



Preamble: What does the AHA advocate for and on what grounds does it do so?

The AHA advocates for the ability of historians to produce and publicise excellent and ethical historical research, with fair access to historical resources and communities, and especially for the viability of evidence-based historical study into the future. This is in accordance with its constitution and its commitment to solidarity among its members.

The terms and reach of advocacy by professional organisations such as the AHA has featured in recent international scholarly debate. The executive of the AHA has spent significant time thinking through these questions in the last year or so. We thought we should attempt an articulation here of what exactly the AHA's remit in advocacy looks like in this current global moment, in an effort to clarify it for the membership and to invite discussion about our shared goals and limitations.

The terms

The Constitution of the AHA, to which we all subscribe upon membership, outlines our formal objectives in point [1.2a-h](#). To put them as briefly as possible they are: to promote and encourage the production of excellent, evidence-based historical literature; to educate the public about the value of such historical literature; to formulate policies and 'express opinions' about public policy issues that 'concern historical study'; and to connect members via communications and assemblies.

Elsewhere [our website](#), written by past executives, notes that we promote and encourage not only historical excellence but also historical integrity and 'ethical practice' in historical work, and that the issues concerning historical study generally include the health of education, galleries, libraries, archives, museums, research funding, and national debate.

The viability of our organisation rests on a certain level of unity among all members. Therefore, our advocacy seeks to speak for as many of our members as possible.

The reach

According to these statements, the AHA's advocacy must centre on supporting the production of excellent and ethical historical research rather than on supporting specific historical interpretations of current or past events. Many of our members engage usefully with the national and global public via their historical interpretations, to which perhaps even a majority of us subscribe and of which we all offer our wholehearted support.

To that end, we advocate for the maintenance or creation of researchers' access to research materials and research funds; their safety to pursue work as professional historians; and their rights to publicise historical work as fairly as possible. We also advocate strongly for the maintenance or creation of effective learning environments for the future flourishing of historical research, usually centring on developments in schools and universities.

Through our solidarity, we advocate for these qualities for historians beyond our own membership, and even beyond our own nation, though we focus on Australia and its region.