

Joshua Sternfeld, Ph.D.

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Strategic policy leader and digital humanities scholar with 20+ years transforming federal programs at the intersection of emerging technologies, public policy, preservation, and institutional resilience. Directed \$122M across 350+ federal grants and 15 programs while pioneering AI governance initiatives, standards and open-source tool development, crisis response protocols, and equity-centered capacity building. Proven expertise in cross-sector partnership development, stakeholder engagement, and translating complex policy frameworks into actionable funding strategies. Published researcher and thought leader bridging technical innovation with humanities perspectives and public interest.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH), Washington, D.C.

Sep 2009-Jun 2025

Assistant Director, Division of Preservation and Access, GS 14-5 (Dec 24-Jun 25)

Senior Program Officer, Preservation and Access, GS 13-9 (Sep 09-Dec 16, Jan 18-Nov 24)

Director, Office of Federal/State Partnership, GS 14-7 (Jan-Dec 17)

Strategic Program Leadership

- Transformed federal research initiative by redesigning NEH's [Research and Development](#) program (**\$18.9M, 2012-2025**) through comprehensive stakeholder review, **tripling applications and doubling annual budget from \$750K to \$1.5M** while directing 75% of awards to underserved communities.
- Led rapid-deployment emergency response programs under accelerated timelines, including training and managing team to coordinate American Rescue Plan funding (**\$13.6M**) across 74 organizations and saving/creating 360+ jobs.
- Led \$2.4M [Education and Training](#) program redesign that **increased budget by 58%**, broadened eligibility and geographic reach, and diversified pedagogical models to meet workforce needs.
- Directed funding distribution to 55 state and jurisdictional nonprofit humanities councils advancing literacy, community, and educational initiatives.

AI Governance & Emerging Technology Policy

- Co-developed and administered federal cross-functional AI initiative, [Humanities Perspectives in Artificial Intelligence](#), in response to White House Executive Order 14110 on Trustworthy AI. Initiative supported establishment of **five university AI research centers (\$2.7M)** and funded original scholarship on the dangers and opportunities of technology, positioning agency as leader in analyzing the ethical, legal, and societal impact of AI systems.
- Secured interagency Memorandum of Understanding with National Gallery of Art advancing collaborative AI applications and data analytics.
- Drafted NEH Public Access Policy for scientific research data aligning with White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; applied across 5 programs.
- Conducted federal agency technology policy research and data analysis to generate actionable recommendations for agency advisory board and senior leadership on AI governance, workforce development, emerging technology implementation, and international coordination.

Cross-sector Partnerships and Engagement

- Developed and managed [Play/back international symposium](#) (200+ participants), one of NEH's largest convenings, to advance audiovisual collection preservation.
- Managed early development of national digital resource of historic local broadcasting spanning all states and jurisdictions in partnership with Library of Congress and WGBH Archives.
- Directed allocation of \$1M+ toward joint funding agreement with UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council for international digital scholarship initiatives

Operational Management

- Supervised a total of **8 FTE** across multiple high-performing cross-functional teams both in-person and remotely, mentoring staff in policy analysis and strategic program development while overseeing budget allocation, regulatory compliance, and operational coordination.

- Led division operations during two terms as Acting Deputy Director managing staff hirings, strategic planning logistics, application review processes, travel authorizations, staff meetings, and program administration.
- Directed agency-wide strategic planning working group resulting in staff professional development workshop series, communications slide deck employed by program staff, and consolidated travel calendar.

Grants Administration and Management

- Directed **\$122M across 350+ awards and 15 programs** spanning digital infrastructure, research and development, preservation, AI/ML, crisis response, sustainable infrastructure, community resilience, workforce development, and heritage science. For further programmatic breakdown, visit www.joshsternfeld.com.
- Conducted hundreds of strategic consultations with universities, nonprofits, and heritage institutions translating government policy into actionable digital projects ranging from \$10,000 assessments to \$1M+ infrastructure initiatives.
- Chaired **80+ technical evaluation panels** assessing emerging technology proposals, including AI/ML applications and digital infrastructure projects. Recruited interdisciplinary experts to evaluate technical feasibility, implementation risks, and strategic value of proposed innovations.
- Established and administered comprehensive Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning frameworks for multiple grant programs, aligning review criteria and impact metrics with regulatory and policy objectives.
- Managed comprehensive **five-year site assessments of 12 nonprofits**, evaluating program effectiveness, data compliance, financial stewardship, and governance practices.

UCLA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND INFORMATION STUDIES

Jun 2007-Aug 2009

Associate Director, UCLA Center for Information as Evidence (2007-2009, Full-Time)

- **Multi-University Program Management:** Managed \$950,555 fellowship program supporting doctoral research across eight partner universities. Organized inaugural international faculty and student institute advancing innovative education theory and practice with 79 participants from Asia, Australia, and North America.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in History, University of California, Los Angeles | B.A. in History, Princeton University

SELECTED SCHOLARSHIP AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Authored field-defining internationally cited studies on digital historical theory, AI, emerging technologies, and pedagogy. Publications in *American Historical Review* and *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* shaped national discourse on AI governance and interpretability in cultural heritage research. For full list of publications, visit www.joshsternfeld.com.
- Adjunct Faculty for American University (2015-2016) and UCLA (2007-2009) teaching original mixed undergraduate and graduate seminars on history, media, and technology. For course syllabi, visit www.joshsternfeld.com.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- **14 consecutive “Exceptional” annual ratings and 14 NEH performance awards** *2010-2024*
- Three NEH Independent Study and Research Development Awards *2013, 2018, 2024*
- German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Annual Fellowship *2004*

CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- *AI and Career Empowerment*, University of Maryland, Robert H. Smith School of Business *2025*
- *AI Governance*. BlueDot Impact. Competitively selected beta tester for 2025 curriculum *2025*