



AASLH STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Approved September 22, 2020

MISSION

AASLH provides leadership and resources to help the history community thrive and make the past more meaningful to all people.

VISION

History organizations everywhere will prosper, tell everyone's story, and be central to important conversations throughout their communities. As a result, the public will use historical thinking skills to actively engage with and address contemporary issues and to value history for its relevance to modern life.

VALUES

We believe **history matters**. History connects people to each other and to something larger than themselves. People need history to understand the world around them and develop solutions for the future.

We believe everyone makes history. **Relevant** history is inclusive history.

Creativity and innovation inform our work as an organization, and collaborative partnerships and practices are key to advancing our mission.

We are **transparent** in how we conduct our work as an association and as historians.

We value **investing** in individuals and organizations and youth along their personal and professional paths.

GOALS

1. **Build and support a more inclusive and equitable history community.**
 - a. Conduct regular diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion assessment and training for Council and staff.
 - b. Develop an overarching inclusion policy for the organization
 - c. At the Annual Meeting, create spaces and opportunities for dialogue, community building, critical thinking, and planning toward greater diversity and inclusion.
 - d. Prioritize diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in programs and operations and encourage all history organizations to do the same.
 - e. Advance a more diverse and inclusive field through continuing education offerings and other programmatic efforts.
 - f. Make the next generation of history practitioners and leaders more diverse and the field more inclusive through professional development opportunities for graduate students and emerging professionals.



- g. Recognize that “sustainability” encompasses environmental and climate issues, as well as issues of equity and diversity.
- h. Continue building collaborative relationships that help AASLH advance DEAI priorities in the history field.

2. Promote the relevance of history.

- a. Lead the history field’s preparation for the U.S. 250th anniversary commemoration, inviting other organizations to join us, with relevance as a focal point.
- b. Recognize and celebrate organizations modeling innovative approaches for making history relevant in all programs.
- c. Encourage members to use innovative means to communicate the relevance of history in their states, regions, and communities; facilitate a ripple effect.
- d. Make relevance a core component of advocacy efforts at the national level through National Coalition for History, Museums Advocacy Day, and other opportunities; explore possibilities for empowering advocates at the state level.

3. Advance history practice through professional development for all levels of the field.

- a. Provide professional development for practitioners in all sectors of the field and at all stages in their career through a comprehensive, year-round continuing education program built on the framework provided by the IMLS grant.
- b. Reaffirm our commitment to sharing best practices, field-wide standards and ethics, and model behavior through a revitalized, professional development, and publications and awards programs.
- c. Improve and expand learning opportunities for small and all-volunteer institutions.
- d. Help history museums and historical societies train and educate their stakeholders in the methods and standards of historical practice.
- e. Make public history and museum studies graduate programs aware of AASLH professional development resources that can augment their curricula.

4. Connect the history community to field-wide questions and each other.

- a. Grow individual and institutional membership to be more representative of the diversity and size of the field.
- b. More members are connected to each other by and talking about AASLH programs, committees, and affinity groups.
- c. Use all program areas as opportunities to connect members with one another and with common set of questions and challenges, increasing the degree to which the field feels like a cohesive community.
- d. Conduct and distribute research about field-wide questions, such as salary and equity, visitation, a census of history organizations, evaluation and impact, communication challenges, gender equity and sexual harassment, and other key areas of concern for members and the field.
- e. Connect and collaborate with other history, museum, and humanities networks and organizations around the country to advance our mission.



INCREASED CAPACITY

To accomplish the goals described below, AASLH will develop new capabilities over the next three years. We will use new research and metrics to serve and expand our membership base, emphasize our reach to thousands of small organizations, and make stronger links to early career professionals and graduate programs, all resulting in increasing financial support from membership revenue and income from continuing education programs. We also will take a more entrepreneurial approach to this earned revenue, refine our continuing education programs to make them more attractive, revitalize our sources of philanthropic support, and generate energy by making the case for history organizations and for AASLH to media outlets.

Specifically, AASLH will

- Revitalize sources of philanthropic support by expanding the Legacy Society, exploring an endowment-building campaign, and seeking major grants from foundations for new projects that also build capacity.
- Following economic recovery after the pandemic, expand institutional memberships 5% each year by launching a membership acquisition program, emphasizing that institutional staff have access to benefits of membership, and demonstrating that AASLH resources, new research, and advocacy serve the entire field, especially small organizations.
- Following economic recovery after the pandemic, increase individual memberships 3% over the next three years, with a new case for participation and a focus on early career professionals, particularly individual history professionals at mid-sized and large institutions with fewer than 10 years' experience in the field.
- Following economic recovery after the pandemic, add to enrollments 5% each year using the 2020 launch of the Enhancement, new connections to graduate programs and to history organizations housed within park systems.
- Increase the profitability of the annual meeting and other earned revenue through a more entrepreneurial approach.
- Continue to build relationships with graduate Museum Studies and Public History programs to introduce new generations of professionals to AASLH

To accomplish these goals, AASLH will need

- Members and committee volunteers who feel involved, connected, informed
- Council members serving as representatives of our diverse field and willing to raise funds
- A staff that is determined and efficient
- A growing and varied range of revenue sources