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# WOMEN'S HERITAGE IN LOS ANGELES

An Overview of the Representation of Women in Existing Historic-Cultural  
Monuments in Los Angeles, California



LOS ANGELES  
CONSERVANCY



National Trust *for*  
Historic Preservation®

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July 17, 2024

Arabella Delgado

Los Angeles, CA

# BREAKDOWN

- Introduction
- Evaluating the HCMs
- Findings and Trends
- Summaries and Recommendations

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD  
Room 1500, City Hall  
Los Angeles, California 90012

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD  
MUNICIPAL ARTS DEPARTMENT

REQUEST FOR  
HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT DECLARATION

OF PROPOSED MONUMENT: YWCA STUDIO CLUB

LOCATION: 1215 LODI PLACE (CROSS STREETS) GOWER + FOUNTAIN  
LOS ANGELES, CA. (ZIP) 90038 AREA

COUNCILMANIC DISTRICT NO. STEVENSON

PROPOSER'S NAME & ADDRESS: YWCA

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION OF MONUMENT: 1927

ARCHITECT: MS. JULIA MORGAN

PRINCIPAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: MEDITERRANEAN SPANISH STYLE RE: 1920'S  
(A photograph to be provided) ARCHED DOORWAYS, TILE ROOF. LARGE LOGIA.  
PAINTED CENTRAL COURTYARD. HANDSOME IRON WORK. NICE DETAILS.

REASON FOR HISTORIC-CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: ONE OF THE FINE RARE EXAMPLES  
(If necessary, attach a sheet) THE PERIOD - UNADULTERATED. A FINE EXAMPLE  
A MORGAN. SEE ATTACHED.

SOURCE/S OF INFORMATION: YWCA STAFF & CITY RECORDS.

NAME & ADDRESS OF PROPONENT: MR. H. JACK CARR  
625 N. HUNTLEY DRIVE LOS ANGELES 90069

Telephone No. (213) DL 72165

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# INTRODUCTION

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# OVERVIEW

- 43 HCMs were chosen for evaluation — represent a wide range of stories, time periods, and quality/quantity of information included in the nomination
- Each was evaluated for their inclusion, or exclusion, of women's history
- Particular focus on significance statement
- Purpose of this study is to understand the work needed to amend existing HCMs to convey women's contributions to LA history

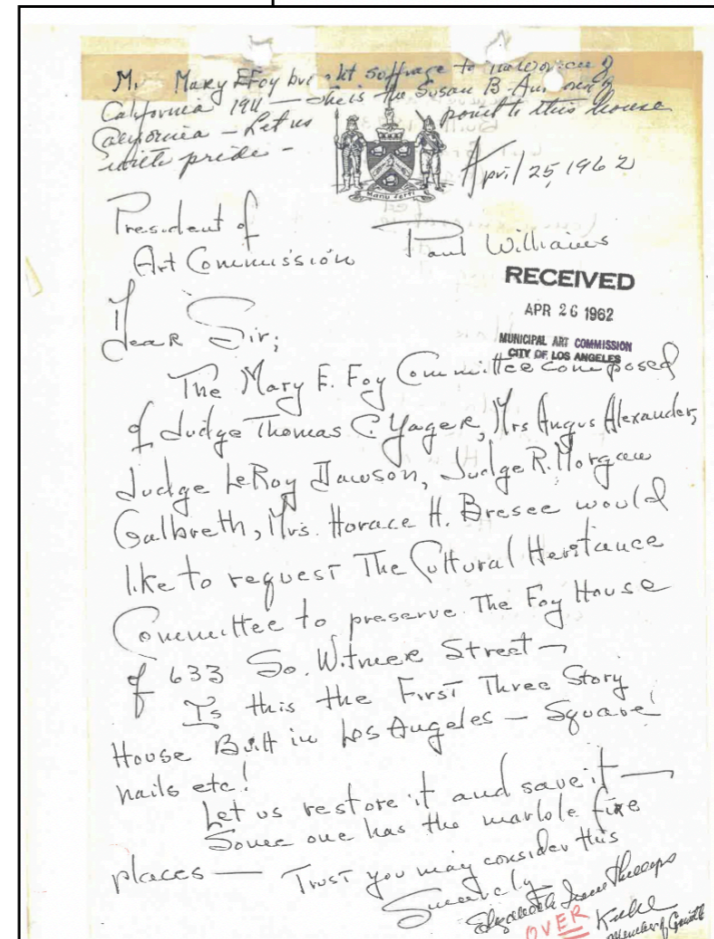
CHC-2019-4804-HCM  
4227 North Agnes Avenue  
Page 3 of 6

#### FINDINGS

- The Arthur and Nina Zwebell Residence "embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction; [and] represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age as an excellent example of American Colonial Revival residential architecture in Studio City, and as a work by noted Los Angeles-based architectural designers Arthur and Nina Zwebell that represents the summation of their careers in architectural design.

#### CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon), building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles if it meets at least one of the following criteria:



ational, state, or local history, or exemplifies  
ural, economic or social history of the nation,  
ersonages important to national, state, city, or  
s of a style, type, period, or method of  
rk of a master designer, builder, or architect  
er age.

story, single-family residence with an attached  
eyheart Drive and Woodbridge Street in the  
built in 1937 in the American Colonial Revival  
hur and Nina Zwebell to serve as their own  
one of three adjacent residences on the west  
s for themselves and two of Arthur Zwebell's

f three distinct volumes and is largely of wood-  
ern wing has wood siding. The east-facing,  
th a two-story central volume topped with a  
hers, flanked on either side by one-story wings  
and red tile ridge caps. The central volume of  
decorative brackets. The ground floor has a  
nson window, as well as two multi-lite double-  
e multi-lite double-hung windows fronted by  
n end of the central volume there is a brick  
ailing. The rear, west-facing elevation features  
te windows wrapping all three sides, a smaller  
pws, and an enclosed porch on the lower level  
of multi-lite French doors. Fenestration on the  
divided-lite double-hung windows, divided-lite  
ndows, and divided-lite French doors.

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# SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

**Women's history was not adequately conveyed, whether intentionally or unintentionally. As a result, this history is not a part of the designation**



**HCM #256: Mack Sennett Studios**

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# SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

**In cases where women are included in the designation, their contributions are diminished and/or overshadowed by other histories**



**HCM #381: Case Study House No. 8**

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# SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

**Even in HCMs designated specifically for women's history, that history is rarely intersectional**



**HCM #175: YWCA Studio Club**


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# SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

**Even in HCMs designated for women's history, significance statements often minimize women's contributions through gendered language and/or insufficient research**

SHIFT FROM SILENT TO SOUND MOTION PICTURES. SHE ALSO BECAME A ROLE MODEL FOR OTHER YOUNG STARLETS, IN THAT SHE BROKE AWAY FROM THE USE OF PANCAKE MAKEUP AND HEART SHAPED LIPS THAT HAD BEEN THE NORM DURING THE SILENT ERA, UTILIZING A MORE NATURAL LOOK THAT EMPHASIZED HER OWN BEAUTY. THIS LOOK WAS TO BECOME THE NORM FOR THE MOVIES AS ACTRESSES, SUCH AS JOAN CRAWFORD, WHO TOOK CLUES FROM BOTH DEL RIOS LOOKS AND HER WARDROBE. AT THE TIME SHE MARRIED GIBBONS, DOLORES DEL RIO WAS AT THE HEIGHT OF HER CAREER IN HOLLYWOOD, WORKING FOR M.G.M. SHE STARRED IN A NUMBER OF FILMS. HOWEVER, BY THE LATE 1930S, HER CAREER HAD BECOME MARGINALIZED AS THE MOVIE MOGULS DECIDED THAT THE TIME FOR HER LATIN BEAUTY HAD PASSED, EVEN IF SHE LOOKED AS GOOD AS EVER. IN 1940 SHE BEGAN SPENDING TIME WITH ORSON



**HCM #1038: Gibbons - Del Rio Residence**

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# SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

**Even with excellent nominations that tell the diverse story of LA women, the professionalization of the HCM process make these types of nominations incredibly difficult for the average community member to carry out**

<sup>1</sup> SurveyLA, *Historic Resources Survey Report: Boyle Heights Community Plan Area*, 11.

<sup>2</sup> George J. Sánchez, “What’s Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews,” *American Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (2004): 635-36; Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 54.

<sup>3</sup> Wild, *Street Meeting*, 25–30. Note that during the period of significance, ethno-racial categories were fluid and contingent on time and place.

<sup>4</sup> The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the first law designed to prevent all members of a specific ethnic or national group from immigrating to the U.S. California politicians, labor leaders, and business interests played key roles in lobbying for the legislation, and its passage opened the door to new waves of immigration laws and policies aimed at preventing non-white groups from migrating and/or naturalizing. See Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 68-88.

<sup>5</sup> SurveyLA, 34. See also Leslie Bernstein Rojas, “Boyle Heights, the ‘Ellis Island of the West Coast,’” *Southern California Public Radio*, March 30, 2011. <https://www.scpr.org/blogs/multiamerican/2011/03/30/8284/boyle-heights-the-ellis-island-of-the-west-coast/>

<sup>6</sup> SurveyLA, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Home Owners’ Loan Corporation, “Area Description: Boyle Heights” (April 19, 1939), *Testbed for the Redlining Archives of California’s Exclusionary Spaces*, salt.umd.edu/T-RACES.

<sup>8</sup> SurveyLA, 13.

<sup>9</sup> SurveyLA, 15-16.

**HCM #1224: International Institute**

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# **EVALUATING THE HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENTS**

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# SELECTING HCMS TO REVIEW

## ➤ **Easily Amended**

- **Have clear connections to women's history; easily accessible information**

## ➤ **Challenging Amendments**

- **Connection may not be obvious; materials may not be easily accessible**

## ➤ **Precedent-Setting Amendments**

- **Set a precedent at the time they were designated; models for amendments**
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# NAVIGATING CRITERIA

**No Criteria** → **Themes** → **4 Criteria** → **3 Criteria**

## 6. APPLICABLE HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT CRITERIA

The proposed monument exemplifies the following Cultural Heritage Ordinance Criteria (Section 22.171.7):

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Is identified with important events of national, state, or local history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community.             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction; or represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age. |

**HCMs were assessed on the present-day criteria they would adhere to**

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# PROPOSED AMENDMENT TYPES

- 1. No Amendment**
  - 2. Name Change Only**
  - 3. Minimal Changes to Narrative/Documentation, No Change to Criteria**
  - 4. Significant Changes to Narrative/Documentation, No Change to Criteria**
  - 5. Significant Changes to Narrative/Documentation, Addition of Criteria**
  - 6. Complete Rewrite**
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# EXAMPLE OF EVALUATION

**Name:** Eagle Rock Women's Twentieth Century Clubhouse  
**Address:** 5101-5105 Hermosa Ave.; 1841-1855 Colorado Blvd.  
**HCM Number:** 537 | **Date Adopted:** 7/2/1991

| Basic Information   |  |
|---|--|
| Community Area Plan: Northeast Los Angeles                                | Architect: Not listed on form          |
| Council District: 14  | Architectural Style: Craftsman         |
| Ownership: Private  | Original Use: Clubhouse                |
| HPOZ: n/a   | Current Use: Clubhouse/ Event Space    |
| NRHP: added 7/30/2013   | Integrity: Excellent                   |
| Date Built: 1915  | Period of Significance: 1915 - present |
| Original Form Prepared By: Jeffrey B. Samudio, The Eagle Rock Association |  |

## Overview of Current Significance Statement

At the time of nomination, the form did not have present-day criteria. Instead, themes are given to check off. Preparer marked the following themes: architecture, arts & leisure, exploration/settlement, government, and social education. This would equate to Criterion 1 (broad social history) and Criterion 3 (architecture) of the present-day nomination form. However, Historic Places LA only attributes its significance to broad history.

The significance statement and architectural description is incredibly brief, as the preparer mainly relies on attached supplementary materials to argue for significance.

The physical description of the building includes the following featured:

- Craftsman style
- Consisting of lounge, meeting hall, and banquet kitchen
- Triangular roof knee bracing
- Large, open overhanging eaves
- Decorative iron tie-back braces of the masonry stoops
- Elaborate stained glass windows
- Curved attic dormer vents
- Half domed entry doors
- Set in park-like setting with mature vegetation

Preparer also noted that the banquet kitchen was added in 1954 and the fireplace was removed 1971 after earthquake damage

In terms of broad social significance, a brief historical timeline is given. The club was founded in 1903, incorporated in 1907 and joined the California Federation of Women's Clubs in 1908. In 1910, the Eagle Rock Women's Twentieth Century club introduced legislation on women's suffrage to the Women's Federation. In 1915, the clubhouse on Colorado and Hermost opened. They helped sponsor the Carnegie Library and construction of the Eagle Rock Bowl

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**Name:** Eagle Rock Women's Twentieth Century Clubhouse  
**Address:** 5101-5105 Hermosa Ave.; 1841-1855 Colorado Blvd.  
**HCM Number:** 537 | **Date Adopted:** 7/2/1991

## Overview of Current Significance Statement

in the same year. They were also the home of the Northwest Chamber Orchestra in 1984 and rehearsal home for the California Lyric Grand Opera in the late 1970s. Aside from this timeline, the club is noted as a "site of community meeting, recitals, and receptions" (2).

There is such a lack of detail in even the most basic of information (like the architect) that the significance of the building and its history doesn't really come through. There needs to be more information on the kinds of services and programs that the club offers to the community. Additionally, a single mention of suffrage legislation is not enough to argue for significance. What was the club's involvement in the suffrage movement? Were there any notable figures in the movement that were also members?

The only time a specific woman is mentioned is in the context of the club's original meeting at the home of Mrs. Philip W. Parker.

Source documents are minimal. They include a brief write-up of the Club's history of its website, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, and some permits (attached documents are illegible).

## Potential for Women's Heritage Amendment

As with the HCM nominations of other women's clubs, there needs to be more detail into the actual programs and causes that the club was a part of. In particular, if a reference is made to women's suffrage, there needs to be a more thorough history of the club's involvement in the movement to make an argument for significance to broad social history.

The attached documents contain information that needs to be researched further and included in the significance statement. For example, the "History" page of the Club notes that they petitioned for Occidental College to accept women when the school moved to Eagle Rock in 1922. This is a piece of local history that really contributes to the Club's significance. The page also indicates that the Club created scholarship funds for women and maintained a "well-baby" clinic for 35 years. These are the types of programs and mission that really tie the Club to the community and showcase how important it is for Eagle Rock.

This is definitely a site that needs input from the Club itself. Might be worth interviewing club members or seeing if they keep their own records/archives.

## Resources for Further Research

NPS Form – <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/9f9022b4-464e-4a9e-9b1b-0f8acb8c2513>

Club website – <https://www.womenscluber.org/>

Write Up -

2

# EXAMPLE OF EVALUATION

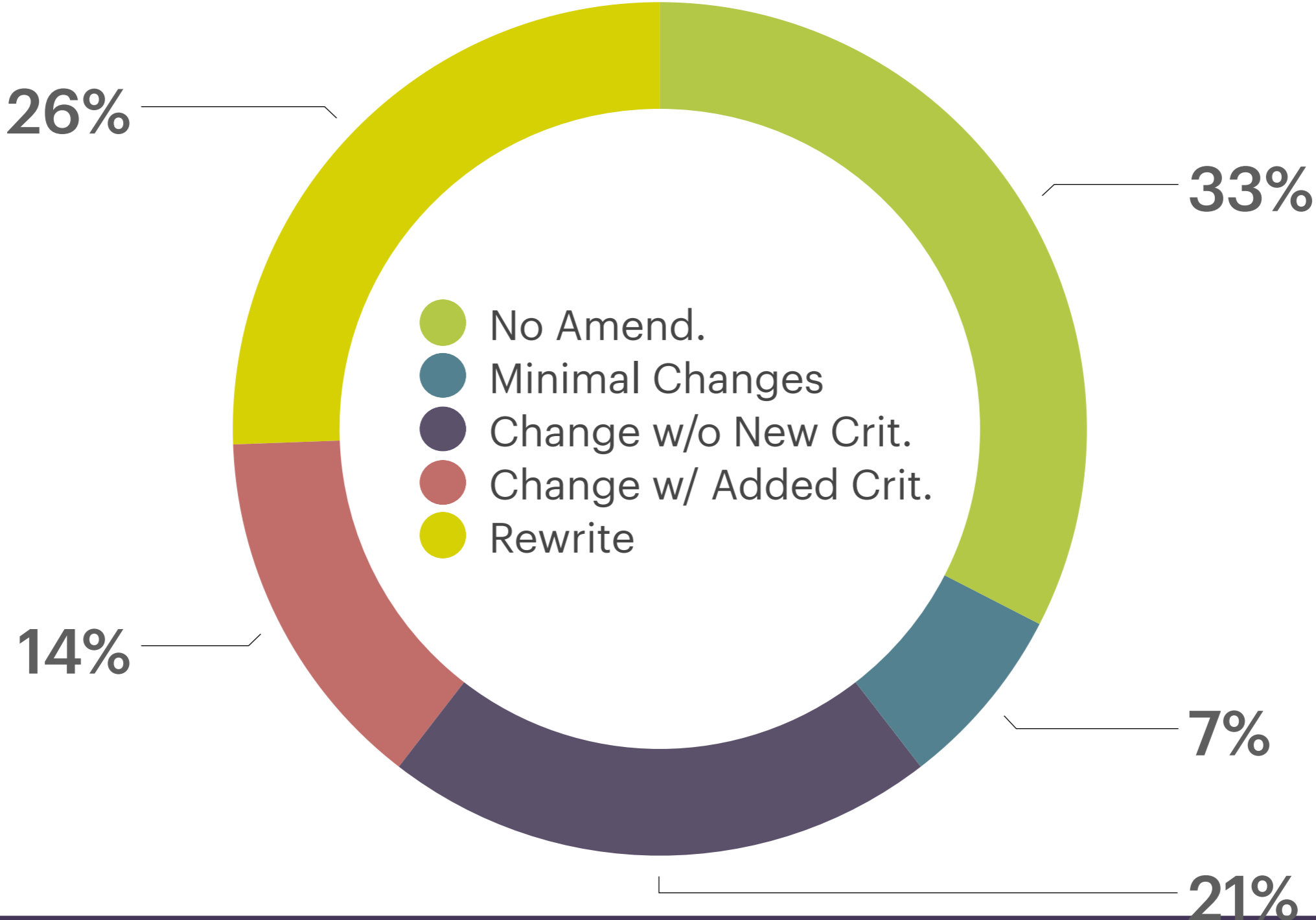
|    | A  | B       | C    | D  | E | F | G | H   |
|----|--|---------|------|----|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | Name   | HCM No. | HPOZ | NR | 1 | 2 | 3 | Type of Amendment Needed  |
| 2  | Foy House  | 8       | X    | X  |   | X | X | Complete Rewrite Needed ▼                                       |
| 3  | Crossroads of the World  | 134     |      | X  |   |   | X | Complete Rewrite Needed ▼                                       |
| 4  | Variety Arts Center Building/Friday Morning Club                     | 196     |      | X  | X |   | X | Complete Rewrite Needed ▼                                       |
| 5  | Casa de Rosas/ Sunshine Mission                                      | 241     |      | X  | X |   | X | Significant Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, Add... ▼ |
| 6  | Arzner-Morgan Residence  | 301     |      |    |   | X |   | Significant Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, NO ... ▼ |
| 7  | Los Angeles Nurses Club  | 352     |      | X  | X |   | X | Complete Rewrite Needed ▼                                       |
| 8  | Giannini Building/ Bank of Italy Building/Women's Banking Department | 354     |      | X  | X | X | X | Significant Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, NO ... ▼ |
| 9  | Case Study House No. 8/ Eames House and Studio and Grounds           | 381     |      | X  | X | X | X | Minimal Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, NO C... ▼    |
| 10 | Wachtel Studio - House and Eucalyptus Grove                          | 503     | X    |    | X |   | X | Significant Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, NO ... ▼ |
| 11 | Emmanuel Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church                          | 578     |      |    | X |   | X | Significant Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, NO ... ▼ |
| 12 | Zobelein Estate  | 583     |      |    |   | X | X | Minimal Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, NO C... ▼    |
| 13 | Lincoln Heights Jail/ Bilingual Foundation for the Arts              | 587     |      |    | X |   | X | Significant Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, NO ... ▼ |
| 14 | Hollywood School for Girls/ Women's Club of Hollywood                | 604     |      | X  | X |   | X | No Amendment ▼  |
| 15 | Ruskin Art Club  | 639     | X    |    | X |   | X | No Amendment ▼  |
| 16 | Los Tiempos - The Chandler Estate                                    | 863     | X    |    |   | X | X | No Amendment ▼  |
| 17 | Nin-Pole Residence   | 892     |      |    |   | X | X | Significant Changes to Narrative and/or Documentation, Add... ▼ |
| 18 | New Temple Missionary Baptist Church                                 | 1194    |      |    | X |   |   | No Amendment ▼  |
| 19 | Arthur and Nina Zwebell Residence                                    | 1199    |      |    |   |   | X | No Amendment ▼  |

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# **FINDINGS AND TRENDS**

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# BREAKDOWN OF AMENDMENTS



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# NO MENTION OF WOMEN'S HISTORY

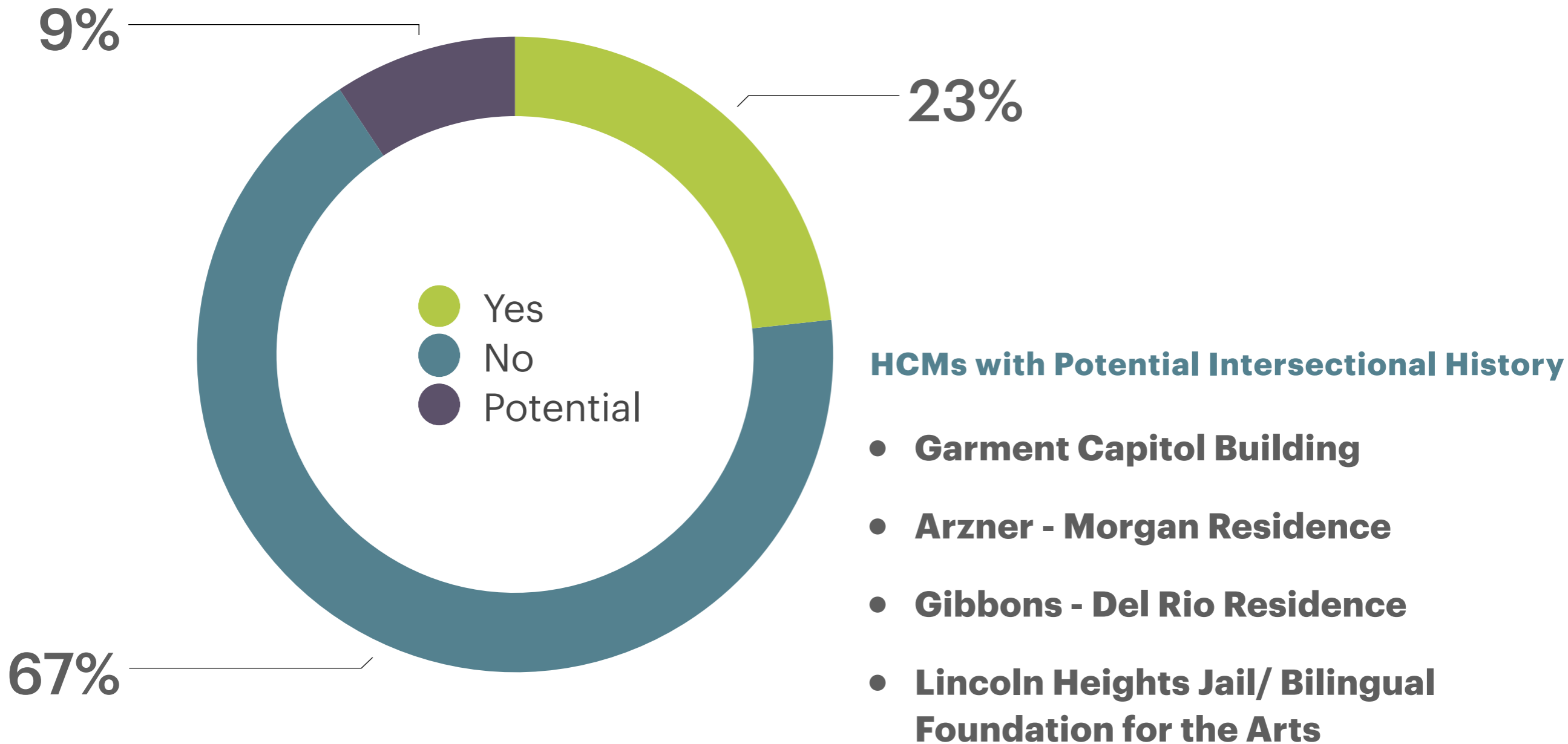
**11.6%**

**OF NOMINATIONS  
DO NOT MENTION  
WOMEN'S HISTORY**

- **Bradbury Building**
  - **Crossroads of the World**
  - **Mack Sennett Studios**
  - **Giannini Building/ Bank of Italy**
  - **Zobelein Estate**
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# INTERSECTIONAL HISTORY



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# GENDER BIAS IN LANGUAGE/NARRATIVE

**13%**

**OF NOMINATIONS  
CONTAIN A GENDER  
BIAS IN THEIR  
LANGUAGE AND/OR  
NARRATIVE**

- **Eames House and Studio Grounds**
  - **Arzner - Morgan Residence**
  - **Gibbons - Del Rio Residence**
  - **Eagle Rock Women's Twentieth Century Club**
  - **Eagle Rock WCTU Home**
  - **Highland Park Ebell Club**
-

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# WOMEN'S CLUB MOVEMENT

**23.6%**

**OF NOMINATIONS  
WERE DESIGNATED  
FOR THEIR  
ASSOCIATION WITH  
WOMEN'S CLUBS**

- **Mary Andrews Clark Residence of the YWCA**
  - **YWCA Studio Club**
  - **Variety Arts Center Building/ Friday Morning Club**
  - **Eagle Rock Women's Twentieth Century Club**
  - **Eagle Rock WCTU Home**
  - **Highland Park Ebell Club**
  - **Los Angeles Nurses' Club**
  - **Hollywood School for Girls/ Women's Club of Hollywood**
  - **Monday Women's Club**
  - **WCTU State Headquarters**
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# **IMPLICATIONS AND OUTCOMES**

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# AREAS OF CONCERN

## ➤ Integrity

- How do we face challenges of physical integrity at vernacular sites?

## ➤ Standards

- Is every nominator expected to meet academic standards when telling under-represented stories? How can we ensure current standards are not a barrier to future nominations?

## ➤ Nomination Process

- Can we modify the current nomination to incorporate diverse histories?

## ➤ Layers of History

- Do we expect nominators to provide an exhaustive history of all the people and stories that are present in a particular place?
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# NEXT STEPS

- **Narrow down 10-15 HCMs for USC Heritage Conservation students**
  - **Review potential new nominations based on research trends**
  - **Create research guide**
-