Opportunities of the Semiquincentennial

A Common Cause to All
Williamsburg, Virginia
March 10, 2023

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President & CEO, American Association for State and Local History
America 250 Foundation is the nonprofit administrative arm of the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission.
State-Level Planning
Vision for the 250th

...to help American society progress towards justice through an inclusive approach to history and to strengthen the history field by attracting interest and investment.
Background on AASLH
Field Guide Themes

1. Unfinished Revolutions
2. Power of Place
3. We the People
4. The American Experiment
5. Doing History
Field Guide Themes

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Long history to... and after Independence

Advancements and setbacks since 1776

Other revolutionary moments

Advancements and setbacks

Liberty and equality in your community
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Who were considered “the people”?
Exclusion and inclusion of groups
Expansion of citizenship
What is an “American”? 
Founders did not have all the answers

Toward a more perfect union

Civic action

Engagement in the present
OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

STRAATEGY 1: Achieve Equality of Voice and Representation

RECOMMENDATION 1.1
Substantially increase the public conversation about policy areas under consideration.

STRAATEGY 4: Dramatically Expand Civic Bridging Capacity

RECOMMENDATION 4.1
Establish a National Trust for Civic Infrastructure to scale up social, civic, and democratic infrastructure. Fund the Trust with a major nationwide investment campaign that bridges private enterprise and philanthropic seed funding. This might later be sustained through annual appropriations from Congress on the model of the National Endowment for Democracy.

STRAATEGY 5: Build Civic Information Architecture that Supports Common Purpose

RECOMMENDATION 5.1
Form a high-level working group to articulate and measure social media's civic obligations and incorporate those defined metrics in the Democratic Engagement Project, described in Recommendation 5.5.

RECOMMENDATION 5.2
Through state and/or federal legislation, subsidize innovation to reinvent the public functions that social media have displaced: for instance, with a tax on digital advertising that could be deployed in a public media fund that would support experimental approaches to public social media platforms as well as local and regional investigative journalism.
Invite public into the process of doing history

Transparency, uncertainty

What counts as evidence

Using different kinds of sources

Multiple perspectives
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<tr>
<th>Institutional &amp; Social Transformation</th>
<th>Our Changing Landscapes</th>
<th>We the People</th>
<th>Civic Participation</th>
<th>Contemporary Debates &amp; Possibilities</th>
<th>A People in the World</th>
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Other AASLH Resources
Defusing the History Wars: Finding Common Ground in Teaching America’s National Story
THANK YOU!

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