

Trump threatens the humanities

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Advisors to the president of the United States, Donald Trump, are evaluating the possibility of eliminating financial support for the arts and humanities in general.

An official announcement has not yet been made, and we still do not know what the cultural policy of the new U.S. leader will be.

Several days ago, however, *The Hill*, a news outlet specializing in political coverage, published details of a proposal attributed to the *Heritage Foundation* and advisors on the Trump team that called for significant cuts to the budgets for the arts, the humanities and public broadcasting.

Specifically, it revealed a plan to eliminate the Public Broadcasting Corporation, which would result in the disappearance of important radio and television programming that meets public purposes with informational, cultural and educational content.

It was also reported that as part of the Trump plan the budgets provided to support the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities could be completely eliminated. Such an action would represent a severe blow to artists, researchers, filmmakers and educators who are able to develop their initiatives today thanks to the financial support they receive from these institutions.

If this prediction comes true, cultural production in the United States will be strongly affected and the same will happen in Puerto Rico, where the Puerto Rican Endowment for the Humanities (FPH, for its Spanish acronym), an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, will suffer a substantial decrease in resources.

Since its creation in 1977, the FPH has contributed to the island's cultural and humanistic development by subsidizing organizations, communities, museums, universities and individuals undertaking projects that reflect the diversity of the Puerto Rican experience, its heritage, traditions and history.

With the sponsorship of the FPH, countless works of research, exhibitions, documentaries, talks, television projects and many public programs have been produced that contributed to the understanding and dissemination of the Puerto Rican humanistic experience in all its forms.

Now it is up to us to defend this cultural inheritance. It is also up to us to ensure that the culture and the humanities do not become a battleground for those who, in the interest of budget balancing, do not understand the value that cultural and humanities work has for the development of our society and its people.

With more than four decades of promoting this cultural and humanities work, the Puerto Rican Endowment for the Humanities has shown our commitment to Puerto Rican society. Now we must take up the defense of such a noble legacy.