

History of Science Society Strategic Plan - 2014

Introduction

Strategic planning is an essential part of keeping an organization healthy. It typically involves reviewing the organization's mission; agreeing on a vision; identifying and coping with changing circumstances; providing a framework of deliberate priorities to guide day-to-day decision-making and allocation of human and financial resources; evaluating performance and organizational effectiveness; and making a sound case for philanthropic support. Early in 2013, the History of Science Society Executive Committee made a commitment to launch a structured strategic planning initiative to take on these tasks, in a manner that would include as many members of the HSS as possible. We knew we lacked the expertise to undertake this process on our own, so we sought out a consultant. After interviewing several candidates, the EC hired Andrew Searle to lead us in our planning.

The 2013 annual meeting in Boston, where we celebrated the 100th anniversary of *Isis*, marked the first formal meeting for strategic planning. Council members and attendees at our business meeting, along with various committee members, were invited to discuss our mission statement. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), comprising 14 members of the HSS, met for the first time as Mr. Searle outlined how the process would unfold. The HSS was most fortunate that HSS President, Lynn Nyhart, agreed to serve on the Leadership Team during the planning (although her term as president would conclude in a matter of weeks), along with incoming President, Angela Creager, and HSS Executive Director Jay Malone. Much behind-the-scenes activity led to a planning retreat in Chicago, where 40 members of the HSS, from around the world, gathered to debate and discuss whom the HSS serves and, essentially, our *raison d'être*. The retreat members identified 6 goals that they considered paramount (see below). The SPC then identified two "goal tenders" (goal leaders) for each goal and these goal tenders assembled their teams to help them establish the objectives, action steps, responsibility, and evaluative procedures for each goal. These goal teams met (virtually) over the next several months and each team created a draft that was then examined by the SPC.

The planning process helped HSS's officers and volunteers to think deeply about whom we serve and what our priorities should be, leading us to identify the areas on which we should devote our efforts. Although HSS serves as the de facto US national society for history of science scholars, the Society is also an international organization and this international scope was confirmed during our planning. This dual nature is intrinsic to our activities overall; it explains why some Objectives in the serve mainly US interests and others serve international interests. Most serve both. *Respectfully submitted by the strategic planning Leadership Team: Angela Creager, Lynn Nyhart, Jay Malone*

Acronyms:

BSHS British Society for the History of Science
CSHPS Canadian Soc for the Hy and Phil of Science
CoE Committee on Education
CoF Committee on Finance
CoMP Committee on Meetings and Programs
CoP Committee on Publications
CoRP Committee on Research and the Profession
CoSSA Consortium of Social Science Associations
EC Executive Committee
EO Executive Office
ESHS European Society for the History of Science

FTE Full Time Equivalent
GECC Graduate and Early Career Caucus
IUHPS International Union of the History and Philosophy of Science
JCSEPHS Joint Caucus for Socially Engaged Philosophers and Historians of Science
JPASS Journal access through JSTOR
NEH National Endowment for the Humanities
NHA National Humanities Alliance
NSF National Science Foundation
PACHS Philadelphia Area Center for the History of Science
SPC Strategic Planning Committee

History of Science Society Strategic Plan, October 2014

MISSION STATEMENT: “To foster interest in the history of science, promote discussion of science’s social and cultural relations, and bring this understanding to others worldwide.”

Goal 1—MEETINGS/NETWORKING: Create vibrant regular HSS meetings and facilitate networking through other associations and venues

Objective 1.1: Host conferences that generate excitement.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Improve experience of meeting for attendees by, for example, limiting number of concurrent sessions.	CoMP, Program Co-Chairs, and EO
B. Enhance intellectual variety in program sessions in terms of different kinds of session and event formats and diversity of topics and panel participants; and enable emerging scholars from within and beyond North America to attend. Synergistic with Step 1.2.B.	Program Co-Chairs, EO, Caucuses, and Special Interest groups

Objective 1.2: Facilitate networking both within and outside the HSS annual meetings.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Feature events that connect scholars around vibrant themes and issues and that promote public engagement on the part of our members. Also contributes to Objective 4.3.	Program Co-Chairs, EO, Interest Groups, and Caucuses, esp. JCSEPHS

B. Foster intergenerational and interdisciplinary networking, especially through supporting our formal and informal mentoring opportunities. Also contributes to Goal 3.

GECC, HSS at Work, Women's Caucus, EO

Goal 2—PUBLICATIONS/STANDARDS: Foster a publishing environment that promotes top-quality history of science scholarship in diverse media for diverse audiences.

Objective 2.1: Maintain the outstanding quality of our print publications, while making HSS more welcoming of innovative research methods and modes of publication, from informal blogging to major online research projects.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Provide members with an HSS-authorized statement about the value of digital work and publication, with some guidelines for defining and evaluating it.	CoP with whatever expert advice is needed
B. Find ways to recognize and make visible outstanding digital products in our field, by publicizing examples, encouraging nominations for Hazen prize where appropriate, and considering the establishment of a new Society prize recognizing excellence in this area. See Step 3.2.B.	EC, CoP, CoE, CoHP
C. Ensure that activities of the CoP include attention to digital humanities and digital publication.	EC, CoP

Objective 2.2: Analyze digital media opportunities as they relate to our publications and mission.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Increase access and usability of the HSS bibliography through development of a new <i>Isis</i> research platform.	Society Bibliographer with Sloan Foundation support, CoP
B. Conduct an assessment of the potential benefits and costs of encouraging and publishing digital products beyond the bibliography. This can be profitably coordinated with our bid for publishers. Also contributes to Objective 4.3.	CoP, EC, and EO, with input from Society Bibliographer and Editor

Objective 2.3: Provide opportunities for learning technical skills needed for digital scholarship.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Promote digital workshops (e.g., THAT camps) at HSS annual meetings.	CoP, CoMP, EO
B. Collect syllabi that integrate digital methods.	CoE

Goal 3—PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Support professional development of emerging history of science scholars in and outside the academy.

Objective 3.1: SKILLS: Encourage historians of science to develop skills to succeed in a range of professions outside and inside the academy (tenure track and non-tenure track).

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Conduct regular workshops for graduate students on professional development, funding opportunities, and academic applications.	GECC, HSS at Work, JCSEPHS, Annual Meeting Program Chairs.
B. Conduct skill-building workshops for new and established historians of science at HSS meeting to develop competencies inside and beyond academe. Synergistic with Step 4.3.B.	CoE, JCSEPHS
C. Work with career development experts to develop a "Best Practices Guide" for departments on advising graduate students on broad career options.	GECC, HSS at Work, EO

Objective 3.2: CULTURE: Foster a culture within the HSS that values, supports, and promotes all career paths for historians of science.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Seek improved mechanisms to increase inclusion of outside-academy historians in HSS annual meeting program.	CoMP, Annual Meeting Program Chairs
B. Sponsor, support, include on committees, and promote non-academic historians of science and their products across HSS events and publications. Synergistic with Objective 2.1.	Hazen Prize Committee, HSS at Work, EO, Nominating Committee, Isis editorial office
C. Expand list of PhDs in History of Science (from ProQuest Dissertations) and search for their current employment, to generate list of people potentially served by HSS membership, inside and outside the academy. Synergistic with Steps 3.4.A and 6.1.B.	EO, paid undergraduate assistant

Objective 3.3: SUPPORT. Provide non-monetary resources and support for historians of science inside and outside the academy so they can continue to flourish as scholars.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Survey historians of science outside academia to assess their satisfaction with HSS and determine their unique needs. Contingent on Step 6.1.B.	EO, HSS at Work and/or CoRP, contract graduate student
B. Promote JPASS and HSTM database as benefits especially helpful to scholars outside academia.	EO, HSS at Work
C. Work with PACHS and other relevant consortia to provide access to workshops, colloquia, and working groups conducted remotely that require membership login.	EO
D. Enhance visibility of non-academic job/fellowship opportunities on HSS website.	EO, HSS at Work

Objective 3.4: NETWORKING. Develop strategies for building our “alumni” network of historians of science (especially those who work in non-academic settings) to facilitate career exploration, broaden the profession's relevance to a wider audience, and give them a continued stake in the profession.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Establish a database for member networking. Synergistic with Steps 3.2.D and 6.1.B.	EO, professional consultant

Goal 4—BROADENING OUR REACH: Promote general interest in history of science among educators at all levels and the public, in part by providing opportunities to scholars to expand their audiences and make their work more effective and relevant.

Objective 4.1: Reconfigure the Governance/Employee Structures of the HSS to include accountability for ‘broadening our reach.’

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Increase engagement efforts among EO staff, making a new hire and redistributing tasks within the office.	EO, EC, and CoF
B. Rename Committee on Education "Committee on Education and Engagement" (or something along these lines) to reflect broader commitment.	EC to bring to Council

Objective 4.2: Support the enhanced integration of the history of science into grades 7-12 and community college classrooms.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Complete an “environmental scan,” identifying existing materials (broadly construed), individuals, and organizations that integrate history of science into education, and write up these results in a formal report. Contingent on funding.	EO, (new FTE,) student assistant
B. Explore partnerships with organizations and individuals who have existing expertise in developing science and history curricula, and work to incorporate further the history of science into their work. Contingent on Step 4.2.A.	EO (new FTE)
C. Encourage participation at state, regional, and national science teacher conferences by HSS members and staff.	CoE
D. Sponsor HSS-branded workshops (at HSS Annual Meeting or locally) that bring together historians of science and educators to develop and refine educational materials to use in classrooms.	CoE, supported by EO
E. Consider developing a specific project, e.g., lobbying for a National History Day topic of Science and Technology and then developing connections around it.	CoE, supported by EO

Objective 4.3: Develop new tools and opportunities for members to connect to broader audiences.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Create a companion publication to each issue of <i>Isis</i> that briefly presents its content, written for a broader public (including media, with press releases).	<i>Isis</i> office, EO Director of Media and Engagement
B. Develop and promote more regular means for making media connections with journalists. Synergistic with Steps 3.1.B and 4.4, 5.1.	JCSEPHS, EO
C. Incentivize reach-broadening by encouraging nominations to the Hazen Prize. See also Step 2.1.B.	EO, CoE

Objective 4.4: Devise strategies for making work done by historians of science more available and accessible.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Explore and assess new means of distributing HoS content. Synergistic with Steps 2.2.A, 5.1.A, B.	CoE, CoP, EO

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| B. Host online forums and annual meeting events to expand coordinated social media use. | CoE, JCSEPHS |
| C. Sponsor annual meeting “engagement workshops” that focus on professional development of relevant skills.
Connects with Steps 3.1.B and 4.3.B and Objective 5.1. | CoE, JCSEPHS |

Goal 5—ADVOCACY: Promote history of science in the United States by advocating on behalf of the field and its practitioners to the public, to government officials, to universities, and to potential employers of historians of science; and support advocacy of history of science in other countries.

Objective 5.1: Promote greater public recognition of History of Science

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Expand EO commitment to media and engagement. See Step 4.1.A.	EO, CoF
B. Develop an online resources task force to elevate the profile of the history of science and keep entries up to date with latest scholarship. See Objective 4.4.	CoE, JCSEPHS

Objective 5.2: Engage policy makers with history of science.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Continue to collaborate with CoSSA and NHA in advocating for our discipline in the US (e.g. NSF and NEH).	EO, Washington rep
B. Continue to collaborate with the IUHPS as well as scientific societies and learned societies, in advocating for our discipline worldwide.	EC, EO
C. Develop a set of principles and policies on advocacy and lobbying.	EC, ad-hoc governance committee

Objective 5.3: Promote enhanced employment opportunities for historians of science both within and outside of academia, especially in governmental positions.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Establish a closer working relationship with Society for History in the Federal Government.	EO, ad-hoc committee, to cooperate with Society for History in the Federal Government

Goal 6—MEMBERSHIP/GOVERNANCE: Produce a sustainable governance and financial system for HSS that will promote a welcoming, culturally and internationally diverse and interdisciplinary organizational culture.

Objective 6.1: Know our members.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Revise Society organization to put in place a committee on membership. This may be a reworked Committee on Research and the Profession.	EC in conjunction with EO
B. Use this committee to establish a baseline analysis of our membership demography, and to analyze and monitor our current membership, and develop goals for diversification of membership. (Contingent on Step 6.1.A; synergistic with Steps 3.4.A and 3.2.D.)	(New) Committee on Membership, EO

Objective 6.2: Increase financial attractiveness of membership to diverse constituents.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Survey membership about whether an income-based dues structure would be preferable; also Step 6.5.B.	CoF and EO
B. Offer new PhDs one year's complimentary membership.	EO in conjunction with UC Press
C. Communicate benefits of HSS membership to faculty at community colleges.	Committee on Membership and EO
D. Rebrand or reinvigorate Sponsor-a-Scholar Program to boost international membership from countries where cost of living or currency makes HSS dues unaffordable.	Committee on Membership and EO
E. Expand joint membership to national and continental (e.g., ESHS) societies beyond BSHS and CSHPS.	Committee on Membership, CoF, and EO

Objective 6.3: Increase international participation during the next five years.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Prioritize increasing the proportion of Council nominees working/living outside US/Canada.	Nominating Committee
B. Invite more HSS members working/living outside US/Canada to serve on committees, to make them more geographically representative of membership.	EC and/or Nominating Committee
C. Identify technological means (and associated costs) that would allow remote participation of HSS Council and committee members in work of Society, should this enable a more geographically diverse participation of members in organization.	EO and EC

Objective 6.4: Create a more open, transparent, and participatory governance structure aligned with HSS's strategic goals.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Appoint an ad-hoc by-laws committee to alter governance in accord with Strategic Plan and Society mission with an eye towards (a) simplifying appointments/elections, term lengths, and their relationship to Council if deemed desirable; and (b) incorporating new committees or renaming and reconfiguring existing committees into by-laws.	SPC, EC, and EO with feedback from existing committees
B. Differentiate areas where volunteer coordination could be undertaken by committees or caucuses and those where EO leadership is required, with aim towards finding a place for managing volunteers in organizational structure.	Ad-hoc by-laws committee (see A) in consultation with existing committee and EO
C. Use HSS website to make governance more transparent.	EO, EC, and Secretary

Objective 6.5: Assess and analyze revenues and expenditures with an eye toward a longer-term financial plan.

<i>Step</i>	<i>Who's responsible</i>
A. Gather information from other medium-sized societies on how they balance sources of revenue, with an eye towards rethinking our long-term plans.	CoF in conjunction with EO
B. Survey membership about whether an income-based dues structure would be preferable; also 6.2.A.	CoF and EO
C. If Step 6.5.B generates sufficient interest, hire consultant to help with reworking dues structure and negotiate plan with press.	CoF and EO