KANSAS COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

by

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Summary

This reports contains numerous findings. These findings are summarized in this section. The page numbers indicate the place in the report where the fuller discussions are found.

* Only a small proportion considered humanities programs a high priority of their organization (p. 5).

* Most respondents stressed the importance of humanities programs (p. 6).

* The general public and students are the most common audience (p. 6). They were also the most frequently mentioned preferred audience (p. 6).

* Specialized groups, such as minorities, public officials, or professional groups, receive little attention (p. 8).

* The dominant modes of communicating with audiences are exhibits, publications, and public discussions (p. 8).

* Television was frequently mentioned for increased use (p. 8).

* Respondents stressed more publicity to increase audiences (p. 9).

* Of the many topics, local and state history and culture receive the greatest attention (p. 9).

* Local or state public policy issues, which receive little actual attention, were not identified as a topic in need of greater attention (p. 10).

* Kansas humanists are highly dependent on KCH for funding (p. 12).

* Most respondents preferred smaller to larger grants (p. 14).

* Even though the sample was drawn from KCH's mailing list, one-third of the respondents have not participated in humanities programs (p. 15).

* The most frequently mentioned reason for not participating was lack of awareness (p. 15).

* In general, respondents were positive about KCH programs (p. 17). Their suggestions for improvement are listed in Table 12.

Introduction

This survey gathered information from Kansas humanists to assist the Kansas Committee for the Humanities' long range planning. The questions covered a range of topics: the importance, various audiences, types, and funding sources for humanities programs; the media used to present humanities programs; and the role of KCH in promoting humanities. (The questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.)

Like other sources of information, this report should supplement, not substitute for, the judgment of the KCH Board of Directors in their long range planning. One pattern that appeared across a number of the questions was a general satisfaction with humanities programs. Rather than a source of new ideas and suggestions, Kansas humanists look to KCH for innovation and leadership.

Care was taken in the survey to represent the diversity within the Kansas humanities communities. The sample was drawn from KCH's updated mailing list. This list includes humanists working in colleges, universities, libraries, and historical associations and others who have participated in KCH programs in the past. In the analysis, differences among these different groups were examined and are discussed when found. Table 1 compares the proportion of different groups in the sample and the population. As shown in the table, the sample closely corresponds

to the population on this dimension. The "other" category refers to individuals and groups, such as medical groups, chambers of commerce, and congressmen, that were small in number and did not fit in larger categories.

TABLE 1
Comparison of the Sample and Population

Institutional Type	Percent in Sample	Percent in Population
Universities	18.0%	25.7%
Two and four colleges	26.6	21.6
Libraries	14.3	12.2
Historical associations	14.3	8.8
Arts organizations	7.0	5.4
Other	19.8	26.3
(number)	100% (384)	100% (3506)

Kansas humanists were contacted using a mail questionnaire. Respondents were randomly sampled from KCH's revised mailing list and were contacted as many as four times to insure an adequate sample. Three hundred and eighty-four humanists returned usable questionnaires, although the valid sample for individual questions can be smaller due to incomplete responses.

The sampling error is less than 5 percent at the 95 percent level of confidence. In other words, if we repeated the study 100 times, we would expect the true (although unmeasurable)

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proportion of the responses to be no more than 5 percent different from the sample responses in 95 of the surveys. For individual questions with valid responses of approximately 300, the sampling error is 5.5 percent. As with all surveys, there are other sources of measurement error, but these were theoretically minimized by following standard scientific practice.

The analysis takes three forms. The answers to close-ended questions are examined based on the percentage of responses falling into each category. In addition, these questions were crosstabulated by the different types of institutions represented by the different responses. When meaningful differences exist between, for example, university professors and librarians, they are also discussed. The answers to open-ended questions were reviewed for general patterns of responses. These are discussed in conjunction with the numerical data.

Findings

General Attitudes About Humanities Programs

Kansas humanists were asked several questions about the emphasis given to humanities programming by their organization. Although only a small proportion (8 percent) considered humanities programming their top priority, 30 percent said humanities had a high priority and an additional 32 percent suggested that they have some priority. Thirteen percent said humanities were given no priority in their organization, and 18 percent indicated they have a low priority.

As would be expected of these respondents, 65 percent stressed that public humanities programs are very important, with

31 percent indicating they are somewhat important (Q7). In addition, the respondents generally felt that their organizations should put greater emphasis on humanities programs. Fifty-two percent think that their organizations should increase the priority of humanities programs, whereas 48 percent think it is about right. Only two respondents felt that the stress was too great.

Audience characteristics. Three questions were asked about the audience for humanities programming: "At what audience does your organization aim most of its public humanities programming?"; "At what audience has your most recent work or program been aimed?"; and "At what audience do you feel your organization should aim its humanities programs?" The first group is referred to as the "target audience," the second the "most recent audience," and the third the "preferred audience." Respondents could identify as many types of audiences as they serve and the percent of respondents mentioning each type is displayed in Table 2.

The findings for the three types of audience are consistent. The general public and students are the most common audience. Nearly 90 percent of the respondents listed the general public among the target and preferred audience. Students are the second most common audience with 56 percent mentioned as target audience and 59 percent as preferred audience. The remaining types of audience are much less frequently listed with the elderly the third most common target audience mentioned by only 34 percent of the respondents. Specialized groups, such as minorities, public officials, or professional groups, receive little attention.

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TABLE 2
Humanities Audience

	Percent Mentioned[a]		
	Target[b] Audience	Most Recent[c] Audience	Preferred[d] Audience
General adult public	86.7% (345)	55.4% (354)	87.7% (350)
Young people	33.3 (345)	11.3 (354)	52.3 (350)
Students	56.2 (345)	28.2 (354)	58.9 (350)
Minority or ethnic groups	18.8 (345)	8.5 (354)	29.1 (350)
Educators	27.8 (345)	13.8 (354)	38.6 (350)
Public officials	10.7 (345)	3.1 (354)	18.9 (350)
Elderly	34.8 (345)	12.1 (354)	43.1 (350)
Professional or occupational groups	15.7 (345)	7.6 (354)	43.1 (350)

[a] Percents do not add to 100 percent; respondents were free to mention more than one category.

[b] Q12 At what audience does your organization aim most of its public humanities programming?

[c] Q13 At what audience has your most recent work or program been aimed?

[d] Q14 At what audience do you feel your organization should aim its humanities programs?

These findings indicate that Kansas humanists focus their attention on general audiences of adults and students with little attention to specialized groups. Moreover the responses to the questions about target, most recent, and preferred audiences are very similar, suggesting that Kansas humanists see little need to change the focus of their programming. Supporting this finding, even though only 19 percent identified minorities as a target audience and 8 percent as a recent audience, over 75 percent of the respondents concluded that minority groups were adequately served (Q15).

There were also few difference in target, recent, and preferred audience between the different types of institutions. Universities offered more programs for minorities, educators, and professionals whereas colleges placed a greater stress on students and the elderly.

Modes of communication. Exhibits, publications, and public discussions are the dominant modes of communicating with humanities audiences. Television was mentioned by only 10 percent of the respondents as the way they approach their audience. Television was, however, the most frequently mentioned media that could be better utilized. These results are shown in Table 3. When asked general questions about ways to expand the humanities audience (Q18 and Q19), respondents stressed more publicity.

TABLE 3
Methods for Reaching Audience[a]

	Percent Mentioned[b] (number answering question)
Public discussions	42.9% (345)
Exhibits	45.2 (345)
Television	10.4 (345)
Radio	17.1 (345)
Distribution of audio-visual materials	13.3 (345)
Publications	44.6 (345)

[a] Q16 How does your organization most often reach its intended audience? In the form of:

[b] Percents do not add up to 100 percent; respondents were free to mention more than one category.

Subject matter. Kansas humanists were also asked several questions about the subject matter of their programs. Greatest attention is given to local and state history and culture. Sixty-four percent reported that this topic receives the greatest amount of attention (Q24) and 53 percent find that it creates the greatest interest (Q26). General humanities programs are the second most common and popular subjects, but they were mentioned by less than 20 percent of the respondents. Public policy and literary topics were the third and fourth mentioned, with international topics the least common. These results are

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summarized in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Most Common Subjects for Humanities Program[a]

	Percent Mentioned[b]	(number)
Local or state history or culture	63.6%	(297)
Local or state public policy issues	11.8	(297)
National or international public policy	5.7	(297)
Literary topics	11.8	(297)
International humanities topics	1.7	(297)
General humanities topics	17.5	(297)

[a] Q24 What subject do you feel receives the greatest amount of
attention in humanities programs in Kansas?

[b] Percents do not add up to 100 percent; respondents were free to
mention more than one category.

When asked which topic areas received inadequate attention
(Q25), respondents did indicate the need for more international
humanities and national or international public policy issues
(see Table 5). Local or state public policy issues, which
receive little actual attention, were not identified as a topic
in need of greater stress.

TABLE 5
Topics Receiving Inadequate Attention [a]

	Percent Mentioned[b]	(number)
Local or state history or culture	18.3%	(262)
Local or state public policy issues	6.5	(262)
National or international public policy	18.3	(262)
Literary topics	20.6	(262)
International humanities topics	30.2	(262)
General humanities topics	20.2	(262)

[a] Q25 What subjects do you feel receive inadequate attention in humanities programs in Kansas?

[b] Percents do not add up to 100 percent; respondents were free to mention more than one category.

As shown in Table 6, the different types of institutions offer very different types of programs. Only colleges and universities provide public policy programs, and universities alone emphasize international policy and humanities programs. As would be expected, colleges and historical associations focus much attention on historical topics.

TABLE 6
Programs Focus for Different Institutions[a]

	Percent Mentioned				
	University	2 and 4 Year Colleges	Library	Historical	Arts
Local or state history and culture[a]	56.6%	61.2%	56.4%	61.7%	61.9%
Local or state public policy	17.1	12.9	2.6	8.5	0.0
National or international public policy	11.8	0.0	7.7	2.1	4.8
Literary topics	5.3	9.4	25.6	4.3	9.5
International humanities	0.0	1.2	2.6	0.0	0.0
General humanities	9.2	15.3	5.1	23.4	23.8
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(number)[b]	(76)	(85)	(39)	(47)	(21)

[a] Q24 What subject do you feel receives the greatest amount of attention in humanities programs in Kansas?

[b] Total number of types of programs mentioned by all the respondents from each type of institution.

Funding. The survey found that Kansas humanists are highly dependent on KCH for funding. When asked (Q8) "Where has your organization looked for support for humanities programs?", KCH was the most frequently mentioned. Forty percent of respondents work in institutions that have approached KCH for financial support. The next most common funding sources are individuals, foundations, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and local businesses. These results are summarized in Table 7. Respondents

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were also asked an open-ended question about funding (Q2). The unguided answers to this question are similar to those presented in Table 7, except that membership dues were frequently mentioned as a source of revenue.

TABLE 7
Funding Sources[a]

	Percent Mentioned[b]	(number)
Have not tried	23.4%	(363)
KCH	40.2	(363)
Foundations	27.5	(363)
Corporations	15.7	(363)
NEH	28.7	(363)
Other organizations	19.3	(363)
Local businesses	27.8	(363)
Individuals	32.5	(363)

[a] Q8 Where has your organization looked for support for humanities programs?

[b] Percents do not add up to 100 percent; respondents were free to mention more than one category.

Most groups, however, have not been successful in receiving grants. Fifty-three percent have not received a grant, 15 percent received only one, and 31 percent received more than one. There are great differences between the types of institutions in the success in receiving grants. As shown in Table 8, among university respondents 58 percent indicated that their institution received more than one grant. This contrasts sharply

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with libraries and historical associations. Sixty percent of the respondents from libraries and historical associations said their organization did not receive any humanities grants.

TABLE 8
Crosstabulation of Grant Recipients by Institution Type

Q5 "Has your organization ever received a grant from KCH?	Institution Type					
	University	2 to 4 Year Colleges	Library	Historical Associ- ations	Arts Organi- zations	Other
Yes, more than once	58.3%	39.2%	14.9%	25.9%	26.3%	16.9%
Yes, once	15.0	16.2	12.8	13.0	21.1	15.3
No	26.7	44.6	72.3	61.1	52.6	67.8
Total (number)	100.0% (60)	100.0% (74)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (19)	100.0% (59)

Chi-square = 39.62; D.F. = 10; p < 0.001

As reported in Table 9, most respondents preferred smaller to larger grants. Nearly 80 percent preferred grants of less than $8,000, with only 2 percent preferring those over $25,000.

TABLE 9
Preference for Grant Size

Q11 "Which size grant would you prefer to see emphasized by the KCH?"[a]	Percent
Less than $ 2,500	37.4%
$ 2,600 to $ 8,000	41.6
$ 8,500 to $15,000	12.2
$15,500 to $25,000	6.6
Greater than $25,000	2.1
Total	100.0%
(number)	(286)

[a] Twenty-five percent of the respondents did not respond to this question suggesting that many are indifferent to the issue.

Evaluation of KCH

One of the surprising findings of the survey was the large number of respondents who had not participated in humanities programs. The sample was drawn from those known to KCH as individuals with past or present involvement in humanities. Thirty-six percent indicated that they had not participated. The most common form of participation is as a member of an audience, 42 percent indicated that form of participation. Twenty-five percent indicated that they had planned a program and 19 percent served as a consultant. These findings are reported on Table 10.

TABLE 10
Forms of Participation

Q33 "In what ways have you participated in programs of the Kansas Committee for the Humanities?"	Percent[a]	(number)
None, that I know of	35.9%	(337)
Audience member	41.5	(337)
Planner	24.9	(337)
Project director	16.0	(337)
Consultant	19.0	(337)
Reviewer or evaluator	10.1	(337)
Present or former KCH member	2.7	(337)

[a] Percents do not add to 100%; respondents were free to mention more than one category.

TABLE 11
Reasons for Lack of Involvement

Q28 "If you have not participated in KCH programming, why not?"	Percent[a]	(number)
Time required in application	25.1%	(235)
Lack of adequate reward	7.2	(235)
Lack of institutional benefit	6.8	(236)
Insufficient staff	29.7	(236)
Matching funds not available	16.5	(236)
Not aware of program	35.2	(236)
Other interests	16.5	(236)

[a] Percents do not add to 100%; respondents were free to mention more than one category.

Respondents gave various reasons for not getting involved in KCH programs. When asked why they had not gotten involved (Q28), 35 percent said they were not aware of the programs, 30 percent said they did not have adequate staff, and 25 percent felt that the time required to apply was prohibitive. These results are reported in Table 11. In general there were no differences in reasons for noninvolvement between the different types of institutions other than that those working in colleges stressed the application time.

Program quality. In general, the respondents were positive about KCH programs, but, as summarized in Table 12, they had several suggestions for improved services (Q 12). Forty-one percent suggest that KCH offer different types of grant and 34 percent suggest a different mix of grants. One-third would like more help in identifying content areas for programs, with 30 percent suggesting improvements in prepared programs. As shown in the table, numerous other suggestions received modest support.

TABLE 12
Ways to Improve KCH

Q20 "In what way could KCH improve its services to humanities organizations?"[a]	Percent[b]	(number)
Enlarge resource center	13.7%	(291)
Different mixture of grants	34.4	(291)
Different funding cycles	10.7	(291)
Different types of grants	40.9	(291)
Improved materials	5.8	(291)
More technical support	16.8	(291)
Identification of content areas	32.3	(291)
Prepared programs	29.9	(291)
Different application process	18.6	(291)
Scholar identification	20.3	(291)

[a] Twenty-four percent of the respondents did not respond to this question indicating a sizable group that had no suggestions for improvement.

[b] Percents do not add to 100%; respondents were free to mention more than one category.

When asked for suggestions KCH could follow to improve public understanding of humanities (Q21), respondents offered a few additional ideas. Several encouraged KCH to be more aggressive in advocating certain programs. Others advised more visibility in local associations with more frequent correspondence and visits. One respondent thought a shift from brief-duration formats, such as seminars, to long-duration projects, such as exhibits, would increase visibility. The

general response to this question was, however, supportive of the current KCH programs and procedures.

Questionnaire and Frequencies

Q1 In your opinion, what is the most important humanities related activity pursued by your organization or institution?

Q2 What is the primary source of funding for the humanities activities of your organization ?

Q3 How high a priority does your organization place on its humanities programming for the general public or some segment of it? Public humanities programming is:

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    1  our top priority...        8.2%
    2  a high priority...         29.7
    3  has some priority...       31.9
    4  has a low priority, or     17.6
    5  not priority at all.       12.6
                                  -------
                                  100%
                                  (364)
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Q4 Do you think that your organization should place a different priority on humanities programming? It should be ...

```
    1 Much higher                 16.8%
    2 Somewhat higher             34.9
    3 It is about right           47.8
    4 It is too high               0.3
    5 It is much too high          0.3
                                  -------
                                  100%
                                  (358)
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Q5 Has your organization ever received a grant from KCH?

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    1 Yes, more than once } Skip to Q6    26.7%
    2 Yes, once } Skip to Q6              12.5
    3 No                                  44.3
    4 Don't know.                         16.5
                                         -------
                                         100%
                                         (375)
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Q6 If your organization has not received a grant, why not?

    1 Unsuccessful application   16.5%
    2 No interest in public programming   18.6
    3 No need of funds for public programming   14.9
    4 Other, please specify: 50.0

                                                 100%
                                                (188)

Q7 Do you personally feel that public humanities programming
    is important? By public programs we are referring to those
    outside of formal education. Is it ...

    1 Very important   65.3
    2 Somewhat important   31.1
    3 Not very important   2.2
    4 Not at all important.   1.4

                                100%
                               (360)

Q8 If your organization has tried to raise money for the
    support of humanities, where has it looked?

                                              Percent Mentioned:
        Have not tried   23.4%
        KCH   40.2
        Foundations   27.5
        Corporations   15.7
        The National Endowment for the Humanities 28.7
        Other organizations   19.3
        Local businesses   27.8
        Individuals   32.5
        Other, please specify: 13.3

Q9 What has been the response of these groups to your requests
    for funds?

Q10 To what extent has the challenge to raise money effected
    your decision to participate in grant programs?

Q11 Which size grants would you prefer to see emphasized by
    the KCH?

    1 Less than $2,000.   37.4%
    2 $2,600 to $8,000   41.6
    3 $8,500 to $15,000   12.2
    4 $15,000 to $25,000   6.6
    5 Greater than $25,000   2.1

                              100%
                             (286)

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Now, we would like to ask you several questions about the
audience for humanities programs.

Q12 At what audience does your organization aim most of its
     public humanities programming? You may check (X) as many
     groups as apply.

     86.7% General adult public
     33.3 Young people (non-curricular)
     56.2 Students
     18.8 Minority or ethnic groups
     27.8 Educators
     10.7 Public officials
     34.8 Elderly
     15.7 Professional or occupational groups, Please specify:
      5.2 Other please specify:

Q13 At what audience has your most recent work or program been
     aimed?

     20.6% No recent humanities projects

     55.4   General adult public
     11.3   Young people (non-curricular)
     28.2   Students
      8.5   Minority or ethnic groups
     13.8   Educators
      3.1   Public officials
     12.1   Elderly
      7.6   Professional or occupational groups, Please specify:
      6.2   Other please specify:

Q14 At what audience do you feel your organization should aim
     its humanities programs? You may check (X) as many groups
     as apply.

     87.7% General adult public
     52.3   Young people (non-curricular)
     58.9   Students
     29.1   Minority or ethnic groups
     38.6   Educators
     18.9   Public officials
     43.1   Elderly
     22.0   Professional or occupational groups, Please specify:
      5.5   Other please specify:

Q15 Are minority groups adequately served by KCH sponsored
     humanities programs?

     24.3   Yes
     75.7   No, If "no", how could they be better served?
     ─────
     100%
     (185)

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Q16 How does you organization most often reach its intended
audience? In the form of:

    42.9% Public discussions
    45.2   Exhibits
    10.4   Television
    17.1   Radio
    13.3   The distribution of audio-visual materials
    44.6   Publications
    17.2   Other, please specify:

Q17 Which medium do you feel your organization might better
utilize?

    33.4% No change, currently used medium is fine
    18.2   Public discussions
    18.5   Exhibits
    25.5   Television
    17.3   Radio
    15.5   The distribution of audio-visual materials
    19.2   Publications
     3.4   Other, please specify

Q18 Are there ways of expanding the audience for humanities
programs?

The KCH is also interested in your suggestions of ways to improve
their work.

Q19 Are there ways to expand public awareness of KCH
activities?

Q21 In what ways could KCH improve its services to humanities
organizations? Check (X) as many answers as apply.

    13.7% Enlarge resource center
    34.4   Different mixture of grants
    10.7   Different funding cycles
    40.9   Different types of grants
     5.8   Improved materials [?]
    16.8   More technical support services
    32.3   Identification of content areas for programming emphasis
    29.9   Prepared programs
    18.6   Different grant application processes
    20.3   Scholar identification

Q21 Are there ways KCH could assist your organization to
increase public understanding and appreciation of the
humanities?

Q22 What has been the <u>most</u> successful humanities program that you have observed? Evaluate the program's content and benefits.

Q23 What has been the <u>least</u> successful humanities program that you have observed? Evaluate the program's content and problems.

Q24 What subject do you feel receives the <u>greatest amount</u> of attention in humanities programs in Kansas?

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63.6%   Local or state history
11.8    Local or state public policy issues
 5.7    National or international public policy issues
11.8    Literary topics
 1.7    International humanities topics
17.5    General humanities topics
 3.7    Other please specify:
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Q26 What subject do you feel receives <u>inadequate</u> attention in Kansas?

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18.3%   Local or state history
 6.5    Local or state public policy issues
18.3    National or international public policy issues
20.6    Literary topics
30.2    International humanities topics
20.2    General humanities topics
 6.1    Other please specify:
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Q26 Which subject creates the greatest interest to the audience served by your organization?

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53.1%   Local or state history
11.9    Local or state public policy issues
 9.9    National or international public policy issues
15.8    Literary topics
 8.3    International humanities topics
20.1    General humanities topics
 4.6    Other please specify:
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Q27 If you have participated in KCH programming, why did you become involved?

Q28 If you have not participated in KCH programming, why not?

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25.1%   Time required in application
 7.2    Lack of adequate reward
 6.8    Lack of institutional benefit
29.7    Insufficient staff
16.5    Matching funds not available
35.2    Not aware of programs
16.5    Other interests
```

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Q29 If you have received a grant from KCH, do you feel that the application and reporting process took ...

      3.4%   little time
     53.8   an average amount of time
     42.9   a great deal of time?

     100%
     (119)

Q30 From your experience, what are the advantages of involvement with KCH?

Q31 What could KCH do to better serve those in the humanities community?

To conclude, we would like some information about you.

Q32 What is your primary humanities-related activity or interest?

     45.2%   Teaching
     21.9   Research
     10.4   Curatorial
     23.3   Public programming
      4.3   Management of published or audio-visual resources
     24.5   Administrator
     13.8   Volunteer
      6.1   Other, please specify

Q33 In what ways have you participated in programs of the Kansas Committee for the Humanities?

     35.9%   None, that I know of }Go to Q35
     41.5   Audience member
     24.9   Planner
     16.0   Project director
     19.0   Consultant
     10.1   Reviewer or evaluator
      2.7   Present or former KCH member

Q34 If you have not participated in any KCH-funded programs, why not?

Q35 What is your highest earned educational degree?

Q36 In what field did you receive that degree?

Q37 What is your current position? If your job title is not self-explanatory, please describe your work.

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