-Assessment Report. Throughout the narrative, the report should describe the intellectual significance of the council's programming and the ways in which that programming sparks the public's engagement with the humanities.

The Self-Assessment Report is prepared and written by a council's board and staff for its own benefit. But there are also external audiences for the report: the staff of Federal/State Partnership, a council's site visitors, the NEH Chairman and staff, and the National Council on the Humanities. Federal/State Partnership recommends that a council share its Self-Assessment Report with all those invited to participate in its site visit. Councils should know that part of this report may be subject to the federal Freedom of Information Act.

Four printed copies and one electronic copy of the Self-Assessment Report are due in the Federal/State Partnership office six weeks before the site visit. Present the material in the order suggested. Bear in mind that the site visitors and NEH staff will carry the Self-Assessment Report with them when they travel to conduct the site visit. For that reason the report should not be unnecessarily large. See page 3 for the format in which the report must be presented.

In the fall prior to the year in which the site visit will take place, the council executive will be informed which staff member of Federal/State Partnership will oversee the site visit. All questions about the site visit should be addressed to that Federal/State Partnership staff member.

ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT: CONTENTS AND PRESENTATION OF THE PACKET

Introduction	<i>page</i> 1
Contents of Packet and Report Presentation Format	3
Structure of the Self-Assessment Report	5
Council Snapshot	5
Analysis of the Council	5
The Context in which the Council Works	5
The Council and the Humanities	5
The Council's Organizational Effectiveness and Management	7
Supplemental Materials	8
Required Materials	8
Other Materials	9
Self-Assessment Report Checklist and Order of Contents	10
Templates	
<small>(also available at www.neh.gov/partnership/assessment/2012-2016SelfAssessmentPacket.htm)</small>	
Council Snapshot Form	attached
Budget Templates	attached

The presentation of the printed Self-Assessment Report:

- The report should be printed in 12-point type with one-inch margins. Staple or clip the report. You may also staple the sections of the report, and then clip the sections together.
- Use one folder with pockets (no fasteners, please) if you wish, but please **do not use a binder or plastic sleeves**. Please do not include materials that do not fit into the folder pockets. The small selection of brochures, newsletters, etc., that may accompany the Self-Assessment Report may be presented in a second pocket folder, if necessary.
- Print the report back-to-back, formatted like a book.
- Budget spreadsheets may be printed on legal-sized paper and folded into the report. Send four copies of the printed version of the report to the Federal/State Partnership staff member responsible for the self-assessment and site visit review. The starred (*) items (see pages 8-9) may be sent in printed form only if the council does not have electronic versions of these materials.
- We recommend strongly that you use a commercial delivery service rather than the U.S. Postal Service to send this package.

The presentation of the electronic Self-Assessment Report:

- The Self-Assessment Report should be emailed to the Federal/State Partnership staff member responsible for the self-assessment and site visit review.
- The report should be in pdf format. All pages should face the same direction, including budget spreadsheets.

The Office of Management and Budget requires federal agencies to supply information on the time needed to complete forms and also to invite comments on the paperwork burden. NEH estimates that the average time to complete this Self-Assessment Report is forty hours per response. This estimate includes time for reviewing instructions, researching, gathering, and maintaining the information needed, and completing and reviewing the report.

Please send any comments regarding the estimated completion time or any other aspect of this Self-Assessment Report, including suggestions for reducing the completion time, to the Office of Publications, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C. 20506; and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3136-0134), Washington, D.C. 20503. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

present materials in the order listed below

A. COUNCIL SNAPSHOT (one page maximum)

Please use the council snapshot form provided or present the information requested in the same order and format as on that form.

B. ANALYSIS OF THE COUNCIL (narrative maximum, 15 pages): The page counts below list the minimum and maximum number of pages for each section. While the second section, The Council and the Humanities, may be the longest, no section should be less than three pages. The program analyses and the staff and board biographies are *not* included in the total page count for this section.

1. The Context in which the Council Works (3-5 pages)

- **Interpret the state's or jurisdiction's** current and projected population demographics, providing data about age, education, and median income. Please also provide information about the state's or jurisdiction's geography, economy, political system, educational system, cultural and humanities infrastructure, and other issues and elements that affect the work of the council.
- **Address and interpret the council's position** with respect to the government of the state or jurisdiction; its relationships with the cultural institutions of the state or jurisdiction; its relationships with colleges and universities, and with academic and professional humanists; its relationships with elected officials; its partnerships, collaborations, and memberships (in state, jurisdictional, regional, or national associations); and its revenue sources.
- **Discuss what the council is best known for** and how you determined this.
- **Interpret the council's history of strategic planning and analyze its plans for the future.** Lay out the major objectives for the next three to five years: for each, include details about the financial and personnel resources required to achieve it, the target audience/s, the short-term benchmark/s, the long-term benchmark/s, the anticipated outcome/s, and the challenges to achieving it. In addition, discuss the roadblocks that the council may previously have encountered, hindering the full achievement of its objectives. Show how the council's strategic planning is taking such roadblocks into consideration.

2. The Council and the Humanities (3-6 pages)

The humanities are at the heart of the council's work. The Self-Assessment Report must explain the significance of the council's programming and its critical importance for the public life of the state or jurisdiction. It should also

explain how each program and activity expands the public's understanding of and engagement with the humanities.

- **humanities achievements and plans for the future:** Explain how the activities sponsored by the council promote civic engagement; lifelong humanities learning; the capacity building of humanities organizations; outreach to youth, families, immigrant populations, and underserved audiences; collaborations and partnerships with nontraditional audiences; and the enhancement of the stature of the council as a major influence in the state or jurisdiction.
- **audiences:** Discuss the primary and secondary audiences served by the council. Note those audiences that are specifically targeted as well as those, such as funders, that play key roles in the council's work. Consider as well potential audiences who are not yet served, and the reasons they have not yet been reached.
- **communication and visibility:** Assess the effectiveness of the council's communication about its work, including its website and electronic communications, publications, media exposure, and development and fundraising.
- **programs:** Use one page per program (*not* included in the total page count for this section), indicating at the top of the page the name of the program and its total cost (including staff expenses and indirect costs). In addition, provide the following information for each program:
 - how it helps fulfill the council's mission, what it helps the council achieve, the audiences it reaches, and its priority in the council's portfolio of programs;
 - its likely contribution to the public understanding of the humanities, based on the significance of the subject and the humanities ideas, the quality and relevance of the humanities scholarship that underlies it, and the extent to which it offers the public analytical perspectives and insights;
 - its strengths and weaknesses;
 - its marketing and publicity, the revenue sources and amounts needed to support it, and the plans for its future; and
 - the cost of the program as a percentage of the council's annual expenditures, and the staff involved in administering it.

For grants programs, please indicate the number of applications received and the number of grants awarded for the last five grant cycles. Break down these data by each grant category.

Provide at least *three* examples of work accomplished that best illustrate the impact, range, and humanities contributions of each program. These examples should demonstrate how the program helps the public learn from the humanities and reflect upon the issues raised by the program.

Note: The program analyses should be presented in the order in which the programs appear in the current year's budget as submitted with the Self-Assessment Report (see below, Required Supplemental Materials).

3. The Council's Organizational Effectiveness and Management (3-5 pages)

- Discuss the council's **organizational effectiveness** with regard to
 - the role of the mission statement in shaping the council;
 - board recruitment and development, including the council's determination of the kinds of board members that it needs, and the nomination and election of board members;
 - the development of the council's leadership and the council's internal capacity building;
 - resource development and fundraising;
 - planning for and managing risks and liabilities; and
 - anticipated changes in organizational structure, acquisitions, and practices; if no changes are anticipated, explain.
- Discuss the council's **organizational management**, analyzing
 - the council's business plan, including details of how it sets budgetary priorities; makes investment decisions, including the rate of draw-down; establishes annual goals for programming, fundraising, and enhancement of the council's visibility; and seeks to make itself accessible and user-friendly to potential applicants, grantees, and members of the public;
 - the means used to guarantee the transparency and accountability of all council activities;
 - the council's relationships with nonprofit and business consultants, and associations, and its other means of identifying and utilizing the best practices in nonprofit and grantmaking management;
 - the board's decisions about executive compensation and evaluation, showing how these decisions reflect the conditions that prevail in the state and region in which the council operates;
 - how decisions are made about staff salaries and benefits and professional development opportunities;
 - how and how often staff evaluations are carried out (including discussion of expectations for staff performance, opportunities for staff communication, teamwork, creativity, and initiative);
 - the role of individual staff members in council communication, planning, and outreach;
 - the working relationship between staff and board (including discussion of board/staff communication and the transparency of activity); and
 - succession planning for the executive and staff members.

- Provide information about the **staff and board**, by submitting a one-paragraph biography (*not* included in the total page count for this section) of:
 - each staff member, including that person's contribution to the work of the council and length of his or her service on the council;
 - each current intern, contractor, and consultant, explaining each person's responsibility and the duration of that person's work with the council;
 - each board member, including that person's professional affiliation, his or her contribution to the work of the council, and his or her length of board service. List officers first, with title. The remaining board members should be listed alphabetically, with gubernatorial appointees clearly identified.

C. Supplemental Materials

1. Required Materials

- **finances:** Indicate the sources of revenue for each council activity and program in the budget. Account, as well, for the full costs of running each activity and program, including the administrative expenses (salary, benefits, rent, utilities, communications, etc.) and indirect costs. The templates are in Federal/State Partnership's preferred format. Please present the information in the order requested on the templates:
 - the actual expenditures for each of the past two fiscal years (template provided);
 - the budget for the current fiscal year (template provided);
 - the actual expenses and obligations to date for the current fiscal year (template provided), presenting the actual expenses in the same order as the budget for the current fiscal year, even if no funds have yet been expended for each category; and
 - the latest audited financial statement *only* if it indicates any findings.*
- **organization:** Provide
 - the by-laws;
 - an organizational chart;
 - the conflict of interest statement/s for the staff and the board;
 - the personnel manual; and
 - a statement of organizational compliance with nondiscrimination laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- **grants:**
 - List the grants made in the last two fiscal years.

- **map of the state or jurisdiction**

2. Other Materials: You may, but need not, submit four sets of a limited selection of additional items, such as brochures, newsletters, media coverage, and annual reports that reflect the council's best work.

The council is encouraged to attach its current strategic plan to the Self-Assessment Report.

If you submit additional supplemental materials, please ensure that they are limited in number and in weight.

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT CHECKLIST AND ORDER OF CONTENTS

(Send four printed copies and one electronic copy of the Self-Assessment Report; items marked with an asterisk [*] need *not* be sent electronically.)

Council Snapshot (please use the template provided on the last page of this packet)

Analysis of the Council

- The Context in which the Council Works
 - the state or jurisdiction
 - the council's position
 - the council's history of strategic planning and its plans for the future

- The Council and the Humanities
 - humanities achievements and plans for the future
 - audiences
 - communication and visibility
 - programs
 - analysis of each program: one page per program

- The Council's Organizational Effectiveness and Management
 - organizational effectiveness
 - organizational management
 - staff and board
 - one-paragraph bio for each person

Supplemental Materials

- required
 - actual expenditures for the past two fiscal years
 - budget and actual expenditures for the current fiscal year
 - latest audited financial statement, *only if there are any findings**
 - by-laws
 - organizational chart
 - conflict of interest statement/s (staff and board)
 - personnel manual
 - statement of organizational compliance with nondiscrimination laws and regulations
 - list of grants made in the last two fiscal years
 - map of the state or jurisdiction*

- other materials (four sets)*

Checklist: include the completed checklist