The American Anthropological Association (AAA) applauds report “The Heart of the Matter: The Humanities and Social Sciences.” Released this week by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences’ Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences, the report is a call to action for the US to make significant investments in the areas of social science research and education.

The report makes three recommendations: Invest in educating people with the humanities and social sciences to provide an intellectual framework for understanding a changing world; focus not just on instruction for specific jobs, but on the development of professional flexibility and inquisitiveness; and acknowledge how the humanities and social sciences enable us to understand diverse cultural perspectives, making it possible for people around the world to work together to address issues of mutual importance.

“The report highlights the contributions made by the social sciences to the United States,” AAA President, Leith Mullings noted in a statement released earlier today. “We look forward to working with the Commission on increasing training and public understanding of the humanities and social sciences.”

This report follows the 2007 publication of the National Academies report, “Rising Above the Gathering Storm,” which highlighted the need for investment in STEM-related education and research. After a series of meetings with government, foundation, and academic leaders and around the US, members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences organized a complementary effort on behalf of the humanities and social sciences.