



## WYOMING HUMANITIES BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

### Company Background

Wyoming Humanities (WYH) is our state’s affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and one of 56 state and territorial humanities councils. We are an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization and have promoted the public humanities in Wyoming through grants and programs since 1970. Our funding comes from the NEH and the State of Wyoming, as well as private sources including foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual donations.

Our marketing persona is **Wyoming Humanities**, though our legal name is Wyoming Humanities Council. Our purpose, guided by our charter from the NEH, is to support public programs and projects that draw on history, literature, philosophy, languages, linguistics, art history, law, religion, ethics, anthropology, sociology, political science, folklore, or any of the other fields of the humanities—the disciplines that explore humanity. We fund statewide nonprofit cultural and educational organizations that have applied to us for funds and have been awarded project grants. We also design and conduct programming. The projects in which we run or invest include conferences, exhibits, documentary films, preservation, publications, workshops, and lecture series.

The organization’s direction is vested in the up-to-twenty members of the board of directors, five of whom may be appointed by the governor. The entire board meets three times a year to advise and govern the organization on strategic vision, budget oversight, general governance, fundraising, advocacy, and future development. Meetings take place at various locations throughout the state and by video conferencing.

### Strategic Plan, Mission, and Vision

By law, we are required to file an updated strategy to meet the needs of our state with the NEH every five years. This follows an in-depth assessment process. In 2018, our mission and vision were updated to reflect a new direction guided by our plan for 2018-22 filed with the NEH. Our plan acknowledges and addresses the current national, state, and local state of affairs in society. Recognizing the significant socio-political problems in the United States, our mission statement emphasizes strengthening democracy through humanities programs and investments. Recognizing that Wyoming is at a crossroads in terms of our economic future, our five-year vision supports the creative and cultural sector as part of Wyoming’s future economic diversification strategy and focuses on expanding the “Wyoming narrative” and advancing highly engaged communities through strong cultural arts programming.

- Our mission is to ***strengthen Wyoming’s democracy by creating an environment of understanding, wisdom, inspiration, creativity, and idea sharing.***
- Our vision is that **Wyoming inspires, and inspired people come together in their communities to solve complex problems in thoughtful ways.**

## ***Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members***

Board members receive online information the week before each meeting, allowing sufficient time to review all actionable content. Board members also take part in meetings of WYH's standing and appointed committees and task forces between full board meetings. There are standing committees for nominations, finance, grants, advocacy, and executive oversight.

Meetings of standing committees and task forces are conducted by conference call or in person at board meetings. In addition, board members are strongly encouraged to attend Wyoming Humanities programs and grantee events in their areas to assist with evaluation and accountability.

While board members receive no pay for their service as directors, travel and other expenses conducted for Wyoming Humanities business may be reimbursed. One of the primary functions of our board is to secure the economic future of this organization through fundraising and advocacy for public funding. General expectations of the board include:

- Interpret the organization's work and values to the community, represent the organization, and act as an ambassador and advocate
- Become familiar with the policies, procedures of the board through the board handbook and other materials provided by the staff.
- Attend meetings regularly; absence from two consecutive meetings by an elective member may be construed as a resignation, and the board may declare a vacancy.
- Prior to each regularly scheduled meeting, read and evaluate board meeting materials related to the agenda.
- Serve on standing committees or task forces as assigned by the chair.
- Promote the humanities and the work of Wyoming Humanities whenever possible and appropriate, and secure resources to support the organization's programs.
- Make a personal financial contribution at a level that is meaningful
- Participate in annual fundraising and fundraising initiatives.
- Direct local individuals and organizations interested in developing humanities grants or programs to Wyoming Humanities staff for assistance.
- Maintain an accurate accounting of time and personal funds spent on board business and provide regular in-kind forms to staff for the purpose of matching the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant.
- Attend and evaluate local and statewide humanities programs.
- Maintain the confidentiality of board meetings; refer all questions regarding board actions to staff.
- Foster board consensus agreement and support all decisions of the board.
- Act in the best interests of the organization and excuse oneself from discussions and votes where there may be a conflict of interest.
- Assist staff with local program development and promotion as needed.
- Support and nurture staff.
- Assume other responsibilities as requested by the chair.

## Organization Responsibilities

- Send at least financial reports and an update of organizational activities that allow board members to meet the "prudent person" standards of the law.
- Opportunities will be offered to discuss with the executive director and the board president the organization's programs, goals, activities, and status; additionally, members can request such opportunities.
- The organization will help the board perform duties by keeping members informed about issues in the industry and field in which we are working, and by offering members opportunities for professional development as a board member.
- Board members and staff will respond in a straightforward fashion to questions that are necessary to carry out a member's fiscal, legal and moral responsibilities to this organization. Board members and staff will work in good faith toward achievement of WYH's goals.
- If the organization does not fulfill its commitments, a member can call on the board president and executive director to discuss the organization's responsibilities to the board.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair, Board of Directors: \_\_\_\_\_