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GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
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NEH and HFRI Sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Humanities Research Cooperation

On Wednesday, September 11, 2024, the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the Academy of Athens' Main Hall, establishing a landmark collaboration to promote research partnerships in Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences among U.S. and Greek researchers.

The MoU was signed by NEH Chair Shelly C. Lowe (Navajo) and the Director of the HFRI, Dr. Katerina Kouravelou, in the presence of U.S. Ambassador in Athens to the Hellenic Republic George J. Tsunis. The Minister of Development, Mr. Takis Theodorikakos, welcomed the ceremony along with Deputy Minister of Development Mrs. Zoe Rapti, who attended the signing event, and representatives of NEH, HFRI, ESETEK, and Greek academic and research institutions. This partnership provides a framework that will encourage collaboration between the American and Greek research communities through the submission of proposals by Greek researchers and their counterparts in the United States.

The proposals will be submitted both to NEH (<https://www.grants.gov/>) and HFRI (<https://portal.hfri.gr/>) in November 2024. The analytical terms and conditions for participation in the call will be announced by the end of September by both agencies.

"Greece has contributed substantially to Americans' understanding of democracy, philosophy, and literature, and NEH has funded research and scholarship on the region since the agency was founded," said NEH Chair Lowe. "Our nations are connected by the curiosity and rich cultural origins of our peoples. Through this partnership with the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation, NEH is proud to dedicate resources to future collaboration between American and Greek researchers. We believe that, working together,

bright minds from our two nations can examine and respond to the most challenging global issues of our time."

"It is a great pleasure and honor to collaborate with the National Endowment for Humanities in order to promote the collaboration between Greek and American scientists in the field of humanities. HFRI prides itself to be the only organization in Greece to fund curiosity-driven research in this field. We are delighted if we can help creating synergies between researchers from Greece and the United States in a field where the past joins the present and the future for a better understanding of cultures and values for more inclusive and democratic societies.", said the Chair of HFRI's Scientific Council (SC), Professor Xenia Chrysochoou.

Ambassador Tsunis praised the collaboration, stating: "Our bilateral collaboration on research and innovation is at an all-time high, and translates into increased U.S. investments in Greece, creating hundreds of new jobs. In this fertile environment, we reach another milestone today with this partnership between the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities and the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation. This MOU dedicates U.S. and Greek government funding for research and scholarly exchange that will bring together Greeks and Americans to take on some of today's most pressing challenges. The United States is proud to be Greece's international education partner of choice."

The Minister of Development, Mr. Takis Theodorikakos, in his address, stated that: "Over the last five years, Greece has significantly improved its position on the international stage, is once again a worthy and equal interlocutor and has also become a safe and attractive investment destination, thanks to the stable political and economic environment that has been secured since 2019. The United States has long been a key strategic ally of Greece, and today's MoU between HFRI and the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) adds another stone to the close ties of cooperation we have been continuously building over the years. The two countries share common visions, but also the willingness to march together on important actions and investments."

Deputy Minister of Development Mrs. Zoe Rapti welcomed the event, stressing that: "This day of sealing our country's cooperation with the United States of America, including in the field of humanities research, in addition to the already close and long-standing cooperation in several critical areas, is a special day." Mrs. Rapti further added that: "The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI), supervised by the Ministry of Development, and the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is a new chapter in this strategic relationship. The NEH is one of the leading humanities research funding agencies in the United States. With both sides having secured funding and a five-year horizon, this partnership aims to empower scientists, both from Greece and the United States, and to support and enhance their knowledge-promoting scientific research in areas such as promoting equality, strengthening democracy, closing the digital divide, and understanding the implications, both ethical and legal, of AI for societies and people. The terms and conditions will be jointly announced by the two institutions and will be followed by an evaluation by the NEH with the assistance of the HFRI. I am confident that the research proposals submitted and supported will meet the contemporary needs of our societies. Knowledge acquisition alone is not enough, but must be the starting point for finding wise solutions to today's challenges."

Following the signing ceremony, a roundtable discussion with representatives of the research and academic community followed, sharing their views on the potential for cooperation between Greece and the United States in the broader research field of humanities and social sciences.

In the context of the cooperation between the HFRI and the NEH, the two agencies co-organized along with the U.S. Embassy in Athens a networking event with Chair Lowe and the Chair of HFRI's SC, Professor Chryssochoou, entitled: **Inclusive Leadership in Research and Universities**. The event was held at HFRI's event hall and hosted representatives of the research and academic community, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and experts working on gender, inclusion, and equality issues, providing a platform to connect and exchange ideas and experiences.

About HFRI

The Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI) was established (Law 4429/2016) in response to the vital need for supporting Greek scientists. It is a legal person governed by private law, monitored by the Ministry of Development. HFRI aims to promote research and innovation in the country. In particular, it aims to evaluate and fund unrestricted research, namely research activities, research infrastructure and their technological applications, arising from scientific curiosity, without any thematic exclusions or geographical limitations, having scientific quality and excellence as a sole criterion.



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