

The National Humanities Alliance Adopts Basic Principles for Managing Intellectual Property in the Digital Environment

The National Humanities Alliance (NHA) has adopted a statement of "Basic Principles for Managing Intellectual Property in the Digital Environment," developed by the NHA Committee on Libraries and Intellectual Property. The document is intended to help build consensus within the educational community on mutual expectations for publisher and user behavior regarding the use of intellectual property in the digital environment. The document grew out of the NHA Board's concern with the limited progress being made by the Conference on Fair Use (CONFU) discussions hosted by the Information Infrastructure Task Force Working Group on Intellectual Property. Since the educational community encompasses such a wide range of institutions and individuals who are creators, owners, and users of intellectual property, the NHA Board believed that if it could not be done on a broader scale, there was a need for the educational community at least to come to consensus on these issues. Not only would such a consensus allow creators, publishers, and users to move forward in this environment, but it would also provide individual institutions and coalitions a common set of broad principles against which they could evaluate legislative proposals. Moreover, if it could speak in one voice, the educational community would strengthen its position in the ongoing legislative debates on intellectual property.

The NHA is seeking endorsement of these principles from other organizations. Copies of the principles will be sent to all ARL members and endorsement will be considered at the May membership meeting. Additional copies can be obtained from ARL. [The document](#) is also available on the NINCH Web site.

The National Humanities Alliance was created in 1981 to unify public interest in support of federal programs in the humanities. The Alliance is made up of scholarly and professional associations; organizations of museums, libraries, historical societies, higher education, and state humanities councils; university and independent centers for scholarship; and other organizations concerned with national humanities policies. The NHA Committee on Libraries and Intellectual Property is chaired by Duane Webster, ARL. Fourteen organizations were included in the discussions leading to the development of the principles statement. The principles are based on the "University of California Copyright Legislation and Scholarly Communication Basic Principles," Working Draft, December 2, 1996.

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