[H-Net Strategic Plan 2015-2020](#)

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Mission Statement

H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online (H-Net) is an independent, non-profit scholarly association that offers an open academic space for scholars, teachers, advanced students and related professionals. H-Net's digital platform, The Commons, provides a dynamic array of functions that allow academics to engage with each other, collaboratively produce knowledge, and disseminate information to its subscribers and the general public. Built around an online system of networks moderated by certified editors, H-Net is uniquely situated to encourage technological innovation in the humanities and social sciences while safeguarding academic best practices.

Vision Statement

Our vision is of the humanities and social sciences transformed by the immense potential of digital technologies and oriented around moderated intellectual exchange, collaborative production, and the open dissemination of knowledge.

Values Statement

H-Net's work is guided and informed by our commitment to:

- **high standards of scholarly, pedagogical and professional behavior**: we are committed to core academic values and best practices. Our institutional and digital framework protects intellectual autonomy, foregrounds the intrinsic intellectual value of scholarship and debate, and insulates contributors from conflicts of interest. We respect each other's way of thinking and promote civility and community-building. Peer review and editorial moderation of content are expressions of this value.
- **a pluralistic and democratic way of decision-making**: we foster a culture that welcomes new participants from all academic backgrounds and that expects decisions to be based on widespread and collegial consultation.
- **principles of Open Access**: we believe in the promise of global knowledge exchange and the need to improve the quality and value of access to it, regardless of wealth or affiliation. As expressions of this value, we are committed to the preservation and searchability of all H-Net published content, and to remaining non-profit and free of commercial advertising.

The following strategic objectives for guiding the decision-making of the H-Net Council for the next five years stem from its efforts to welcome scholars from all backgrounds and institutional settings, recognizing that knowledge production happens in many places and finds expression in many formats. There are four key goals by which these strategic objectives are fueled:

1. To develop H-Net's dual potential for publishing diverse online academic content and providing a

moderated space for discussion in the Humanities and Social Sciences.
2. To preserve H-Net's financial self-sufficiency, and to continue to improve H-Net's financial capacity to enhance its activities, pursue its goals, and serve its members.
3. To increase the visibility and recognition of H-Net in and out of academia.
4. To continue to develop our digital capabilities and to provide leadership in the humanities and social sciences in capitalizing on digital capabilities.

GOAL ONE: To develop H-Net's dual potential for publishing diverse online academic content and providing a moderated space for discussion in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Strategies:

- To support Networks in developing content, recruiting editorial staff members, and engaging with subscribers.
- To support the creation of new Networks that are built around a clear vision of their value to the academic common good of their field of study.
- To either re-staff or retire and archive Networks that have fallen into disuse.
- To expand and enhance H-Net's Review program through recruitment, training, and support for cross-Network and H-Net-wide initiatives, including the Book Channel.
- To improve the flow of information between Network Staff and Subscribers, and between The Home Office and both Network Staff and Subscribers through the continued development of user profiles, polling, and Editor Resources.
- To enrich H-Net's training resources through content from the Home Office, including webinars, optional training modules, videoconferences, and model projects that illustrate the different features of The Commons.
- To track and participate in the evolution of peer review in an age of social media and online publication.
- To develop a set of procedures for an Editor and Network Development Fund to support projects at individual Networks.

GOAL TWO: To preserve H-Net's financial self-sufficiency, and to continue to improve H-Net's financial capacity to enhance its activities, pursue its goals, and serve its members.

Strategies:

- Continue to secure revenue through the efficient operation of our Job Guide.
- Increase our revenue from donations by continuing to underscore the value of H-Net to our subscribers and general public and by engaging individual Networks in our fundraising efforts.
- Seek out other revenue streams that are free from conflicts of interest. This may include developing sponsorship programs with external academic organizations and enhancing H-Net's digital infrastructure to encourage the same.
- Research the potential for grant writing and other types of partnerships with interested parties,

including individual H-Net networks, and pursue them if warranted.

GOAL THREE: To increase the visibility and recognition of H-Net in and out of academia.

Strategies:

- To circulate H-Net's extensive, freely available online content across and beyond academic circles using an outreach campaign.
- To advocate for the humanities and social sciences within academia and to the larger public. This will include foregrounding H-Net's core values among and beyond its Networks. It will also involve considering the possibility of building on the strengths of pre-existing networks to develop a central forum for discussing the future of the humanities and social sciences.
- To continue to be a central point for information about academic jobs. This will include continuing to operate the H-Net Job Guide so that it is free for all job-seekers.
- To continue to be a central point for academic announcements. This will include: better integrating H-Announce into The Commons platform, e.g., announcements could require categories and keywords; continuing to ease the process whereby a person, group, or institution may submit an academic announcement; ensuring that all announcements are moderated and edited in a timely fashion; and, encouraging Network Editors to send appropriate announcements available on H-Announce to their Networks.
- Explore other data H-Net can collect that can be used in future decision making at the organizational level, including our re-post rates--how often are H-Net content items being shared on social media and by whom?
- To establish a process whereby Network Editors will be recognized and funded through external partnerships for conducting special projects and presentations.

GOAL FOUR: To continue to develop our digital capabilities and to provide leadership in the humanities and social sciences in capitalizing on digital capabilities.

Strategies:

- To draw on H-Net's extensive experience producing open-access content to inform broader discussions across the humanities and social sciences about the future of publication.
- To continue to enhance features of H-Net's The Commons platform in line with the long-term welfare of H-Net and the scholarly communities it serves.
- Partner with similar organizations, e.g., HASTAC, to help raise the number of channels for communication about work undertaken in the H-Net Commons and leadership roles for H-Net members.
- Continue to offer valuable audiences and marketing outlets to traditional scholarly publisher companies in creative and innovative ways.

Metrics

- Create a list of target conferences and publications that are highly visible hosts for conversations going on in topics that H-Net should be addressing, e.g., Open Access publishing, technologies in education/higher education, digital scholarship and archives.
- H-Net Council creates a new standing Committee to develop and oversee an outreach campaign across and beyond academic circles, e.g., Committee on Research Dissemination.
- The Home Office designs a new feature and/or series of features for build out the unique qualities of the Commons and increases efficiencies, convenience, look-and-feel, e.g., a program that encourages and makes it easier for Network Editors to post relevant ads from the Job Guide to their Networks.
- Increase the number of experienced Home Office staff working with H-Net services or networks in professionally and intellectually meaningful ways, e.g., graduate students or recent graduates who can intern with Network Editors or those who moderate and edit academic announcements under direction from the Home Office.
- A collaborative production of a new project or event (across or within Networks) is designed or rolled out each quarter, e.g., Crossroads, H-Podcast.
- Develop at least one new external partnership annually for funding special projects and presentations by H-Net Council, Home Office staff, and Network Editors.
- H-Net co-sponsors participation in at least one conference, workshop or other type of professional development per year for eligible H-Net Home Office staff to remain up-to-date on applicable technologies and digital humanities techniques.
- Mentorships between H-Net Network Editors are called for and developed (one-on-one, study circles, affiliation clusters).