



## NCPH Long Range Plan

*Adopted April 19, 2012*

### **Mission:**

NCPH inspires public engagement with the past and serves the needs of practitioners in putting history to work in the world by

- building community among historians,
- expanding professional skills and tools,
- fostering critical reflection on historical practice, and
- publicly advocating for history and historians.

### **Vision:**

NCPH will be the “go to” organization for public history that professionals turn to day to day, through the year, and throughout their careers.

### **Values:**

In pursuing this vision, NCPH will work with

- openness to new ideas,
- nimbleness to adapt to change,
- sensitivity to difference,
- responsibility to personal and professional ethics, and
- attentiveness to the needs of the widest community of public historians.

### **Goals 2012-2017**

Over the next five years, NCPH will do the following:

#### **I. Build a more inclusive and vibrant public history community**

NCPH aims to bring together practitioners, scholars, and public audiences; raise the profile of public history (and NCPH) within the historical profession; increase awareness of how the skills and training of public historians aid professional practice; and meet the needs of early-, mid-, and advanced career professionals as well as newcomers to the field.

Objectives:

- A. Raise profile of public history among potential students facing career decisions, history departments and academic administrators making curricular choices, and cultural institutions making hiring decisions:
  - design promotional materials about public history education and careers and distribute them to undergraduate and graduate programs across the country;
  - continue to create and disseminate guidelines and resources for universities pursuing public history education

- foster conversations with leaders in state and local historical societies, federal agencies, museums, and other public history organizations and entities to ensure links between public history curriculum and practice (Invite leaders to roundtables, participation in conference, ask for what they look for in hiring.)
- B. Increase racial/ethnic diversity in the membership:
- invite diverse public history practitioners from other disciplines and organizations to participate in the annual meeting and on NCPH committees
  - continue to provide travel assistance for annual meeting participants of racial/ethnic minorities
  - reprise or sponsor sessions, workshops, or related events at conferences that attract diverse participants (e.g., Association for the Study of African American Life and History)
  - foster diversity in the board of directors and in committees
- C. Encourage greater disciplinary and professional diversity:
- encourage participation in the annual meeting and on committees by public history practitioners from other disciplines and organizations (e.g., military and federal historians, consultants, oral historians, historic preservationists, folklorists, archaeologists)
  - continue to encourage exploration of the breadth and variety of the term “public history”
  - foster diversity in the board of directors and in committees
- D. Continue developing the international reach of the organization and the field:
- support the growth of the International Federation for Public History
  - continue to provide travel assistance for international annual meeting participants
  - continue to solicit international and transnational journal articles and special issues as well as conference sessions
  - foster diversity in the board of directors and in committees
- E. Use social networking and related digital tools to increase conversations across constituencies within NCPH and among public history practitioners; break down silos of generation, professional specialization, and geography:
- develop an NCPH blog for discussion of general topics as well as more focused conversations among constituencies, such as consultants, graduate students, and public history educators
  - continue to use social media and H-Public to facilitate discussion and build connections
  - cross-link and cross-post among NCPH’s journal, newsletter, listservs, and blogs
  - encourage NCPH committees and other interested individuals to become involved in these activities
- F. Monitor and participate in professional and academic conversations about the future of digital scholarship and digital public history:
- continue exploration of digital media in the journal and on the “Off the Wall” blog
  - continue partnerships with the Center for History and New Media, such as THAT Camps at the annual meeting
  - explore the potential inter-relationships between existing communication forms (the journal, newsletter, the conference, committees, blogs, etc.) and digital media.

- G. Extend NCPH's reach by endorsing (and applying NCPH's brand to) local, state, regional, and international gatherings, projects, and workshops:
- with a cohesive brand and vision, lend NCPH's name to others' existing or new projects and programs which accomplish our goals. For example, put NCPH's name on workshops or training happening outside of our annual meeting.
  - form a program committee of the board to organize, solicit, or reprise NCPH sessions to be offered at AASLH, AHA, and other associations' conferences

**II. Engage and sustain members at different stages of their careers.**

NCPH shares best practices and builds skill sets that enable professional success; encourages experimentation that reinvents public history practice and transcends disciplinary boundaries.

Objectives:

- A. Focus on quality of membership (depth of engagement) rather than quantity:
- retain members by offering enhanced benefits of membership, with an eye toward the professional needs and interests of new, established, and senior public historians
- B. Encourage members to share professional expertise and experience and use social networking and related digital means to increase conversation across generations:
- develop a general, umbrella NCPH blog which engages targeted groups
  - cross-link and cross-post among NCPH's journal, newsletter, listservs, and blogs (recognizing that age affects individuals' use of print vs. electronic)
  - encourage NCPH committees to help moderate and contribute
  - encourage "live-wire" individuals to help moderate and contribute
  - utilize directories, such as LinkedIn, and/or use of NCPH blog and Facebook group to connect across generations, employment sectors, and geography
- C. Provide access to NCPH programs and benefits for new members of the profession who might not have the means to travel to the annual meeting:
- explore using local and state gatherings—such as brownbags, workshops, or existing conferences or other events—as ways for individuals with a state or local focus to connect to NCPH
  - offer digital access (for a fee) to some annual meeting sessions, workshops, etc. to individuals not able to attend
- D. Provide workshops and other forms of continuing education:
- have Professional Development Committee rewrite workshop guidelines and create a curriculum to be taught in a rotating schedule of workshops.
  - offer a half-day boot camp for new professionals to attend in the spring before they graduate.
  - offer more conceptually sophisticated opportunities for mid- and advanced career professionals at the annual meeting in the form of longer sessions with less focus on presentation and more time for discussion.
- E. Offer benefits and resources targeted to various constituencies:
- begin restricting some materials on website to members only
  - offer podcast/videos of conference sessions

- offer reading lists and best practices documents for public history programs (Curriculum & Training Committee)
- offer best practices documents for consultants (Consultants Committee)

### **III. Encourage collective conversation about the shape and directions of public history.**

NCPH invites reflection about the contours of public history as a field and profession. Through open-ended questions, conversation, and debate, we prize tradition while embracing the uncertainty of the new.

Objectives:

- consider new possibilities for the journal as a medium, its relation to other NCPH media/voices, how it serves the field, profession, and organization, and encourages internationalization
- maintain peer review at the core of what NCPH provides, from articles to conference sessions to best practices documents.
- continue to make annual meeting an opportunity for open and stimulating conversation about transformative developments in the field
- explore how new media are transforming public history thought and practice; explore opportunities presented by both formal and informal media to re-imagine how public history is practiced
- work to increase access to gray literature (such as unpublished reports and working documents):
  - create a portal on the NCPH website that identifies gray literature, categorizes its forms, and provides links to online collections of gray literature
  - develop the site and larger project by involving public history graduate students at multiple universities, using a wiki to recruit help in updating links, exploring a connection to JSTOR, and offering workshops on how to formulate a methodology for finding gray literature

### **IV. Be a strong voice for the interests of public history practitioners and an advocate for applying and connecting history to contemporary issues.**

NCPH intends to advocate for history in the wider world by encouraging connections between issues from the past and contemporary questions, opening conversations among policy-makers, strategists, and historians to discuss paths to the future, urging that historical resources be safely preserved and publicly accessible, and mobilizing support for funding history museums, historic sites, and history education.

Objectives:

- develop an internal mechanism (e.g., a standing committee) that enables NCPH to issue public statements in favor of preservation and accessibility of historical resources, funding of historical organizations, and open dialogue and informed discussion about history's relationship to contemporary concerns.

- B. support the preservation and accessibility of historical resources, and support other organizations that mobilize support for funding history museums, historic sites, and history education:
  - continue to support the National Coalition for History
  - consider joining the National Humanities Alliance and similar organizations
- C. assert the importance of professional training for public history practitioners and bring wider awareness to public history as a field

**V. Increase NCPH's financial capacity to pursue its goals.**

Objectives:

- A. Position the Board of Directors at the center of development activities:
  - recruit board members who have business, legal, or other professional backgrounds
  - engage the board more directly in fundraising activities
- B. Increase financial resources:
  - raise at least \$10,000 per year for the Endowment
  - increase cash amounts for awards
  - increase size of reserve in annual budget
  - continue to build planned giving program
  - increase the number of Patrons and Partners
  - cultivate a culture of giving among graduate students and new professionals, corporations, and among other groups and in other areas