

Timeline of U.S. Federal Cultural Policy Milestones

1787 to 2006



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1780's	1787– Adoption of the Constitution of the United States of America
1790's	<p>Access & Equity 1790– Copyright Act of 1790 (major revisions in 1831, 1870, 1909, 1976, 1998/Bono Copyright Act)</p> <p>Communities and Citizenship 1795 – First Naturalization Act establishes the “two-step, five-year” general rule 1798 – Alien and Sedition Acts permits deportation, by order of the President, of aliens judged to be dangerous or engaged in treasonous acts</p> <p>Investment 1791– Pierre L’Enfant is commissioned to provide urban designs for the new capitol city of Washington, D.C. 1798 – Establishment of the Marine Corps Band becomes the first federal support of an artistic discipline</p> <p>Law 1791– Bill of Rights, in particular the First and Tenth Amendments</p>
1800's	<p>Investment 1800 – Library of Congress is established 1804 – Lewis and Clark Expedition, first federally funded exploration to collect natural scientific and cultural data 1814 – British forces burn down the Capitol Building which houses the Library of Congress as part of the burning of Washington during the War of 1812. The Library is reestablished the following year when the federal government purchases the personal library of Thomas Jefferson. 1817– First federal visual arts support is given with the commission of four Revolutionary War scenes by John Trumbull for the Capitol Rotunda</p>
1820's	<p>Investment 1821 – Columbian College (now at George Washington University) created by Congressional Charter</p>
1830's	<p>Access & Equity 1831 – Revision of <i>Copyright Act</i>. Copyright protection is extended to 28 years with potential of a 14-year extension</p> <p>Communities & Citizenship 1830 – <i>Indian Removal Act</i> 1839 – Trail of Tears, 16 000 Cherokee Indians are forcibly relocated from 5 eastern states to Oklahoma as the final implementation of the <i>Indian Removal Act</i> of 1830</p>

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1840's	<p>Investment 1846 – Smithsonian Institution established as a trust (At present includes 16 museums, four research centers, the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, a research library system, the Smithsonian magazine, the Smithsonian Institution Press, a Traveling Exhibition Service and the National Zoo.)</p>
1850's	<p>Law 1857 – Dred Scott v. Sanford Case — Supreme Court rules that African-Americans are not citizens of the U.S., forbids congress to legislate against slavery, and nullifies the Missouri Compromise of 1820</p>
1860's	<p>Communities & Citizenship 1861-1865 – Civil War erupts between the North and South over the practice of slavery 1862 – Homestead Act allows settlers to claim and purchase federally owned land 1863 – Emancipation Proclamation whereby President Lincoln declares slavery illegal 1865 – Constitutional Amendment XIII outlaws slavery 1866 – Constitutional Amendment XIV addresses citizenship rights and eligibility for election to national public office</p> <p>Education & the Creative Workforce 1867 – Department of Education Act authorizes the first Office of Education</p> <p>Investment 1862 – Land-Grant Colleges Act/Morrill Act – Federal public lands are donated and sold to create endowments, which ultimately leads to the establishment of 102 state colleges and universities</p>
1870's	<p>Access & Equity 1870 – Revision of <i>Copyright Act</i>. Copyright administration assumed by the Library of Congress 1870 – Constitutional Amendment XV provides voting rights to all citizens regardless of race</p> <p>Preservation 1872 – Yellowstone Park becomes the first National Park</p>
1880's	<p>Communities and Citizenship 1882 – Chinese Exclusion Act prohibits Chinese laborers from emigrating to the U.S. for a period of ten years 1887– Dawes Act (General Allotment Act) allots lands on “reservations” to Native Americans and extends U.S. laws over these lands</p>

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1890's	<p>Communities & Citizenship 1892 – Ellis Island Immigration Processing Center established. Over 71% of U.S. immigrants (12 million) migrated through this Center before its closing in 1954. 1896 – Plessy v. Ferguson — Supreme Court establishes the “separate but equal” verdict on education segregated by race.</p> <p>Education & the Creative Workforce 1890 – Second Morrill Act gives the Office of Education responsibility for the land grant colleges</p>
1900's	<p>Access & Equity 1909 – Copyright Act revision provides protection over all works of authorship and extends terms to 28 years and renewals up to 28 additional years</p> <p>Investment 1906 – Antiquities Act becomes the first law to “establish federal management over cultural and scientific resources”</p>
1910's	<p>Access & Equity 1912 – U.S. ratifies Berlin Convention of 1906 (International Wireless Telegraph Convention) 1912 – Act to Regulate Radio Communication is the first federal legislation pertaining to wireless communications</p> <p>Communities & Citizenship 1917 – Citizens of Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory, are granted U.S. citizenship</p> <p>Education & the Creative Workforce 1917– Smith–Hughes Act provides federal funding for vocational (agricultural) training</p> <p>Investment 1910 – Commission of Fine Arts established 1917 – Revenue Act establishes deduction for individual charity contributions but limits amount to 15% of annual income</p> <p>Preservation 1916 – National Park Service is created</p>
1920's	<p>Access & Equity 1927 – Radio Act creates the Federal Radio Commission as a license agency and radio-wave regulator that preceded the FCC</p> <p>Communities & Citizenship 1920 – Constitutional Amendment XIX awards women the right to vote 1923 – Equal Rights Amendment proposed to legislate equal rights for women (failed in Congress in 1982 and has yet to be ratified)</p>

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1920's	1924 – <i>National Origins Act</i> institutes immigration origin quotas based on the formula of 2% of each U.S. resident ethnic demographic in the year 1890
1930's	<p>Investment</p> <p>1932 – <i>Gift Tax Act Charitable Deduction</i> established through the <i>Revenue Act</i> of 1932</p> <p>1933 – <i>Public Works of Art Project</i> (PWAP) established as part of the New Deal programs</p> <p>1934 – <i>National Archives</i> and the <i>National Historical Publications and Records Commission</i> founded</p> <p>1935 – <i>Federal Art Project</i> established by the <i>New Deal Works Progress Administration (WPA) art projects</i></p> <p>1935 – Corporations are allowed to claim a charitable tax deduction, as part of the New Deal</p> <p>1937 – <i>National Gallery of Art</i> established from the donation of Andrew Mellon's personal art collection</p> <p>Law</p> <p>1934 – <i>Communications Act of 1934</i> establishes the Federal Communications Commission (<i>FCC</i>) to regulate interstate and international communications</p> <p>1935 – U.S. becomes party to the <i>Roerich Pact</i> a Pan-American agreement which protects cultural property in times of war</p> <p>Preservation</p> <p>1935 – <i>Historic Sites Act</i> (amended eight times)</p>
1940's	<p>Education & the Creative Workforce</p> <p>1944 – <i>GI Bill</i> (Servicemen's Readjustment Act) provides educational financial aid for veterans</p> <p>Cultural Exchanges & Public Diplomacy</p> <p>1942 – <i>Voice of America</i> is established as an international broadcasting service</p> <p>1946 – <i>Fulbright Program</i> “the flagship international education program” for international exchange and mutual understanding, is established</p> <p>1948 – <i>U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act (Smith–Mundt Act)</i> prevents the US from disseminating information domestically that has been designed to deliberately influence foreign audiences</p> <p>Investment</p> <p>1945 – Founding member of <i>United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization</i></p>
1950's	<p>Communities & Citizenship</p> <p>1952– <i>Immigration and Nationality Act (McCaren–Walter Act)</i> eliminates racial restrictions but codifies quotas and has been <i>amended</i></p>

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1950's cont.	<p>1957 – Commission on Civil Rights established as an independent fact-finding agency of the Executive branch</p> <p>1957 – <i>Civil Rights Bill</i> passed</p> <p>Cultural Exchange & Public Diplomacy</p> <p>1953 – United States Information Agency (USIA) is established</p> <p>Education & the Creative Workforce</p> <p>1954 – Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka – Supreme Court declares “separate but equal” unconstitutional</p> <p>1958 – National Defense Education Act</p> <p>Investment</p> <p>1950 – National Science Foundation created</p>
1960's	<p>Access</p> <p>1966 – Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) allows citizens to request unclassified information about government activities</p> <p>Citizenship and Immigration</p> <p>1964 – Civil Rights Act protects against discrimination in voting, employment or distribution of public services based on gender, race, religion or national origin</p> <p>1965 – <i>Immigration and Nationality Services Act</i> (Hart–Celler Act) eliminates national-origin quotas</p> <p>Cultural Exchange and Public Diplomacy</p> <p>1961 – <i>Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act</i> (Fulbright–Hays Act) establishes the J Visa to support cultural and educational citizen exchanges</p> <p>1964 – ART in Embassies Program is established</p> <p>1968 – Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars established</p> <p>Education & the Creative Workforce</p> <p>1965 – Higher Education Act (reauthorized in 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1986, 1992, and 1998)</p> <p>1965 – Federal Head Start Program begins to provide public preschool education as part of the War on Poverty Programs</p> <p>1966 – “<i>National Defense Education Project</i> is passed to coordinate the federal role in international education. Later, this project is incorporated as <i>Title VI of the Higher Education Act</i>”</p> <p>1968 – Title VII Bilingual Education Act added as a provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (expired in 2002)</p>

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1960's cont.	<p>Investment</p> <p>1965 – National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act creates the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)</p> <p>1967 – Public Broadcasting Act establishes the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) as a private non-profit corporation and it is the largest single source of funding for public television and radio programming</p> <p>1969 – Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) is created by the CPB</p> <p>Law</p> <p>1966 – US ratifies UNESCO's Florence Agreement (1952) concerning the importation of educational, cultural and scientific materials</p> <p>1967 – U.S. enters into force the 1954 Beirut Agreement to facilitate international circulation of visual and auditory materials of an educational, cultural and scientific nature</p> <p>Preservation</p> <p>1966 – National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) establishes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as an independent federal agency</p> <p>1968 – National Historic Preservation Fund created and administered through the National Park Service</p>
1970's	<p>Access & Equity</p> <p>1972 – Title 9 is enacted as part of the <i>Educational Amendments of 1972</i> to prevent discrimination based on gender</p> <p>1974 – Privacy Act addresses the “collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of personal information by federal executive branch agencies”</p> <p>1974 – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act protects student records and gives parents some access to their children's records</p> <p>1976 – Convention on Political Rights of Women (1954) ratified by the U.S.</p> <p>1978 – American Indian Religious Freedom Act</p> <p>Education & the Creative Workforce</p> <p>1974 – Bilingual Education Act, first legislation to address the needs of minority language (non-English) speaking students</p> <p>1974 – Women's Educational Equity Act</p> <p>1975 – Education for All Handicapped Children Act</p> <p>1979 – Department of Education is established</p>

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1970's cont.	<p>Investment</p> <p>1970 – Corporation for Public Broadcasting creates National Public Radio (NPR)</p> <p>1971 – John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts opens its doors in Washington, D.C.</p> <p>1971– NEH initiates State Humanities Program (By 1979, there is a citizen-governed humanities council in each of the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia)</p> <p>1972 – NEH's annual Jefferson Lecture on the Humanities is established</p> <p>1974 – State Arts Agencies are operational in all 50 states (first was established in Utah in 1899)</p> <p>1976 – Museum Services Act creates the Institute of Museum Services which is combined in 1996 with the DOE's of Library Programs Office (est. 1956) to form the Institute of Museum and Library Services</p> <p>Law</p> <p>1973 – Roe v. Wade — Supreme Court rules that abortion is legal</p> <p>1976 – Revision of the Copyright Act brings U.S standards in line with international laws and codifies first doctrine and fair use practices. Copyright protection is extended to life of author plus 50 years and includes unpublished works.</p> <p>Preservation</p> <p>1972 – The US is the first nation to ratify UNESCO's World Heritage Convention</p> <p>1974 – Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act (Moss–Bennett Act)</p> <p>1975 – Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act provides support for international museum exhibition exchanges by the federal government's assumption of indemnity</p> <p>1976 – Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program is initiated under the joint management of the IRS, National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs)</p> <p>1976 – American Folklife Preservation Act creates the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress</p> <p>1979 – Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) (amended four times since)</p>
1980's	<p>Access & Equity</p> <p>1988 – U.S. signs Berne Convention (est. in 1886), which establishes copyright at life of author plus 50 years</p> <p>Communities & Citizenship</p> <p>1980 – Refugee Act (reauthorized through 2002) provides resettlement of refugees and assists in achieving economic self-sufficiency</p> <p>1984 – National Medal of Arts established and up to twelve are awarded annually henceforth</p> <p>1986 – Immigration Reform and Control Act enacted to address illegal immigration</p>

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1980's cont.	<p>Cultural & Public Diplomacy 1984 – U.S. secedes from UNESCO</p> <p>Investment 1982 – President's Committee on the Arts & Humanities established by Executive Order 1985 – National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs program was created under the NEH to support arts and cultural initiatives in the capital area. In 1987, responsibility was transferred to the Commission on Fine Arts. 1989 – Culture Wars begin over NEA grant controversy 1989 – PL 1-21 (<i>Interior Appropriations Bill</i>) establishes an Independent Commission under the direction of John Brademas to review the NEA's grantmaking procedures. Their report, <i>The Independent Commission, A Report to Congress on the National Endowment for the Arts</i>, September 1990), defends the existence of the NEA and sets standards for publicly funded art.</p> <p>Law 1986 – Electronic Communications Privacy Act protects electronic communications in transit and storage from internet service providers and government surveillance, without a warrant 1986 – International Telecommunications Convention of 1982 is ratified 1987 – Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act implements the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the U.S. signed in 1983</p> <p>Preservation 1985 – National Archives becomes an independent federal agency 1986 – U.S. begins to observe Martin Luther King Day</p>
1990's	<p>Access & Equity 1990 – Americans with Disabilities Act 1992 – Copyright renewal becomes automatic 1996 – Telecom Act amends the 1934 Communications Act 1998 – Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act (CTEA) extends protection to life of author plus 70 years 1998 – Digital Millennium Copyright Act implements the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty. 1998 – International Religious Freedom Act 1999 – Digital Theft Deterrence and Copyright Damages Improvement Act increases penalties for copyright infringement</p>

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1990's
cont.

Communities & Citizenship

1990 – [Immigration Act](#) amends the *Immigration and Nationality Act*, provides exceptions to language-testing requirements of the *Naturalization Act of 1906* and creates a lottery

1992 – [Chinese Student Protection Act](#)

1996 – [Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act](#)

Cultural Exchange & Public Diplomacy

1991 – [National Security Education Act](#) (*Boren Bill*), supports undergraduate study abroad and foreign language and area studies for graduates

1999 – [USIA](#) is dismantled through the [Foreign Affairs and Restructuring Act](#) and incorporated into the State Department under the [Bureau of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs](#)

Education & the Creative Workforce

1990 – [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) (reauthorized in [1997](#) and [2004](#))

1994 – [Educate America Act](#)

Law

1990 – [Indian Arts & Crafts Act](#) provides standards to authenticate and label Native American goods made exclusively by certified tribe artisans

1994 – U.S. ratifies the [International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#) of 1965

Preservation

1990 – [Native American Graves Protection Repatriation Act](#) (NAGPRA)

1996 – [Museums and Library Services Act](#) establishes the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#), which administers the *Library Services and Technology Act* and the *Museum Services Act*. (The *Museum and Library Services Act* was [reauthorized in 2003](#).)

1996 – [National Film Preservation Foundation](#) created by Congress as an independent non-profit public private partnership

1996 – [E.O. 13007](#) (*Indian Sacred Sites*) dictates that federal land management must accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners

1999 – [Save America's Treasures](#) is founded by Executive Order and administered in partnership with the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#) and the [National Park Service](#)

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2000's	<p>Access & Equity</p> <p>2002 – Technology Education and Copyright Harmonization Act clarifies copyright in regards to educational and distance educational purposes</p> <p>2005 – Family Entertainment and Copyright Act includes the Artist's Rights and Theft Prevention Act and the <i>Family Home Movie Act</i> and institutes criminal penalties for individuals who make illegal copies</p> <p>2006 – Orphan Works Act (HR 5439) introduced to return works with unknown authorship to the public domain</p> <p>Communities & Citizenship</p> <p>2001 – US Patriot Act, changes surveillance laws and provides additional executive powers to combat terrorism</p> <p>Cultural Exchange & Public Diplomacy</p> <p>2002 – Radio Fardo and Radio Sawa are launched to target the Muslim world.</p> <p>2002 – Cultural Bridges Act</p> <p>2003 – U.S. Rejoins UNESCO</p> <p>2003 – Publication of the Djerejian Report – <i>Changing Minds, Winning Peace – A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Policy in the Arab and Muslim Worlds</i></p> <p>2003 – CultureConnect and the Cultural Ambassadors Program are launched</p> <p>2003 – Office of Global Communications is established at the White House</p> <p>2004 – Inaugural meeting of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy /PL 107 – 228 (2002)</p> <p>2005 – Cultural Diplomacy – The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy report synthesizing 30 recent reports on public and cultural diplomacy is released</p> <p>Education</p> <p>2001 – No Child Left Behind Act introduces new standards and accountability in primary and secondary education</p> <p>Investment</p> <p>2002 – Sarbanes–Oxley Act introduces new auditing standards for corporations, government and foundations</p> <p>2006 – National Heritage Areas Act of 2006 reduces royalty for sodium production to provide funds for heritage areas</p> <p>Law</p> <p>2000 – Children's Internet Protection Act restricts access to offensive content on the internet for school and library computers receiving funding from the federal E-Rate program.</p> <p>2003 – McCreary County v. ACLU—Supreme Court rules that displays of the Ten Commandments in isolation within federal courthouses is unconstitutional</p>
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2000's cont.	<p>2003 – Supreme Court upholds the <i>Copyright Term Extension Act (1998)</i> in Eldred v. Ashcroft</p> <p>2004 – Supreme Court rules against COPA in Ashcroft v. ACLU after previously striking down the Communications Decency Act in 1997 and the 1996 Child Pornography Prevention Act in 2002</p> <p>2004 – Satellite Home Viewer Extension and Reauthorization Act</p> <p>2005 – MGM Studios v. Grokster — Supreme Court rules that enablers of copyright infringement through file sharing can be held liable</p> <p>2005 – Family Entertainment and Copyright Act</p> <p>Preservation</p> <p>2000 – National Recording Preservation Act establishes the National Recording Registry and the National Recording Preservation Board</p> <p>2001 – Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, assists countries with tangible and intangible cultural heritage</p> <p>2003 – Preserve America is initiated by Executive Order, calling on federal agencies to take a lead role in preserving American heritage through upkeep of federal monuments, partnerships and regional cultural tourism</p> <p>2005 – National Museum of the American Indian opens</p>
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Sources and Related Timelines:

[American History Timeline](#), Smithsonian Encyclopedia

[Copyright Timeline: A History of Copyright in the United States](#), Association of Research Libraries

[History of the International Visitor Leadership Program](#), Bureau of Education and Cultural Exchange, U.S. State Department

[National Endowment for the Arts Timeline](#), National Endowment for the Arts

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[Timeline of the Civil War](#), Library of Congress

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