



## Infrastructure in Our Communities

Good roads and bridges are valuable because they improve life and opportunity for all members of a community. But communities need more than fresh asphalt to thrive; they need a robust cultural infrastructure that strengthens social bonds, creates a sense of identity and direction, and gives individuals the means and knowledge to develop their own cultural resources. These sorts of improvements take time, money, and sustained public attention—they can't be created overnight. But they can have enormous pay-offs that transform access to culture, opportunity, and economic development.

**" State humanities councils make long-term investments in the creation of cultural resources that permanently improve communities."**

In towns like Sidney, Montana; Chester, Pennsylvania; and Logan, Utah, state humanities councils have made long-term investments in the creation of cultural resources that have permanently improved those communities. State councils create and strengthen partnerships within a community, and they contribute knowledge, funding, and programmatic expertise to assist new museums, libraries, writing centers, and cultural destinations. The councils work to ensure the success of those new facilities by building the capacity and knowledge of local organizers, and by making grants that support wide-ranging, innovative programming for the long-term benefit of a community.



### **CASE IN POINT**

"Montana's "Hometown Humanities" program devotes significant resources and attention to a different rural community each year, offering regular cultural programming, helping communities build or improve their cultural infrastructure, and preparing them for long-term success and a lifetime of engagement with the humanities.

**Building the  
Nation's**

**Cultural**

**Infrastructure**

To see what your state council is building, visit [statehumanities.org](https://statehumanities.org)



**HUMANITIES NORTH DAKOTA**  
GameChanger Ideas Festival  
Max Patzner



**MARYLAND HUMANITIES**  
Maryland History Day  
Mitro Hood Photography

Every community is different. What works for a small rural municipality in Nevada might not translate to a mining town in West Virginia, and that's why state councils take their lead from the communities they serve.



**State councils worked with 8,825 partner organizations in FY 2017**

The councils work with community members to define their objectives (be that building a local history museum, strengthening educational outreach, or training volunteers), and then they help make those aspirations a reality through direct financial aid, practical guidance, programming expertise, and long-term planning for intelligent and stable growth. In many ways, state councils work as both fire starter and fuel: they spur immediate action and activity, and then they help sustain and develop that energy into resources for the community.

**“ Every community is different. What works for a small rural municipality in Nevada might not translate to a mining town in West Virginia. ”**



**Councils worked with +5,300 rural, suburban, and urban communities in FY 2017**

This support is particularly important for rural towns and disadvantaged communities, many of which have never seen committed efforts to create cultural infrastructure projects. For these types of organizations, especially those just getting off the ground, the assistance of state councils is a lifeline that gives beleaguered communities a chance to form their own cultural infrastructure or to repair and revive older facilities which, like cracked sidewalks or aging water mains, occasionally require outside support to revamp. Indeed, just like roads and bridges, the humanities are worth investment because they improve the quality of life for all members of society.



**State councils leveraged \$4.18 at the local level for every federal dollar they regranted in FY 2017**

**To see what your state council is building, visit [statehumanities.org](http://statehumanities.org)**