

Mass Humanities uses history, literature, philosophy, and the other humanities disciplines to enhance civic life and enrich public discourse across the Commonwealth.

THREE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- I. *Mass Humanities will be a forceful advocate for the public humanities, for humanities institutions that play a vital role in their communities, and for the incorporation of humanities values (e.g., critical thinking, self reflection, diversity of viewpoints, etc.) and perspectives in all aspects of public life.*
 - Serve as a funder, facilitator, and catalyst for projects that bring humanities perspectives to bear on issues of concern in Massachusetts;
 - Encourage projects that involve collaboration between humanities institutions and other types of institutions and agencies, both public and private (e.g., hospitals, social service agencies, prisons, state government);
 - Use the press and other media to increase public awareness of the role of the humanities in public life;
 - Enhance the Foundation's visibility and reputation as an important resource for those who make, interpret, and implement public policy in Massachusetts.

- II. *Mass Humanities will periodically identify a social, political or cultural issue or theme that is both timely and of enduring significance and bring its programmatic resources to bear on increasing public understanding of and engagement with that issue. The goal will be to foster both personal reflection and informed civic engagement.*

For 2016-2018 the Foundation's thematic focus will be
"Negotiating the Social Contract"

Programmatic initiatives may include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- RFPs and other incentives for grant proposals addressing the theme;
 - Library reading and discussion programs exploring related issues;
 - Annual public symposium addressing the theme;
 - Mass History programming related to the theme;
 - *Public Humanist* essays related to theme.
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- III. *Mass Humanities will seek to expand the power and pleasure of the humanities by engaging larger and more diverse audiences that cross social, cultural, and economic divides.*
 - Grant proposals that demonstrate a strong potential for Engaging New Audiences (ENA) for the public humanities will be eligible for up to \$10,000.
 - Grant proposals that demonstrate a strong potential for Engaging New Audiences AND address the foundation's thematic focus will be eligible for up to \$25,000. Only one such grant will be awarded annually.

Operational Principles

- Humanities content must be central and substantial in all Mass Humanities programs.
- Treatment of controversial issues will be balanced and even-handed.
- Preference is given to projects designed for underserved audiences.
- Preference is given to projects in keeping with its programming theme.
- Preference is given to projects likely to raise the foundation's visibility.