

**INSTITUTE FOR HERITAGE EDUCATION
STRATEGIC PLAN, 2024-2026
JANUARY 2024**

VISION

We see cultural heritage education as a path to understanding and respect, ultimately contributing to healthy, vibrant communities and a more peaceful world.

MISSION

Our mission is to provide and support education that helps people understand and appreciate their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others.

PURPOSES

1. We support established and new cultural heritage education programs and projects, providing funding, curriculum development, professional development, consultation, and continuity of leadership as needed to help make these efforts sustainable and optimally effective.
2. We provide materials and professional development opportunities for cultural heritage educators, including classroom teachers, museum educators, cultural resource interpretation specialists, and youth group leaders.
3. We contribute to the professionalization of cultural heritage education.

CORE UNDERSTANDINGS

The following core understandings inform and direct our work.

1. By discovering our shared heritage, we can create stronger and more resilient communities and preserve the most valuable aspects of our shared history.
2. Recognition of our shared humanity fosters attitudes of respect, fairness, and unity.
3. By protecting cultural heritage, we honor the history and culture of living descendants.
4. Cooperation and collaboration are vital elements of successful programs of all kinds.

ORGANIZATION

IHE was incorporated under the laws of the State of Montana effective September 17, 2014. We amended our Articles of Incorporation on May 6, 2019, and received approval of tax exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (3), effective October 24, 2019.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Quality Education and Reduced Inequality

CAPABILITIES FOR SUCCESS

- * Our Board of Directors: We have a small but highly accomplished Board with core competencies in cultural heritage education, archaeology, and nonprofit organization management. The current board has more than 100 years of experience relevant to the organization's work.
- * Partners: We have excellent partners in the Project Archaeology administrative office at Southern Utah University; the Project Archaeology (PA) Leadership Team; and Project Archaeology state and regional programs. We work closely with partners to support and expand the national network of trained Project Archaeology instructors and descendant community educators.
- * Educator network: We are able to call on a national network of highly qualified heritage educators to create curricula and lead professional development for educators.
- * Descendant community support: Indigenous and other descendant community educators contribute to every curriculum and every professional development event we organize.

STRATEGIC PLAN ELEMENTS**1. Develop IHE's capabilities and organizational effectiveness.**

- * Develop the Board of Directors consistent with the growth of the organization. Outline desirable skills, experience, and other traits, identify potential new members, plan for Board transition, and recruit new members as we develop the organization.
- * Determine base funding levels for out-years, consistent with program plans in 2-4 below, and identify potential funders. Approve a comprehensive budget, funding, and program initiative strategy for each year.
 - * Establish mechanisms to bring in unrestricted funding.
 - * Build a staff with relevant skills and experience.
 - * Review bylaws, policies, and policy needs annually and create/revise as needed.
 - * Update and improve the web site as appropriate. Continue to provide news/insights and other elements that foster understanding of the organization and of cultural heritage generally, and that expands IHE's audience.
 - * Build effectiveness of public communication via social media, publications, presentations, an email list, and donor contact methods.

2. Support and implement the heritage education program Project Archaeology.

- * Fund, organize, and carry out teacher workshops and institutes under at least three federal cooperative agreements a year.
- * Expand the reach of Project Archaeology to underserved states, regions, and populations, e.g., the Southeast and Midwest states, urban populations in the West, rural areas generally, and communities with underserved populations.

- * Provide new, geographically relevant curricula to serve areas and populations not represented in existing Project Archaeology curricula, e.g., precontact shelter and rock art investigations in underserved geographic areas and historic site investigations relevant to underserved audiences.

- * Establish non-federal funding streams to support Project Archaeology work.

- * Work with existing and new partners to plan, fund, and carry out new projects as opportunities arise.

- * Offer introductory presentations on Project Archaeology to important audiences, e.g., federal archaeologists and professional groups of teachers, museum educators, and others.

3. Continue and expand the existing grant program to support a broad range of heritage programs and educators.

- * Canvass grantees for fresh ideas about how to structure the program.

- * Provide funding for more and larger professional development grants.

- * Develop RFP distribution methods to reach a broad audience of heritage programs and educators.

- * Assist grantees with marketing their events as needed.

- * Assist in developing new heritage education materials, projects, and programs for funding as opportunities arise.

4. Contribute to the professionalization of cultural heritage education.

- * Establish a scholarship program for existing heritage educators and promising students entering the field.

- * Assist with developing and distributing best practices for heritage educators.

- * Assist with designing and conducting heritage education research projects; assist with publication of results in appropriate peer-reviewed journals and books.

- * Publish annually in at least one peer reviewed journal, anthology, or similar vehicle on pertinent themes in cultural heritage education.

- * Attend relevant career or training programs representing IHE and promote the option of cultural heritage education as a specialization.