



Budget Request For Fiscal Year 2024

**Submitted to the Congress
March 2023**

March 13, 2023

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, Chairman Simpson, and Ranking Member Pingree:

I am pleased to transmit the attached funding justification for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in support of the President's budget request for fiscal year (FY) 2024. The Budget provides \$211 million for NEA and funds 168 full-time equivalents. This amount is \$4.0 million (approximately 2%) more than appropriated for the NEA in FY 2023 and will permit the NEA to continue to support the health and vitality of the arts and culture sector; fortify its work at the intersections of arts and education, health, community development, and other sectors; and strengthen its work enabling every American to reach their full potential through the arts.

The NEA's mission is to foster and sustain an environment in which the arts belong to and benefit everyone in the United States by advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice. The work of the NEA is integrated throughout all segments of our society and in every part of the country. The NEA engages with students finding their voices through the *Poetry Out Loud* initiative and with seniors struggling with social isolation who participate in the *Big Read*. Through *Creative Forces*®, a partnership with the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, the NEA supports the health, well-being, and quality of life of active military and veterans and their families through creative arts therapies and other activities. Through the *Our Town* program, towns and cities, both big and small, are supported in building creative local partnerships to improve communities and advance social, physical and economic outcomes. And core to our impact through the Grants for Arts Projects program, thousands of arts organizations bring joy, solace, healing, and economic benefit to their local communities.

The arts are essential in helping us make sense of our shared circumstances from different perspectives. They are a vital part of how we move forward together to address the wide range of social, environmental, and economic challenges that lie before us as a nation. Through grant programs, honorific awards, and strategic partnerships, the NEA is a national resource that supports learning in and about the arts and celebrates the nation's rich and diverse cultural heritage. Work at the intersection of arts and other fields such as education, health, and community development strengthens the well-being and economic vitality of our nation. Whether in metropolitan areas or rural communities, the NEA works to reinforce our social fabric and help us step into a new era stronger, smarter and better equipped to help fulfill the promise of our nation.

As outlined in the attached justification, the President's Budget for FY 2024 enables the NEA to support the still-struggling, post-COVID arts and cultural sector; expand support for historically underserved communities and first-time applicants; provide additional opportunities for people to experience the arts, create, and express themselves; strengthen civic infrastructure through the arts; and fortify the NEA's administrative operations in order to best serve the public. The request also includes other resources needed by arts communities like technical assistance, information, and funding for national initiatives. In addition, the NEA will explore partnerships with other federal agencies, unlocking the power of the arts to support whole of government efforts around equity, resilience, infrastructure and other national priorities.

The resources requested by the President for FY 2024 will allow the NEA to accomplish these important tasks and more fully meet its mission. I believe deeply that arts and culture have a unique power to better our economy, improve the health and well-being of our communities, and bring greater understanding and unity to our nation. Supporting opportunities to make, teach, and engage with the arts is necessary for us all, as individuals and as a nation, to reach our full potential.

With gratitude,



Maria Rosario Jackson, Ph.D.
Chair, National Endowment for the Arts

Table of Contents

OUR HISTORY	1
OUR MISSION, VISION, AND STRATEGIC GOALS	2
OUR MISSION	2
OUR VISION.....	2
OUR STRATEGIC GOALS.....	2
FY 2024 BUDGET REQUEST	3
BUDGET REQUEST BY PROGRAM ACTIVITY	4
PROMOTION OF THE ARTS	5
DIRECT ENDOWMENT GRANTS (DETAIL BY GRANT TYPE).....	6
<i>Grants for Arts Projects</i>	7
<i>Equity Program</i>	7
<i>Challenge America Grant Program</i>	7
<i>Research Grants in the Arts</i>	7
<i>NEA Research Labs</i>	7
<i>NEA Literature and Translation Fellowships</i>	7
<i>Lifetime Honors</i>	7
<i>Our Town</i>	8
<i>Leadership Initiatives</i>	8
LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES (DETAIL)	11
<i>Arts & Human Development Task Force</i>	11
<i>Arts Education Partnership</i>	11
<i>Blue Star Museums</i>	11
<i>Citizens’ Institute on Rural Design</i>	12
<i>Creative Forces®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network</i>	13
<i>International</i>	16
<i>Mayors’ Institute on City Design</i>	18
<i>Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge</i>	19
<i>NEA Big Read</i>	19
<i>NEA Research Labs</i>	20
<i>Poetry Out Loud</i>	21
<i>Save America’s Treasures</i>	21
<i>Shakespeare in American Communities</i>	21
<i>Sound Health Network</i>	21
<i>Additional Partnerships</i>	22
STATE AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS (DETAIL).....	24
PROGRAM SUPPORT	28
ADMINISTRATION.....	34
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL (OIG)	40
APPENDICES	41
STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026	56

Our History

The National Endowment for the Arts, established by Congress in 1965, is an independent federal agency that is the largest funder of the arts and arts education in communities nationwide and a catalyst of public and private support for the arts. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the NEA fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts benefit everyone in the United States.

The agency partners closely with the nation's 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies and 6 regional arts organizations, as well as with private entities, leveraging resources to provide more arts funding and arts programs across the country. Through its grant awards, strategic partnerships, and honorific awards, the NEA supports learning in and about the arts, celebrating the nation's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and promoting equitable access to the arts in every community in the United States.

The NEA's primary activities include grantmaking to nonprofit arts organizations, public arts agencies and organizations, and individual writers and translators. It also is a national leader in the field and a convener on issues important to the arts community and people working at the intersections of arts and other fields such as health, community development, and education, among others. The NEA supports and conducts groundbreaking arts-based research and disseminates important information through features on notable artists and arts organizations in communities nationwide via our blog, podcasts, *American Artscape* magazine, and social media.

The NEA seeks to bring meaningful arts experiences to all Americans.

Our Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals

Our Mission

The arts strengthen and promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the National Endowment for the Arts fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts belong to everyone in the United States.

The NEA mission is based on an abiding conviction that the arts play an integral role in our national life and public discourse.

Our Vision

A nation in which the arts are essential to our democracy by nourishing creative enterprise, freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry.

By giving voice to unique talents and perspectives through creative expression, the arts embody and reflect the boldness of our democratic experiment.

Our Strategic Goals

The NEA's FY 2024 budget request is built on the foundation of the following goals established in the Agency's Strategic Plan for FY 2022-2026.

Support opportunities for all people to participate in the arts and arts education.

Integrate the arts with strategies that promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities.

Build capacity and infrastructure within the arts sector through knowledge-sharing, tools, resources, and evidence-based practices.

Pursue and adopt excellent operational practices to support the agency's mission.

Across the four strategic goals, the NEA will support the cross-cutting objective to model diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts through all of its activities and operations.

FY 2024 BUDGET REQUEST

Budget Request by Program Activity

Table 1: FY 2022 - FY 2024 Budget Request by Program Activity
(\$ in thousands)

Program Activity	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Request
Promotion of the Arts			
Direct Endowment Grants	90,196	97,470	98,820
State and Regional Partnerships	<u>57,763</u>	<u>64,980</u>	<u>65,880</u>
Subtotal	147,959	162,450	164,700
Program Support	2,032	2,500	2,750
Administration	32,112	42,050	43,550
Total	182,103	207,000	211,000

FY 2022 includes use of available funds carried over from prior years.

Table 2: FY 2023 - FY 2024 Summary of Changes by Program Activity
(\$ in thousands)

Program Activity	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Request	+/-
Promotion of the Arts			
Direct Endowment Grants	97,470	98,820	1,350
State and Regional Partnerships	<u>64,980</u>	<u>65,880</u>	<u>900</u>
Subtotal	162,450	164,700	2,250
Program Support	2,500	2,750	250
Administration	42,050	43,550	1,500
Total	207,000	211,000	4,000

Promotion of the Arts

The NEA’s core grant programs include both Direct Endowment Grants and State and Regional Partnerships. The NEA awards project-based grants to organizations supporting opportunities for public engagement with the arts and arts education, for the integration of the arts with strategies promoting health and well-being of people and communities, and for the improvement of overall cultural capacity and infrastructure within the arts sector. Projects may be small, medium, or large; existing or new; and may take place in any part of the nation’s 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. jurisdictions.

Program Activity (\$000)	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Request
Promotion of the Arts			
Direct Endowment Grants			
Project Support	81,480	86,870	87,820
Challenge America	<u>8,716</u>	<u>10,600</u>	<u>11,000</u>
subtotal	90,196	97,470	98,820
State and Regional Partnerships			
Basic Plan Support	45,507	51,139	51,848
Underserved	<u>12,256</u>	<u>13,841</u>	<u>14,032</u>
subtotal	<u>57,763</u>	64,980	65,880
Total	147,959	162,450	164,700

FY 2022 includes use of available funds carried over from prior years. Excludes reimbursable funding and obligations funded by the American Rescue Plan.

Summary of Increase/Request: +2.25 million; \$164.7 million

The NEA requests a FY 2024 funding level of \$164.7 million for Promotion of the Arts, approximately 1.4 percent more than the amount enacted for FY 2023. Consistent with agency practice, 60 percent (\$98.82 million) of this request will be used for Direct Endowment Grants and 40 percent (\$65.88 million) will be dedicated to funding the NEA’s State and Regional Partnership Program.

Further details regarding the requested increases for the NEA’s Direct Endowment Grants and the State and Regional Partnerships Program are provided in the two sub-sections that follow.

Direct Endowment Grants (Detail by Grant Type)

Program Activity (\$000)	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Request
Direct Endowment Grants			
Grants for Arts Projects	56,827	59,230	58,600
Equity Program	5,760	4,240	5,240
Challenge America Grant Program	1,650	2,620	2,850
Research Grants in the Arts	815	1,075	950
Research Labs	1,950	2,075	2,300
Literature Fellowships	1,200	1,200	1,200
Lifetime Honors	350	325	325
Our Town	3,900	4,275	4,000
Leadership Initiatives	<u>17,744</u>	<u>22,430</u>	<u>23,355</u>
subtotal	90,196	97,470	98,820

FY 2022 includes use of available funds carried over from prior years. Excludes reimbursable funding and obligations funded by the American Rescue Plan.

Summary of Increase/Changes - Direct Endowment Grants +1.35 million; \$98.8 million

Equity Program: The FY 2024 Budget includes \$5.24 million in funding to continue the NEA’s work to support a range of eligible organizations throughout the arts and cultural ecosystem that are serving their communities by advancing equitable participation in the arts. This work enables the NEA to reach underserved populations and strengthen local communities by bolstering work at the intersection of the arts and other sectors including public health, transportation, housing, and community development. When the arts are represented in policies and investments across sectors, they enable deeper community connection and more sustainable and equitable impacts.

United We Stand: Within “Leadership Initiatives”, the FY 2024 Budget provides \$2.0 million for initiatives stemming from the President’s “United We Stand” Summit. The NEA recognizes the role of the arts in building empathy and strengthening mutual understanding; providing solace in the direct aftermath of incidents of hate-motivated violence; and building community resilience and recovery. Through its “United We Stand” response, and in coordination with the National Endowment for the Humanities, the NEA will support arts organizations that advance these themes. This work will build on the NEA’s ongoing engagement with states, regions, and local communities, highlighting and strengthening the role of the arts in the nation’s civic infrastructure.

The NEA requests \$98.82 million in FY 2024 for the following Direct Endowment Grant activities:

- Grants for Arts Projects: \$58.6 million to support opportunities for public engagement with the arts and arts education, to embed the arts in system-wide initiatives that strengthen or heal communities, and for the improvement of overall cultural capacity and infrastructure within the arts sector.
- Equity Program: \$5.24 million as discussed above. This effort supports the NEA’s Equity Action Plan by building on the FY 2023 partnership with Regional Arts Organizations, and continuing to address disparities between the availability of arts programming and participation of underserved groups. This work will continue to strengthen local communities by bolstering work at the intersection of the arts and other sectors, enabling more sustainable and equitable impacts.
- Challenge America Grant Program: \$2.85 million to enable small organizations, particularly those that are first-time applicants and/or grantees, to extend the reach of the arts to groups and communities with rich and dynamic cultural identities that are underserved—those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability.
- Research Grants in the Arts: \$0.95 million to support research that investigates the value and impact of the arts, either as individual components within the U.S. arts ecology or as they interact with each other and with other domains of American life.
- NEA Research Labs: \$2.3 million for transdisciplinary research teams grounded in the social and behavioral sciences, yielding empirical insights about the arts for the benefit of arts and non-arts sectors alike. (See ‘Leadership Initiatives’ below.)
- NEA Literature and Translation Fellowships: \$1.2 million awarded to published creative writers and translators. Creative Writing Fellowships of \$25,000 are awarded in alternating years in prose (fiction and creative nonfiction) and poetry, giving recipients the time and space to create, revise, conduct research, and connect with readers. Translation Fellowships grants of up to \$25,000 are awarded to published translators for the translation of specific works of prose, poetry, or drama from other languages into English to make them accessible to American audiences.
- Lifetime Honors: \$0.325 million for the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships, the highest honor that our government bestows on jazz musicians and advocates; the NEA National Heritage Fellowships, recognizing the recipients’ artistic excellence and supporting their continuing contributions to our nation’s traditional arts heritage.

Additionally, the NEA supports the National Medal of Arts through [Program Support](#) funding. These honors are awarded by the President of the United States to individuals or groups who are deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding

contributions to the excellence, growth, support, and availability of the arts in the United States.

- Our Town: \$4.0 million to support creative placemaking projects that integrate arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes. These projects require a partnership between a nonprofit organization and a local government entity, with one of the partners being a cultural organization. Grants range from \$25,000 to \$150,000, with a minimum cost share/match equal to the grant amount.
- Leadership Initiatives: \$23.355 million for the NEA's *Arts Education Partnership*, *Creative Forces*®, *NEA Military Healing Arts Network*, *Poetry Out Loud*, *NEA Big Read*, and *Performing Arts Discovery* programs, among others, that extend the reach of the agency through partnerships with state, regional and national partners. The NEA also will identify opportunities to infuse the arts into civic infrastructure in communities across the country; facilitate further integration of arts in federal social and economic policy and programs; and deepen work with underserved communities. Within this amount, \$2.0 M also is slated for a new initiative associated with the longer-term objectives stemming from the President's "United We Stand" summit. (See '[Leadership Initiatives \(Details\)](#)' below.)

FY 2023 Activities

The NEA holds National Council on the Arts (NCA) meetings several times throughout the year. Consistent with current practices, the first NCA meeting took place in late October 2022 at which time 1,251 organizations were recommended for Grants for Arts Projects 1 (GAP 1), for a total of nearly \$28.8 M in funding. NEA received 1,939 grant applications for GAP 1 consideration for FY 2023, 60 more than the amount the agency received in FY 2022.

The next FY 2023 NCA meeting is slated to take place in late March 2023. At that time, grant recommendations will include the second round of funding for Grants for Arts Projects awards (GAP 2). NEA received 1,928 grant applications for GAP 2 consideration for FY 2023, 120 more than the amount the agency received in FY 2022.

In addition, NEA received 447 applications for the Challenge America Grant program for FY 2023 and recommended 262 organizations for a total of \$2.62 M in funding. This is 233 more applications than the agency received in FY 2022. Challenge America Grants are approved through the Chairman's Delegated Authority.

FY 2022 Accomplishments/Activities

NEA-funded arts activities are as diverse as the places that foster them. The following are just a few of the projects funded in FY 2022:

- Equity Pilot Initiative: Consistent with the NEA's Equity Action Plan, the NEA signed a cooperative agreement with South Arts Inc., with engagement from all six Regional Arts

Organizations, to support a range of eligible organizations throughout the arts and cultural ecosystem that have demonstrated a commitment to equity within their practices and programming and have undertaken consistent engagement with underserved groups/communities. Applications to organizations across the country are expected to open in spring, 2023. The design and implementation of a robust technical assistance program and a comprehensive research and evaluation element are also underway.

- **In Tuskegee, Alabama, Tuskegee University** received a \$150,000 grant to support personnel, safety supplies, and marketing expenses in response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. (American Rescue Plan)
- **In Cordova, Alaska, the Native Village of Eyak Traditional Council** received a \$150,000 grant to support personnel, safety supplies, and marketing expenses in response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. (American Rescue Plan)
- **The City of Reno, Nevada,** received a \$500,000 grant to support a subgranting program, which is helping restore the local community's cultural infrastructure, benefitting arts workers, artists, and audiences. (American Rescue Plan)
- **In West Bloomfield, Michigan, Friendship Circle** received an \$18,000 grant to support professional development for artists with disabilities and the creation of a publication featuring their work. (Grants for Arts Project)
- **In Dillon, Montana, Art Mobile of Montana** received a \$30,000 grant to support a traveling exhibition and visual arts education program that will benefit students and teachers from rural Montana schools, including schools on Native American reservations, and feature original artwork by Montana artists. (Grants for Arts Project)
- **In Nashville, Tennessee, the Actors Bridge Ensemble** received a \$10,000 grant to support the development of a new theater work based on the oral histories and personal narratives of Nashville residents. (Grants for Arts Projects)
- **In Austin, Texas, Forklift Danceworks** received a \$20,000 grant to support an artistic residency with the City of Austin's Watershed Protection Department (WPD). The residency will include artistic research with WPD employees and will lead to the co-creation of a site-specific dance performance inspired by the work they do to maintain Austin's creeks and waterways. (Grants for Arts Projects)
- **In Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, Endless Mountain Music Festival** received a \$10,000 grant to support a series of music performances and outreach activities in rural and economically disadvantaged communities in New York and Pennsylvania. (Challenge America)
- **In Santa Fe, New Mexico, Axle Projects, Inc.** received a \$10,000 grant to support a public art and photography project in rural northern New Mexico. The grant will result in a free mobile photography studio visiting rural communities such as Dulce, Chama,

Taos, and Espanola. (Challenge America)

- In **Eureka, California, Ink People, Inc.** received a \$50,000 award to support the creation of public art and interpretive signage that will reintroduce the spoken and written Wiyot language to public spaces in the Wiyot Tribe homeland of Eureka, California. Project activities include the design and installation of signage featuring Wiyot names for people, places, and geographic features, as well as the design of graphics featuring Wiyot words and phrases that will appear on buses and billboards. The project will be a partnership of Ink People Center for the Arts, the Wiyot Tribe, the City of Eureka, and the Humboldt Transit Authority. It is part of a larger initiative to acknowledge the Wiyot history and presence in the area, following the 2019 landmark agreement to return Tuluwat Island back to the Tribe. (Our Town)

Leadership Initiatives (Detail)

As discussed above, the NEA has a number of high-priority “Leadership Initiatives” within its Promotion of the Arts program. Many of these initiatives revolve around partnerships between the NEA and other entities – not only within the arts sector, but also across the federal government, state and regional agencies, and educational institutions. These partnerships extend and deepen the work of the NEA, embedding the arts and culture in the whole of society, to better serve all communities across America.

Summaries of the NEA’s plans and successes related to budget-impacting initiatives, which cut across several of the NEA’s strategic plan goals, are broken out below to better reflect their importance and the level of interest that they garner from policymakers and the public.

Arts & Human Development Task Force

The NEA spearheads partnerships with other federal agencies to investigate areas of common interest. Since 2011, the NEA has convened the [*Arts and Human Development Task Force*](#), a coalition of representatives from 16 federal entities, to encourage more and better research on how the arts can help people reach their full potential at all stages of life.

In FY 2022, the Task Force met quarterly to review and discuss research on such topics as the arts’ role in social and civic engagement, the relationship of museums and libraries to social well-being, the neuroscience of dance and movement, and how arts programming might deter youth violence. In FY 2023 and FY 2024, the NEA aims to broaden participation in the Task Force and support the productive evolution with additional member agencies that are focused on the intersection of arts, health, and civic infrastructure. The expanded Task Force will build on previous collaborations that have produced research reports and convenings with a focus on increasing understanding of how the arts advance health and enhancing capacity for the adoption of innovative arts and cultural practices within federal funding programs; ultimately strengthening civic infrastructure and improving health outcomes for both local communities and individuals.

Arts Education Partnership

The [*Arts Education Partnership*](#) (*AEP*) is the nation’s hub for arts and education leaders, building their leadership capacity to support students, educators, and learning environments through research, reporting, counseling, and convening. *AEP*, which includes more than 100 organizations dedicated to advancing arts education, has been supported by the NEA and the U.S. Department of Education since 1995 and is administered by Education Commission of the States.

Blue Star Museums

[*Blue Star Museums*](#) is a collaboration among the NEA, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense, and more than 2,000 museums in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto

Rico to offer free admission to the nation's active military personnel including National Guard and Reserve and their families from Armed Forces Day through Labor Day. Participating museums include children's museums, fine art museums, history and science museums, and nature centers.

The program provides families an opportunity to enjoy the nation's cultural heritage and learn more about their new communities after completing a military move. It also helps museums improve their community outreach, and better serve service members and their families.

Citizens' Institute on Rural Design

Citizen's Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a leadership initiative of the NEA in partnership with the Housing Assistance Council. Focusing on communities with populations of 50,000 or less, *CIRD*'s goal is to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of rural America through planning, design, and creative placemaking.

CIRD is intended to empower local citizens to capitalize on unique local and regional assets in order to guide the civic development and future design of their own communities. The *CIRD* program goals include:

- Building capacity in rural communities to plan comprehensive revitalization strategies;
- Introducing creative placemaking, arts, culture, and design strategies as drivers of economic development in rural America;
- Facilitating a network of rural communities for idea exchanges and peer learning; and
- Preparing communities to be ready and competitive for state and federal funding opportunities.

The program offers competitive funding to small towns and rural and tribal communities to host a multi-day local community design workshop. *CIRD* workshops bring together local citizens and community leaders to address specific planning, design, and arts-related issues. Workshops and programming have focused on a range of design topics that include creating public or civic spaces, developing recreational trails, adaptive reuse of community buildings, redesigning main street, integrating cultural identity into the built environment, designing quality affordable housing, and more. *CIRD* issues a call for communities to apply to the program with two opportunities for engagement: hosting a local design workshop and/or participation in the design learning cohort. Experts in architecture, landscape architecture, rural planning, creative placemaking, main street revitalization, economic development, transportation, and related fields are engaged to lend expertise at local design workshops and to facilitate training and capacity building through the design learning cohort. Participating communities receive additional support through webinars, peer exchange, and access to design and arts experts that help to advance their community's vision.

From 2021-2022, *CIRD* engaged four rural communities in hosting a local design workshop and 15 communities in the design learning cohort. Separately, *CIRD* produces public webinars on the topic of rural design for a broad audience and maintains an active and engaging website, www.rural-design.org that serves as a resource to rural communities across the country. *CIRD*

has delivered design assistance to more than 100 rural communities throughout the country since 1991.

Creative Forces®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network

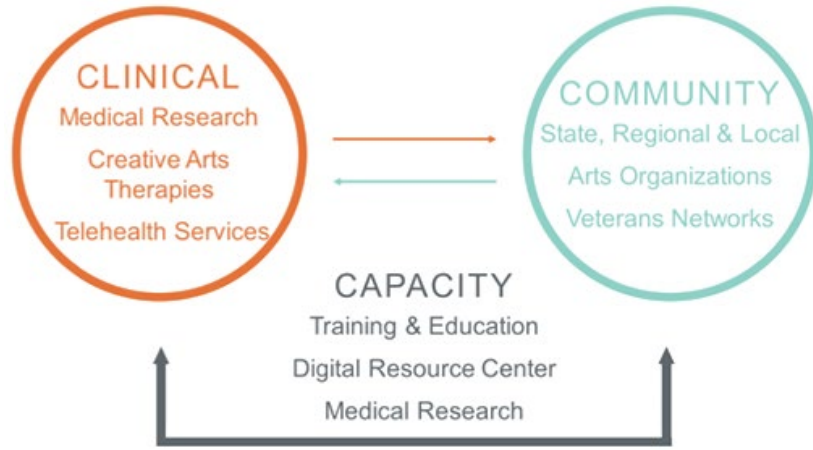
[Creative Forces®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network](#) is an initiative of the NEA in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs (VA) that seeks to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military and veteran populations exposed to trauma, as well as their families and caregivers.

The program places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at clinical sites throughout the country, including telehealth services, and increases access to community arts activities to promote health, well-being, and quality of life for military service members, veterans, and their families and caregivers. *Creative Forces* is managed in partnership with Civic Arts, the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, and Mid-America Arts Alliance.

The program is building a national network of care and support for trauma-exposed service members, veterans, and their families and caregivers.

The program has three components:

- **CLINICAL** – *Creative Forces* is placing creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at military medical facilities, including telehealth delivery of care for patients in rural and remote areas. In clinical settings, creative arts therapists provide art, music, and dance/movement therapies, as well as therapeutic writing instruction, for military patients, veterans, and their families.
- **COMMUNITY** – Since 2017, *Creative Forces* has invested in community arts engagement activities in order to advance our understanding of their benefits and impacts for military and veteran populations exposed to trauma. In 2021, the NEA announced the [Creative Forces Community Engagement grants](#) to support emerging and established non-clinical arts engagement projects designed to promote creative expression, social connectedness, resilience and successful transition to civilian life.
- **CAPACITY** – *Creative Forces* invests in capacity-building efforts, including the development of toolkits, training materials, and other resources to support best practices in serving the target populations. In addition, *Creative Forces* is investing in research on the impacts and benefits—physical, social, and emotional—of these innovative treatment methods.



Creative Forces has supported research and evaluation on how creative arts therapies have helped service members deal with trauma as part of an integrated care model and has published more than 20 clinical research studies in peer reviewed journals since 2016 on the impacts of these treatments for patients with traumatic brain injuries and associated psychological health issues. More recently, the program has expanded to include support for trauma-exposed military-connected populations in both clinical and community settings.

The NEA currently funds creative arts therapists, equipment, and supplies at 12 clinical sites across the nation, plus telehealth services from multiple sites. Through *Creative Forces*, creative arts therapists are anticipated to provide more than 23,000 clinical encounters, and serve approximately 3,200 new patients every year, with additional reach to rural and remote places provided via the telehealth component. In 2020, *Creative Forces* partnered with the VA Office of Rural Health and the North Florida/South Georgia VA Health System to expand access to the creative arts telehealth therapies. In partnership with the Rural Veterans Telerehabilitation Initiative, *Creative Forces* has expanded to three additional VA sites. Each site hired two Creative Arts Therapists to deliver telehealth-based services, one funded by the VA and the other funded by *Creative Forces*.

<i>Creative Forces</i> Clinical Sites	
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), Anchorage, AK	G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center, Jackson, MS
Fort Carson, CO	Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville, NC
James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, Tampa, FL	VA Northeast Ohio Healthcare System, Cleveland, OH
North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System, Gainesville, FL	Fort Hood, TX
Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center, Indianapolis, IN	Fort Belvoir, VA
National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) at Walter Reed, Bethesda, MD	Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Tacoma, WA

In September 2021, the NEA launched a national subgranting program to support community engagement activities for military and veteran populations that have been exposed to trauma. The grant program is open to any eligible organization from across the country. Approximately 25 grants per year are supported by this program, which includes community-level data collection to measure the tangible benefits and impacts of these efforts.

The initiative continues agency investments in research on the impacts and benefits—physical, emotional, social, and economic—of creative arts therapies as innovative treatment methods for military and veteran-connected populations who have been exposed to trauma. [Key clinical research findings](#) associated with *Creative Forces*-supported research indicate that creative arts therapies can:

- Enable recovery from traumatic experiences through meaning-making, positive framing, and verbal processing.
- Reduce symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including flashbacks and nightmares, and interrupted sleep.
- Improve awareness and tolerance of PTSD/traumatic brain injury (TBI) symptoms such as hypervigilance, pain, and stress.
- Encourage development of healthy independent coping mechanisms through creation of a safe environment and therapist/patient rapport.
- Channel aggressive behaviors and provide a means to address anger and anxiety through creative expression and improved self-regulation.
- Foster the ability to experience hope and gratification, and increase confidence through strengths-based rehabilitation.
- Reduce isolation and stigma through meaningful interaction with others and improved communication with family, peers, and providers.

Capacity-building efforts also continue to expand. The Creative Forces National Resource Center was launched in July 2020. The [National Resource Center](#) provides online capacity-building support for the initiative. Features and services of these online support tools will help manage knowledge distribution; support consistent delivery of clinical treatment; coordinate research; facilitate data collection; and, support training and collaboration efforts for stakeholders across clinical and community efforts to support our military and veteran-connected populations.

International

The National Endowment for the Arts brings the benefit of international exchange to arts organizations, artists, and audiences nationwide. The Arts Endowment's international activities increase recognition of the excellence of U.S. arts around the world and broaden the scope of experience of American artists, thereby enriching the art they create. Through partnerships with other government agencies and the private sector, the National Endowment for the Arts fosters international creative collaboration by strengthening residency programs of foreign artists in communities across the country. Local citizens as well as the arts community benefit from the lasting international ties that result.

In March 2022, NEA Chair Jackson was invited to be part of a Presidential Delegation to the United Arab Emirates to attend the United States National Day at [Expo Dubai](#). In August 2022, Chair Jackson delivered a speech about Culture & Freedom at the [Edinburgh International Culture Summit](#) in Scotland. In September 2022, she served as the head of delegation for the U.S. government at UNESCO's [Mondiacult](#) in Mexico City.

USArtists International

[USArtists International \(USAI\)](#), in partnership with Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, supports performances by U.S. artists at impactful international festivals and performing arts marketplaces outside the United States and its jurisdictions. The program supports the engagements of exemplary solo artists and ensembles across all performing arts disciplines including dance, music, theater, multidisciplinary work, and folk/traditional arts.

USAI is designed to encourage the presence of U.S. performing artists on international stages and in the global arts community; to support engagements that develop and expand both the careers and artistic goals of U.S. performers by providing connections with presenters, curators, and fellow artists; and to promote justice in the arts community by elevating the diverse voices contributing to the vibrant array of creative expression in the United States.

In 2022, through this Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation partnership, nearly 1,000 American artists travelled abroad with USAI support to more than 33 different countries.

Performing Arts Discovery

In partnership with Western Arts Alliance, the [Performing Arts Discovery \(PAD\)](#) program promotes U.S. performing artists to international programmers, festival directors, and venue managers. PAD aims to expand international markets and generate overseas touring opportunities for U.S. performing artists.

Performing Arts Global Exchange (PAGE)

[Performing Arts Global Exchange \(PAGE\)](#) in partnership with Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation brings exemplary international music, dance, and theater to audiences across the United States. Fee support grants are available to nonprofit presenting venues and units of state, local, or tribal

government based anywhere in the U.S. or its jurisdictions that book artists from a curated roster. Artists on the roster have not widely toured in the United States and reside in a selected region; the 2022–2023 roster features artists from Australia and New Zealand.

U.S.-Japan Creative Artist Fellowship Program

The [*U.S.-Japan Creative Artist Fellowship Program*](#) provides three- to five-month residencies in Japan for five individual creative artists in any discipline. While in Japan, artists work on an individual project which may include the creation of new work or pursuit of their individual artistic goals. In summer 2019, JUSFC and the Arts Endowment selected five U.S.-Japan artistic teams for the 2019–2020 U.S.-Japan Creative Artists Fellowship Program. Each team collaborated on a project that reflected the themes of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. While the Olympics were postponed because of COVID, the completed projects continue to be showcased in Tokyo.

Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions (FACIE)

In partnership with the State Department, the NEA convenes a Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions (FACIE) panels which make recommendations for official U.S. presentations at the Venice Visual Arts and Architecture Biennials. The Venice Biennale is one of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the world with more than 500,000 visitors yearly. The Art Biennale recently closed with American artist [*Simone Leigh's: Sovereignty*](#) receiving rave reviews. British artist Sonia Boyce and Simone Leigh were awarded Golden Lions, the exhibition's highest honor, at the Venice Biennale in April 2022. Cleveland-based gallery SPACES has been selected to organize the U.S. exhibition at the 2023 Venice [*Architecture*](#) Biennale. The exhibition, titled “Everlasting Plastics”, aims to examine the role of this material “both literally and as a cultural metaphor.”

The NEA also works with other federal agencies and international organizations in order to strengthen global diplomatic ties in the cultural sphere. For example, the NEA's Office of International Activities (OIA) coordinates activity with the U.S. Department of State, especially to connect U.S.-based arts organizations with cultural attachés. Additionally, the OIA is a key point of contact for international cultural visitors from the State Department's International Visitors Leadership Program. OIA works with the State Department's Foreign Service Institute to educate new cultural attaché officers about the NEA before they head to various U.S. Embassy posts.

Other International Activities

The NEA works in partnership with the State Department to carry out key global events that help to bolster the work of U.S. artists and strengthen our global diplomatic presence. This includes the [*Festival Internacional Cervantino*](#), a festival which takes place each fall in the city of Guanajuato, located in central Mexico. The United States will be the country of honor in 2023. The festival originates from the mid-20th century and has grown to become the most important international artistic and cultural event in Mexico and Latin America, and one of four major events of its type in the world.

The NEA and Chair Jackson will participate in the first [Cities Summit of the Americas](#), which will take place April 26-28, 2023, in Denver, CO. The Cities Summit will promote regional cooperation, convening sub-national leaders from across the entire Western Hemisphere with diverse and inclusive representatives of government, civil society, business, academia, youth, culture and the arts, and indigenous and under-represented groups. Together they will engage with national leaders and consider how best to ensure its relevance to citizens at a regional and local level. This includes strengthening democracy and public health, fostering clean energy transitions, meeting environmental challenges, increasing access to critical digital technologies, ensuring the safety and dignity of all migrants, and combatting the spread and influence of disinformation.

Osaka World Expo 2025

The next World Expo will take place in Osaka, Japan in 2025 and the State Department's Expo Unit has asked the NEA to participate. The agency believes this is the perfect opportunity to work closer with the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission and replicate the collaborations of the NichiBei Creative Artists for the Tokyo Olympics in 2020.

Finally, the NEA coordinates programming with the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), a global network of arts councils, ministries of culture and government agencies representing more than 70 countries that advance arts and culture. IFACCA is an important forum for exchange and learning in support of strengthening cultural ecosystems in support of vibrant, sustainable and inclusive societies.

Arts & Artifacts Indemnity Program

The NEA's Museums Office administers the U.S. government's *Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Program* on behalf of the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. The Indemnity Program was created by Congress in 1975 for the purpose of minimizing the costs of insuring domestic and international exhibitions for U.S. nonprofit museums and organizations.

Mayors' Institute on City Design

[Mayors' Institute on City Design \(MICD\)](#) is a leadership initiative of the NEA in partnership with the United States Conference of Mayors. Since 1986, the Mayors' Institute has helped transform communities through design by preparing mayors to be the chief urban designers of their cities. By helping mayors address design challenges, MICD has helped to change the course of cities across the country, leading the way to substantive improvements in everything from public spaces to transportation to economic mobility.

MICD achieves its mission by organizing sessions where mayors engage leading design and development experts to find solutions to the most critical planning and design challenges facing their cities.

Every year, *MICD* plans and manages up to five sessions held throughout the country. Participation in each two-and-one-half-day session is limited to no more than eight mayors and

eight preeminent design and development professionals, along with *MICD* partners. Sessions are organized around case study projects. Each mayor presents a project from his or her city and receives feedback from other mayors and design professionals. Many complex design topics have been addressed in recent years including downtown and neighborhood revitalization, transportation planning, creative placemaking, district visioning and branding, main street and commercial corridor redevelopment, affordable housing, historic preservation, and sustainable development. Following each presentation, mayors and design professionals identify important issues, offer suggestions, and discuss potential solutions. The interchange sparks lively debates, generates new ideas, and inspires creative thinking.

Just City Mayoral Fellowship, a collaboration with the United States Conference of Mayors and the Just City Lab at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, launched in Fall of 2020. Using the *MICD* model, the program brings together eight mayors and a range of design experts over the course of nine weeks to directly tackle racial injustices in each of their cities through planning and design visioning and interventions. Additional *MICD* offerings have included direct technical assistance support for mayors and their planning staff, along with a series of virtual seminars that cover timely topics such as designing streets for pandemic response and recovery, and monuments—reckoning with the past and envisioning the future. *MICD* offers mayors an intimate space to learn from each other and the nation's leading design experts on ways to tackle pressing and timely design challenges. In 2023, *MICD* will invest in developing curricula, case studies, and other resources for mayors to engage arts and culture more deeply in advancing their vision for their city.

With the dual goals of educating mayors about design and educating design professionals about the practical needs of American cities, the program has graduated more than 1,200 mayors and engaged more than 750 designers.

Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge

The [*Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge*](#), a national contest for high school students with a passion for musical theater songwriting and for the wide range of musical styles represented in contemporary musicals. The goal of the program is to engage the musical theater field in nurturing the next generation of songwriters. Working alone or in collaboration with another student, contestants are challenged to create the lyrics and music for an original song that could appear in a musical theater show. Students whose songs are selected as the winning entries will participate in one-on-one songwriting mentorships to continue developing their songs with professional musical theater artists, as well as experience their original song performed by professional musicians and singers for an audience.

NEA Big Read

The [*NEA Big Read*](#), a partnership with Arts Midwest, broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. Showcasing a diverse range of titles that reflect many different voices and perspectives, the *NEA Big Read* aims to inspire conversation and discovery.

The *NEA Big Read* annually provides support to selected nonprofit organizations around the country to host dynamic community-wide reading programs, each designed around a single *NEA Big Read* selection. Arts Midwest manages the *NEA Big Read* grants program. Each community program that receives an NEA Big Read grant—which ranges between \$5,000 and \$20,000—is also provided with resources, outreach materials, and training on various aspects such as working with local partners, developing public relations strategies, and leading book discussions and Q&As. The program may last as short as a week or as long as several months and includes a kick-off event; book discussions; events inspired by the content and themes from the book(s) (e.g., panel discussions, lectures, film screenings); and projects that engage the community and/or respond creatively to the book (e.g., art exhibitions, theatrical and/or musical performances, poetry slams, writing workshops and contests, activities related to collecting and sharing oral/written stories from members of the community).

NEA Research Labs

Through a series of grants and cooperative agreements, the NEA has established a national program that permits transdisciplinary research teams, grounded in the social and behavioral sciences, to engage with the NEA’s [five-year research agenda](#). The [NEA Research Labs](#) program will yield empirical insights about the arts for the benefit of arts and non-arts sectors alike.

Each of the *NEA Research Labs* designs a research agenda, conducts a program to implement its own agenda, and prepares reports and other products that contribute substantively to a wider understanding of one of three areas of special interest to the NEA. In FY 2023, the NEA announced six research topics corresponding with two priority categories that will be addressed by future Labs:

- **Measuring the Impacts of the Arts:** On U.S. Economic Growth, and/or Innovation; On Cognition and Learning; and, On Health and Wellness for Individuals
- **Monitoring and Improving Systems:** Community Health and/or Revitalization; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Arts; and, Other Aspects of the Arts Ecology

These topics stem from the NEA’s five-year research agenda, where they are accompanied by sample research questions to guide applications to the program.

NEA Research Labs are housed at universities and made up of transdisciplinary teams of researchers. The Labs illustrate not only the significant role that the arts play in advancing our understanding of other fields but also in showing the effectiveness of diverse teams—including researchers, artists, and arts administrators—working together to produce knowledge.

In response to findings from the 2020 report, *Arts and Research Partnerships in Practice: Proceedings from the First Summit of the National Endowment for the Arts Research Labs*, NEA is supporting a technical assistance provider to connect and convene the Labs in FY 2023 and FY 2024, and to assist with promoting their work to relevant stakeholders.

In FY 2022, the NEA awarded \$1.95 million to 12 Research Labs, including 5 new Labs and renewed agreements with 7 other Labs. In FY 2022 alone, based on their NEA-supported work, research award recipients produced 14 published articles. In total, there are currently 24 *NEA Research Labs* across the country.

Poetry Out Loud

A partnership of the NEA, the Poetry Foundation, and the state arts agencies, [*Poetry Out Loud*](#) is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life.

Save America's Treasures

[*Save America's Treasures*](#) awards grants to preserve nationally significant historic properties and collections that convey our nation's rich heritage to future generations. The program is administered by the National Park Service in cooperation with the NEA, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Shakespeare in American Communities

[*Shakespeare in American Communities*](#) is a theater program that inspires students nationwide with live performances of Shakespeare's plays. Annually, selected theater companies receive competitive grants to support performances and educational activities. These funds have enabled theater companies to offer more performances to schools and reach more students. They have expanded the geographic reach of their touring programs, and provided improved access to the arts for underserved schools.

[*Shakespeare in American Communities: Juvenile Justice*](#), a leadership initiative in partnership with Arts Midwest, enables theater companies and organizations to engage youths within the juvenile justice system with the works of Shakespeare through theater education programs nationwide. Theater companies and organizations across the nation partner with the juvenile justice system to reach youths through juvenile facilities or detention centers, educational schools/programs specifically for juvenile offenders or incarcerated youths, court-appointed programs, short- or long-term treatment centers, and transitions centers. A growing body of research indicates that arts programs in justice facilities can help reduce recidivism rates, increase self-esteem, and improve social interactions and emotional health.

Sound Health Network

The NEA's [*Sound Health Network*](#) (SHN) is a partnership of the NEA with the University of California, San Francisco in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and Renée Fleming, the center's artistic advisor. The SHN was established to promote research and public awareness about the impact of music on health and wellness. A national resource center, SHN regularly hosts webinars for the public,

issues newsletters, maintains a clearinghouse of research articles, and connects and convenes researchers, musicians, music therapists, and others to improve access to knowledge at this bustling intersection.

SHN aims to expand knowledge and understanding of how listening to, performing, or creating music involves intricate circuitry in the brain that can be harnessed for health and wellness applications in daily life; explore ways to enhance the potential for music as therapy for neurological disorders; identify future opportunities for research; and create public awareness about how the brain functions and interacts with music.

- In FY 2022, SHN hosted a symposium to explore research and practice concerning music and mental health; the Network also partnered with NIH to host a grant-writing workshop for music and health research. In addition, SHN cosponsored “Sound Health: Renew/Remix,” a two-day event featuring lectures, panel discussions, performances, and demonstrations at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In FY 2023 and FY 2024, SHN anticipates extending its partnerships and programming to serve music education educators.
- *Sound Health*, a separate partnership between the John F. Kennedy Performing Arts Center and the NIH, in association with the NEA, promotes research and public awareness about the potential impact of music on neuroscience, health, and well-being. In partnership with NIH, the NEA supports research grants on “Music and Health.”

Additional Partnerships

In addition to the initiatives described above, the NEA recently entered into the following strategic interagency partnerships, which demonstrate the value of the arts more broadly across a wide-range of governmental activities:

- In FY 2022, through a partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF), the NEA cosponsored “The Arts and the Algorithm: An Amalgamation,” a research workshop on integrating the arts with computer science education, and a subsequent report published by the College of Charleston. Both agencies are pursuing plans to extend their research partnership in FY 2023.
- In FY 2022, the NEA, Centers for Disease Control, and CDC Foundation entered into an agreement supporting a CDC Foundation grant program called “Engaging the Arts to Build Vaccine Confidence,” which enabled 30 organizations to work at the intersection of the arts and public health during the height of the pandemic.
- The NEA and General Services Administration entered into an agreement allowing the agencies to collaborate to increase awareness of GSA’s Art in Architecture program and to promote federal art commission opportunities for artists that reflect the diversity of communities across the nation.

- With the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the NEA continues to update and publish national and state-level statistics about the arts and cultural economy.
- In FY 2023, the NEA will partner with the U.S. Department of Education (National Center for Education Statistics) to add an arts component the High School & Beyond longitudinal study.

In FY 2023 and FY 2024, the NEA expects to continue conversations with other federal agencies about forming additional interagency partnerships that strengthen the connection between the arts and other fields.

State and Regional Partnerships (Detail)

Program Activity (\$000)	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Request
State and Regional Partnerships			
Basic Plan Support	45,507	51,139	51,848
Underserved	<u>12,256</u>	<u>13,841</u>	<u>14,032</u>
subtotal	57,763	64,980	65,880

FY 2022 includes use of available funds carried over from prior years. Excludes obligations funded by the American Rescue Plan.

Summary of Increase/Changes - State and Regional Partnerships +0.9 million; \$65.88 million

The NEA is requesting an approximately 1.4 percent increase in its State and Regional Partnerships budget.

Forty percent of the NEA’s grantmaking dollars are awarded to the nation’s 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and six regional arts organizations (RAOs) through state partnership agreements. Partnership funds are matched by state resources on at least a one-to-one basis, with the partial exception of certain funds provided to U.S. jurisdictions, and the ability to seek specific waivers. This approach leverages the NEA’s resources by catalyzing arts projects in thousands of communities across the country and allowing the NEA to build and sustain local arts capacity for planning, programming, evaluation, and communications.

State Partnership Agreements

The National Endowment for the Arts has fostered and encouraged the creation and expansion of SAAs since the mid-1960s. Today, agencies exist in all 50 states and 6 U.S. jurisdictions. Through Partnership Agreements with SAAs, the Arts Endowment is able to extend its reach to every community in the United States, translating national leadership into local benefit.

Regional Partnership Agreements

The RAOs are private, nonprofit entities created by state arts leaders in the mid-1970s to facilitate the exchange of artists across state borders. The National Endowment for the Arts encouraged development of the RAOs to cultivate the touring of artists to sparsely populated and underserved areas of the country. Since that time, the six RAOs have evolved to play a major role in strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the U.S. arts infrastructure, by cultivating public and private resources; working collaboratively across state, national, and international borders; and delivering programming across all disciplines.

National Services Partnership Agreements

National service organizations provide leadership, training, planning, coordination, and information services to support SAAs and RAOs. In FY 2024, the NEA anticipates continuing its National Services Partnership Agreement with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), who provides arts leadership services nationwide.

FY 2023 Activities

- Partnership Agreements: Applications requesting FY 2023 support were submitted from SAAs and RAOs in October 2022. The NEA anticipates once again supporting all 50 state arts agencies, six jurisdictional arts agencies, and six regional arts organizations with funding for programming and activities that supports both locally-identified priorities and NEA strategies.
- Cooperative Agreements: Cooperative agreements with service providers will further the work of the NEA in FY 2023, including renewal of an existing cooperative agreement with NASAA to support research and leadership development services relevant to state arts agencies, jurisdictional arts agencies, and regional arts organizations.
- Field Development: FY 2023 will see important field developments relative to the relationship between jurisdictional arts agencies and regional arts organizations. In June 2022, the three Pacific Island jurisdictional arts agencies (Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities, American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture, & Humanities, and Northern Marianas Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture) joined as members of Western State Arts Federation (WESTAF). In December 2022, Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña joined as a member of the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, marking the first time that all jurisdictional arts agencies are represented by membership with regional arts organization. Regional arts organization membership will provide additional technical assistance and programmatic resources to these jurisdictional arts agencies.

FY 2022 Accomplishments/Activities

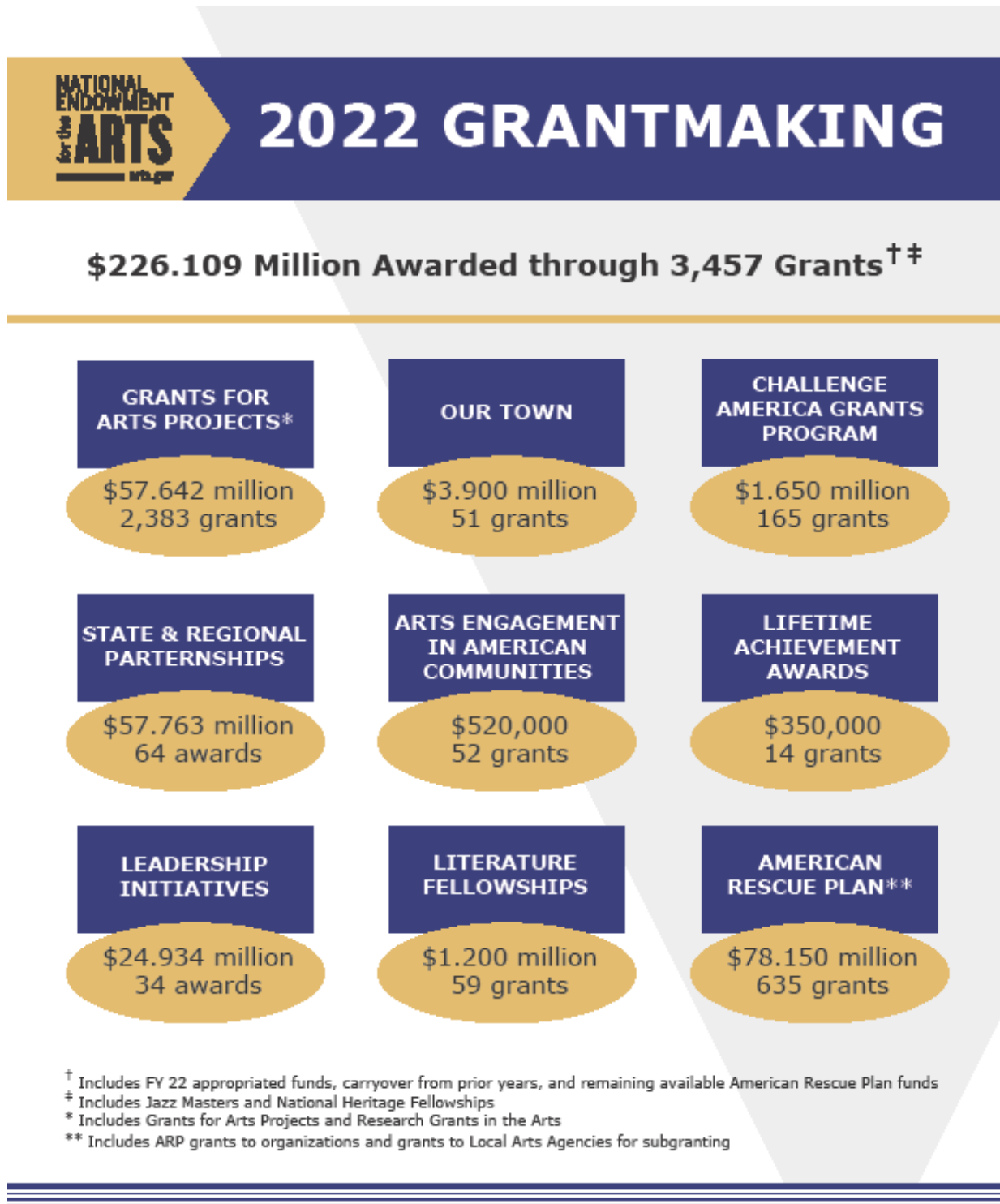
- FY 2022 State Partnership Agreements provided support for the planning and implementation of locally-determined priorities, identified through each state's strategic planning process. In addition, Partnership Agreements provided funding for arts education activities that address the NEA's arts education goals; arts programming in underserved communities, as identified by each state; and folk and traditional arts projects that strengthen the traditional arts and cultural heritage of states, thereby helping to preserve the diverse cultural heritage of the nation.
- FY 2022 Regional Partnership Agreements provided support for the planning and implementation of locally-determined priorities, identified through each RAO's strategic planning process. In addition, Partnership Agreements provided funding for touring artists and performer showcases, giving priority to underserved communities; folk and traditional arts projects that strengthen the traditional arts and cultural heritage of regions,

thereby helping to preserve the diverse cultural heritage of the nation; and professional development training for accessibility.

Partnership Agreement Outcomes

- In FY 2022, local priorities for both SAAs and RAOs focused on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, both on arts agencies and their constituents. Partnership Agreements include the ability for grantees to subgrant federal funds, successfully furthering the reach of federal dollars. Work also continued to emphasize issues surrounding access, diversity, inclusion, and equity. For SAAs, additional priorities included efforts to expand community engagement, especially in underserved communities; and community and economic development, arts education, and lifelong learning. For RAOs, additional priorities included a pandemic-related focus on touring. With the bulk of their work related to the support and presentation of performing arts, the RAOs pivoted quickly to encourage and support moving as much of the work online as possible while still maintaining opportunities for audiences to connect with artists in real-time, which is a hallmark of the NEA's RAO Touring Program.

The following graphic provides additional details on the NEA’s grantmaking in FY 2022.



Program Support

Program Support activities directly relate to and enable the NEA to serve the American public by exercising leadership with the arts fields. These activities include: grant application review, research and analysis projects, outreach, production of various agency publications, travel for members of the National Council on the Arts (NCA), arts accessibility activities, contractual services, and assessments for E-Government initiatives.

Program Activity (\$000)	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Request
Program Support			
Panels and Reviewers	338	380	380
Consultants	46	62	62
Printing and Reproduction	33	51	52
Travel	0	74	80
Research and Analysis	1,281	1,238	1,400
Accessibility	1	23	23
Other Services	124	342	356
Grants.gov Assessment	<u>209</u>	<u>330</u>	<u>397</u>
Total	2,032	2,500	2,750

FY 2022 includes use of available funds carried over from prior years. Excludes obligations funded by the American Rescue Plan.

Summary of Increase/Changes: +0.250 million; \$2.75 million

The two primary drivers of the request for additional Program Support resources are:

- **Research and Analysis:** The NEA requests \$1.4 million, \$162,000 more than FY 2023. Included within this amount are funds to support two significant Office of Research and Analysis (ORA) program support projects: an outcomes evaluation of a community-arts-engagement grants program as part of the NEA’s Creative Forces initiative and an outcomes evaluation of the NEA’s Equity Pilot Initiative.
- **Grants.gov Assessment:** The NEA projects that the annual fee charged by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for the NEA’s use of Grants.gov will increase by \$67,000 based on the five-year rolling average assessment calculation that now contains additional usage data related to the NEA’s ARP and CARES Act grantmaking activities.

The NEA requests \$2.75 M in FY 2024 for the following Program Support activities:

- Panels and Reviewers. \$380,000 is requested for panelist and reviewer compensation. As required by law, the NEA engages expert advisors to review grant applications, which enhances the credibility, transparency, and fairness of the review system.
- Consultants. \$62,000 is requested to support expert consultants' participation at convenings on arts topics, and review of manuscripts submitted as part of the *NEA Literature Fellowships* application review process.
- Printing and Reproduction. \$52,000 is requested for the production of publications that directly relate to the arts fields, including brochures about agency grant opportunities.
- Travel. \$80,000 is requested to support travel for NCA members, recipients of the National Medal of Arts, and individuals participating at convenings, symposia, and meetings.
 - Members of the NCA (composed of up to 18 voting members) typically travel to Washington, D.C. three times per year to advise the NEA Chair on agency policies, grant applications, and the funding of specific projects. They also travel to attend working groups and other agency meetings and functions. As the NEA returns to its regular practices in this area, it will continue to monitor the appropriateness of travel consistent with COVID-19 guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force.
 - The NEA's request also funds travel for recipients of the *National Medal of Arts* to receive their awards at the White House should a ceremony be held in FY 2024. Created by Congress in 1984, the *National Medal of Arts* is conferred annually by the President to honor persons and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to the excellence, support, growth, and availability of the arts in the United States.
 - In addition, the NEA anticipates inviting a limited number of individuals to travel at the request of the NEA to participate at convenings, symposia, and meetings on various arts topics.
- Research and Analysis. The NEA requests \$1.4 million in Program Support funds for research and analysis. The NEA's Office of Research and Analysis (ORA) produces unique data sets to the public and analyses and reports that provide important insights into public policy issues affecting artists, arts organizations, and arts audiences. Funding in this area also supports activities essential to implement the goals, objectives, and performance measurements reflected in the agency's Strategic Plan and Performance Plan.

- ORA-produced datasets include the Arts Basic Survey (ABS) and the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), both conducted in partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau; and the Arts Module of the General Social Survey (GSS), supported in partnership with the National Science Foundation. The NEA makes these datasets publicly available, along with other arts-related data and data tools, through its [National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture](#) (NADAC), a free online repository for researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers.
- Program Support funding also will be used to initiate new studies as part of the NEA’s five-year Research Agenda and the agency’s FY 2023 and FY 2024 Learning Agenda (including program evaluations of two NEA flagship initiatives); sustain a National Statistics and Evidence Reporting Center and a technical assistance provider for the NEA’s Research Labs program; and create and maintain interactive maps and dashboards based on NEA grants data—a priority of the agency’s Data Governance Board.
- Accessibility. The agency goal of increasing access to the arts for all Americans is achieved, in part, by addressing grantee compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The \$23,000 requested will support symposia, workshops, and panels that address accessibility issues.
- Other Services. \$356,000 is requested for contractual services supporting programs, projects, and initiatives as well as the *National Medal of Arts*; the costs associated with panel operations; negotiation and approval of indirect cost rates for nonprofit organizations and non-Federal organizations; and efforts to enhance public access to and knowledge about the agency’s activities, such as production of agency publications, online content, and webcasts made available to the arts field and general public.
- Assessment for Grants.gov. The Grants.gov initiative is part of the overall E-Government program for improving access to government services via the internet. The charter of Grants.gov calls for establishing a simple, unified electronic storefront for interactions between grant applicants and the Federal agencies that manage grant funds. Grants.gov allows organizations to find and apply electronically for competitive grant opportunities from all Federal grantmaking agencies. As one of 26 Federal grantmaking agencies, the NEA is assessed an annual fee for use of Grants.gov, which is paid to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the managing partner for Grants.gov. \$397,000 is requested for the FY 2024 Grants.gov assessment.

FY 2023 Activities

Research and Analysis. In FY 2023, the NEA intends to generate technical documentation and reports from public datasets in the arts based on 2022 surveys that will have been conducted through partnerships with the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Science Foundation. Funding provided in FY 2023 also will sustain a National Statistics and Evidence Reporting Center and a technical assistance provider for the NEA Research Labs program. It also will be used to support

analytical capacity for NEA research staff in the production and maintenance of user-friendly data tools and templates. Finally, program support funding will be used to initiate research and evaluation projects stemming from the NEA's five-year Research Agenda and FY 2023 Learning Agenda.

Quality Grant Application Review. All grant applications to the NEA are reviewed on the basis of artistic excellence and artistic merit, as required by the agency's authorizing legislation. Applications generally receive three levels of review. First, they are reviewed by independent, national panels of artists and art experts. Panels make recommendations that are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts (NCA). The NCA, the NEA's advisory body, comprises nationally and internationally renowned artists, distinguished scholars, and arts patrons appointed by the President, and members of Congress (who serve *ex officio*). Per the NEA's authorizing legislation, "*in making such appointments, the President shall give due regard to equitable representation of women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities who are involved in the arts and shall make such appointments so as to represent equitably all geographical areas in the United States.*" The NCA reviews and makes recommendations on the applications. Those recommendations for funding are sent to the NEA Chair. The Chair reviews those applications and makes final decisions on all grant awards.

The NEA's application review process relies on the assistance of citizen experts who serve as panelists and consultants; their membership must comply with the agency's authorizing legislation which includes ensuring "*that all panels are composed, to the extent practicable, of individuals reflecting a wide geographic, ethnic, and minority representation as well as individuals reflecting diverse artistic and cultural points of view.*" To achieve this mandate, the NEA carefully tracks the characteristics of each panel, including the percentage of new versus returning panelists, representation from people of color, sex/gender balance, and geographic diversity. The NEA also ensures that panelists bring diverse points of view to the grant application review process, as evidenced by factors such as their experience in the arts, education and/or work experience, and other professional activities. At the end of each year, the NEA analyzes its achievements in these areas. Panels contribute significantly to the Chair's funding decisions. For review of FY 2023 applications, the NEA anticipates that approximately 700 citizen experts will review approximately 6,500 grant applications.

Since 2014, 100 percent of the NEA's panels have occurred virtually rather than in-person and yielded the same level of quality results at considerable cost-savings. Further, through the use of an electronic application review system, the NEA has enhanced its application review process by enabling applicants to upload their application material electronically; panelists to review application material (including work samples), score, and comment online in advance of panel meetings; and, staff to use new tools for the application process and the management of panel meetings. Panelists thoroughly review all applications, have quality discussions, and recommend applications of high artistic excellence and merit for funding. Panelists and NEA staff are overwhelmingly satisfied with the quality of virtual grant application review.

Virtual panels also result in other practical benefits: meeting planning is streamlined; the agency's pool of potential panelists is expanded; and, staff and panelists have more time to focus

on application review. Additionally, use of virtual panels and the processes and procedures put in place aided the NEA significantly during the pandemic.

In alignment with the agency's engagement efforts, NEA is exploring solutions to support communities that may have limited access to internet.

FY 2022 Accomplishments/Activities

Quality Research and Analysis. In FY 2022, ORA published interactive data tools, maps, fact-sheets, and three research briefs about U.S. artists and arts managers and their demographic and/or geographic characteristics. Accompanied by an interactive data tool, these briefs—which drew on special tabulations from the U.S. Census Bureau—were designed to advance regional and national policy conversations about diversity and equity within the arts workforce. ORA also published data, interactive tools, fact-sheets, and reports related to the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account, a product of the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and supported by the NEA. In addition to its own production of research briefs and data tables, ORA prepared and contributed 13 arts-related datasets and/or catalogue listings to the National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture (NADAC). In particular, through NADAC, ORA released quarterly issues of *Arts Research Quarterly* – a round-up of recent journal articles – and hosted a public webinar, “Arts Production in an Era of Crowdfunding.” Also, in the first quarter of FY 2023, ORA released research publications, datasets, and an interactive graphic about U.S. arts participation patterns in 2019-2020.

Effective Engagement. Outreach is a critically important strategy for all agency goals. Through the Program Support account, our outreach efforts focus primarily on the use of our website, the production and distribution of materials, and the use of social media as vehicles for communication. We support outreach intended to educate applicants, grantees, and the general public. Additionally, we provide technical assistance that encourages accessibility in arts programming for older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, and people who reside in institutions. In FY 2022, the agency evolved its strategy from “outreach” to “engagement,” and finding ways to build trust and long-lasting relationships with communities whose access to NEA funding, programming and resources has been limited by ethnicity, geography, economics and disability.

Examples of accomplishments include:

- Providing up-to-date information on the arts and the NEA on our website, such as the [National Endowment for the Arts blog](#), that highlights how the arts strengthen and promote the well-being and resilience of neighborhoods and towns across America; and by webcasting live events such as the *NEA Jazz Masters* awards ceremony and concert, and public meetings of the National Council on the Arts. The NEA also continues to maintain an [online grant search](#) tool that allows the public to search all of the NEA's grants since 1998.
- Expanding the use of webinars to interact with the public. Webinars cover a wide variety of subjects, from grant workshops, to press conferences, to NEA research

efforts, to presentations on topics of interest to both the agency and its constituents. Recent webinars include:

- Grant guideline workshops, with presentations by NEA staff followed by question and answer sessions.
- On March 11, 2021, the NEA hosted [*The Art of Reopening Webinar*](#) exploring best practices for reopening arts venues. The webinar is based in part on the NEA's report [*The Art of Reopening: A Guide to Current Practices Among Arts Organizations During COVID-19*](#) that was published in January 2021. The report examines reopening practices of organizations that resumed in-person programming in 2020 and presents promising tactics along with nine case studies.

The use of webinars provides members of the public with an opportunity to communicate directly with and ask questions of the agency, as well as an available resource to share with others and use for future reference. In turn, the NEA is able to interact with more members of the public than it could in a single in-person forum, while also saving travel and meeting costs.

- Producing and distributing materials such as:
 - The [*Guide to the National Endowment for the Arts*](#), which provides details on the programs and activities that the NEA supports, as well as funding deadlines for the agency's various grant programs.
 - [*American Artscape*](#), the agency's quarterly magazine featuring interviews with and stories on artists, arts organizations, and arts projects from across the United States.
 - The agency's [*Annual Reports*](#), highlighting NEA activities during a given fiscal year.

Using social media: the agency has a presence on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), and [Instagram](#), all with the goal of helping the NEA share information and stay connected to the public. On YouTube, the public can access information such as video profiles of *NEA Jazz Masters*, and hear students who participated in *Poetry Out Loud* talk about their experience with the program.

Administration

The NEA’s Administration (Salaries and Expenses) budget provides operating funds essential to the achievement of the mission, goals, and objectives of the NEA. Funds provided for this program activity cover personnel compensation and benefits; staff and invitational travel; rental payments to the General Services Administration (GSA); communications and utilities; contractual services such as training and information technology support, reimbursable interagency agreements with other federal agencies; and the acquisition of supplies and equipment.

Program Activity (\$000)	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Request
Administration (Salaries & Expenses)			
Personnel Compensation	18,303	20,750	23,381
Civilian Personnel Benefits	6,211	7,053	8,132
Benefits for Former Personnel	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
Total Compensation & Benefits	24,521	27,813	31,523
Travel & Transportation of Persons	114	450	475
Transportation of Things	1	8	8
Rental Payments to GSA	2,995	3,029	3,096
Comm., Utilities & Misc. Charges	249	283	287
Printing and Reproduction	17	30	30
Other Services	3,799	8,422	7,389
Supplies and Materials	5	48	50
Equipment	408	1,967	692
Insurance Claims & Indemnities	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Other	7,591	14,237	12,027
Total: Salaries and Expenses	32,112	42,050	43,550
FTEs	140	154	168

FY 2022 includes use of available funds carried over from prior years. Excludes reimbursable funding and obligations funded by the American Rescue Plan, along with those funded from the Gifts and Donations account.

Summary of Increase/Changes: +01.5 million; \$43.55 million

Compensation and Benefits: The NEA’s FY 2024 submission requests seven additional positions to address the increased administrative and financial management workload associated with the NEA’s growth in overall demand and grant volumes, particularly with regard to application processing, awards processing, and grants management.

Office of the Chief Diversity Officer: The FY 2024 Budget includes \$1.0 million to permanently establish the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer. The NEA anticipates hiring a Chief Diversity Officer in FY 2023. This position was established in response to Executive Order 14035 on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce. The CDO position and Office will support the agency’s implementation of the DEIA Strategic Plan and lead/support other special initiatives, further embedding DEIA throughout the NEA’s programs, operations, policies, and practices and thereby advancing the Agency’s Strategic Plan and Equity Action Plan.

The NEA requests \$43.55 million in FY 2024 for Administration (S&E) for the following cost areas and activities:

- Personnel Compensation and Benefits. Personnel compensation and benefits account for approximately 72 percent of the agency’s S&E budget. The personnel compensation request of \$31.523 million supports 168 FTE. This funding level also covers the anticipated 5.2% federal employee pay raise for January 2024. (See “[Attracting and Retaining Talented Professionals](#)” section below.)
- Staff and Invitational Travel. \$0.475 million is requested for local and out-of-town travel for staff. This travel amount supports agency outreach efforts, technical assistance to grantees and potential applicants, and travel related to the planning and implementation of the agency’s projects, activities, and initiatives.
- Rent. \$3.096 million is requested for rental of office space in the Constitution Center in FY 2024.
- Contractual Services and Interagency Agreements. Contractual services obtained from the private sector and interagency agreements with other federal agencies include, but are not limited to, security, training, and various miscellaneous services such as administrative contracts for information technology and financial assistance. The Budget provides \$7.389 million for these purposes.

The NEA uses contractual services and interagency agreements for a range of activities such as payroll and personnel processing with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Health and Human Services’ Employee Assistance Program. Funds also are used for the agency’s information technology management program including:

- Support of the financial management information system (Delphi) and e-travel services system (E2) provided under an interagency agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Enterprise Services Center (ESC).
- Support for an electronic grants management system (eGMS) provided under an interagency agreement with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) through a strategic partnership.

Expenses associated with IT modernization and cybersecurity initiatives are detailed in the “Commitment to IT Modernization” section below.

- Other Operating Expenses. \$1.067 million is requested for other operating services including transportation of things; communications, utilities, and miscellaneous charges; printing; supplies; and equipment (including information technology hardware and software).

Commitment to IT Modernization

The NEA requests funding within the Salaries & Expenses budget line item for IT resources, including personnel and funding for IT modernization and cybersecurity initiatives.

In alignment with the Executive Order on Improving the Nation’s Cybersecurity issued on May 12, 2021, the NEA’s Salaries & Expenses request includes funding for investments in specific capabilities that protect and defend our systems and information. In particular, the FY 2024 request includes \$4.3 million, \$1.0 million more than provided by Congress in FY 2023, to continue the NEA’s multiyear efforts to implement the President’s Executive Order on Improving the Nation’s Cybersecurity including a focus on Zero Trust implementation and security logging requirement.

Recognizing the critical importance of a secure cyberspace, the NEA thus far has:

- Worked with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to complete the implementation of continuous diagnostic monitoring (CDM).
- Worked with CISA to successfully implement EINSTEIN 3 Accelerated to provide intrusion prevention security services through our Internet Service Provider.
- Developed an integrated, continuous delivery “pipeline” system for the agency’s grant application Applicant Portal to provide a more secure and immutable infrastructure.
- Completed the deployment and integration of a new remote access platform and retired its use of traditional VPNs.
- Improved its identity and access control (in FY 2022) by completing the migration of logical access for all systems to a cloud-based Identity as a Service tool. Logical access to all IT systems, likewise, is now managed from one user database using multi-factor authentication (MFA).

In FY 2023, the NEA plans to continue its commitment to cybersecurity by:

- Establishing an agreement or contract for security as a service activities to satisfy FISMA findings and fill gaps where resources are unavailable. This effort will include using a SOC-as-a-Service to monitor and respond to cyber events in real time.

- Replacing and updating the Agency's switches and wireless router equipment.
- Completing the move of the NEA's 'Council Book Viewer' to the a more secure, cloud-based system and simultaneously making it a public facing application that is integrated with Login.gov and requires MFA for usage by the agency's council members.
- Procuring and implementing a Privileged Access Management tool to aid in our Zero Trust Architecture implementation and increase our cybersecurity.

Building on FY 2023, the following cybersecurity investments and enhancements are planned for FY 2024:

- Implementation of enhanced logging covering Azure Cold and Hot Storage, centralizing the logs in order to perform fast searches and powerful visualizations to monitor key metrics.
- Implementation of additional controls over Personally Identifiable Information and Controlled Unclassified Information through tagging.
- The purchase of additional Microsoft, Okta and Zscaler security modules to enhance the NEA's network and cloud security in alignment with the agency's Zero Trust architecture plan.
- As new applications are adopted into the NEA's environment, all agency systems will be managed by an identity provider and require MFA.
- Update and create documentation required for agency systems to maintain an Authority to Operate.
- Continue network security upgrades by limiting cross communication between VNets and Resource Groups, limiting East West Traffic Communication, implementing Zscaler Tunnel 2 on devices, and strengthening ZPA Access policies.
- Update the agency's patch management tool to accommodate remote work devices.
- Implement PRISM, a web-based, commercial off-the-shelf, procurement and contract management system. This tool will streamline end-to-end procurement, integrating and tracking information from the initiation of the requirement through solicitation and award.

In addition to the cybersecurity enhancements discussed above, the NEA made the following general technology improvements in FY 2022:

- The Office of Information & Technology Management (OITM) infrastructure team reviewed the technical infrastructure and developed a plan to transition to Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6). (The NEA anticipates beginning to transition to IPv6 in FY 2023.)
- OITM worked with the Office of General Counsel (OGC) to develop and deploy a new OGC case management system to automate OGC’s workflows.
- Upgraded SharePoint utilizing Power Automate to provide automated updates to the Change and Control Management Board and Incident Response workflows. (The NEA is planning to implement an automated Plan of Action and Milestones tracking workflow in FY 2023.)
- Modernized and updated the agency’s three major information systems (the GSS, the agency website (arts.gov), and the grant application Applicant Portal):
 - Current modernization efforts for the NEA’s GSS system include the migration of servers and file services to the MS Azure cloud.
 - The NEA’s arts.gov website, which uses the Drupal content management system was successfully upgraded from version 8 to version 9 and now is Section 508 compliant.
 - The Applicant Portal is hosted in the Microsoft Azure cloud using both Infrastructure as a Service and Platform as a Service cloud technologies. Changes to code were made to accommodate the move from DUNS numbers to Unique Entity Identifiers.

Attracting and Retaining Talented Professionals

The NEA’s staff, its most valuable asset, is dedicated to the agency’s mission of promoting and strengthening the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation.

The NEA’s FY 2024 submission requests seven additional positions to address the increased administrative and financial management workload associated with the NEA’s growth in overall demand and grant volumes, particularly with regard to application processing, awards processing, and grants management.

The NEA staff has proven its resilience in its ability to adapt in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NEA transitioned to a mainly virtual workforce for two-and-a-half years without losing its ability to operate effectively, efficiently, and with continued exemplary levels of customer service. In June 2022, the NEA finalized a new Telework and Remote Work Directive, consistent with OPM’s “2021 Guide to Telework and Remote Work in the Federal Government.”

NEA is continuing its commitment to the principles of embedding diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) into the agency's work practices, to foster a safe place for employees to thrive. The NEA invests in training, mentorship, and staff recognition programs, and promotes strong employee morale and work-life balance in order to attract, develop, and retain a talented and diverse staff who are empowered and equipped to execute a shared mission and vision for the agency.

Below is a list of strategies for implementation of this important objective:

- Recruit and retain a highly motivated, diverse, and talented workforce.
- Ensure that all agency staff are developed and trained to succeed while employed at the NEA.
- Develop and maintain a work environment that is safe, diverse, and inclusive, with an emphasis on open communication and the well-being of NEA staff.

The NEA's workforce is at the heart of its ability to provide the American people with the highest level of service. The NEA identifies critical workforce needs; it recruits strategically and in compliance with government hiring principles; it provides its workforce with incentives such as training and advancement opportunities, as appropriate; and it develops and maintains policies and processes to ensure excellent performance and accountability.

The NEA has taken steps to foster an environment that supports a highly productive, creative, and motivated workforce. In addition to government-wide benefits—including family-friendly leave policies, and flexible/alternative work schedules—the NEA provides wellness services, such as its interagency agreement with Federal Occupational Health (FOH) to provide health center services and employee assistance programs to agency staff.

The NEA also uses federally approved awards such as performance awards, special acts, and time-off awards as a means to reward and incentivize employees. Estimated awards spending in FY 2023 and FY 2024 is provided in [Appendix B: Awards and Recognition Data](#).

Office of Inspector General (OIG)

The Office of Inspector General was established in 1989 pursuant to provisions of the Inspector General Act Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-504), and the Inspector General Reform Act of 2008. The OIG is responsible for conducting audits, investigating allegations of unlawful or unauthorized activity, and providing technical assistance to grantees on matters relating to the financial management of their awards. The OIG helps the agency evaluate and improve management systems to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse, and ensure efficient, effective service. In addition, the OIG works with the Chief Information Officer to ensure the NEA’s compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act.

There is no separate appropriation for the OIG; the OIG’s budget is funded within the NEA’s Administration budget. Pursuant to the Inspector General Reform Act of 2008, the following table reflects the funding provided for the Inspector General.

Program Activity (\$000)	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Request
Personnel Compensation	644	632	769
Personnel Benefits	144	150	196
Travel	0	14	14
Other Services	150	185	167
Training	2	15	15
Equipment	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	941	998	1,163
FTEs	4	4	5

Appendices

Appendix A: Budget Request by Object Class
(\$ thousands)

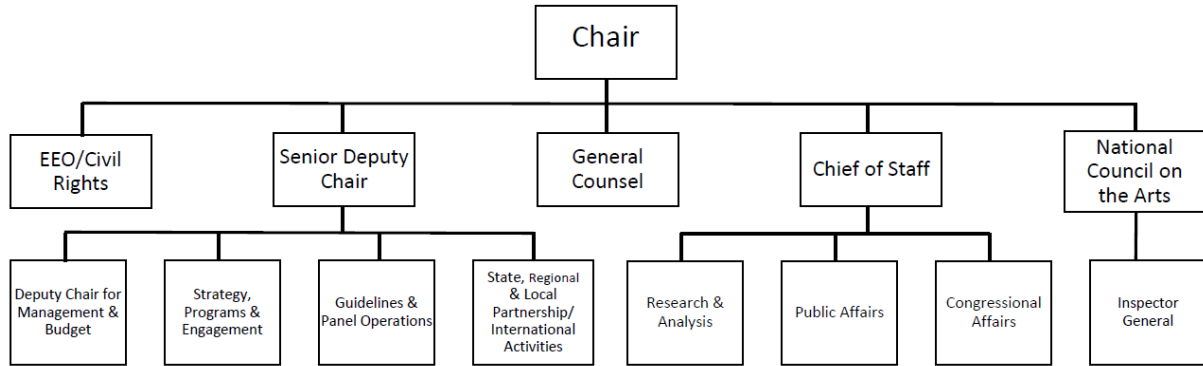
Object Class	Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Request
	Promotion of the Arts			
25.1	Advisory and Assistance Services	790	1,000	1,000
41.0	Grants, Subsidies, and Contributions	147,169	161,450	163,700
	Total	147,959	162,450	164,700
	Program Support			
21.0	Travel and Transportation of Persons	0	82	82
24.0	Printing and Reproduction	33	51	52
25.1	Advisory and Assistance Services	1,315	1,492	1,649
25.2	Other Services from Non-Federal Sources	674	853	945
25.3	Other Goods and Services from Federal Sources	10	20	20
26.0	Supplies and Materials	0	2	2
	Total	2,032	2,500	2,750
	Administration			
11.1	Full-Time Permanent	15,420	17,279	19,741
11.3	Other than Full-Time Permanent	2,385	2,672	3,053
11.5	Other Personnel Compensation	498	524	587
11.8	Special Personal Services Payments	0	275	0
11.9	<i>Total Personnel Compensation</i>	18,303	20,750	23,381
12.1	Civilian Personnel Benefits	6,211	7,053	8,132
13.0	Benefits for Former Personnel	7	10	10
	Total Personnel Compensation and Benefits	24,521	17,813	31,523
21.0	Travel and Transportation of Persons	114	450	475
22.0	Transportation of Things	1	8	8
23.1	Rental Payments to GSA	2,995	3,029	3,096
23.3	Communications, Utilities and Misc. Charges	249	283	287
24.0	Printing and Reproduction	17	30	30
25.1	Advisory and Assistance Services	710	952	720
25.2	Other Services from Non-Federal Sources	2,437	5,142	4,650
25.3	Other Goods and Services from Federal Sources	652	2,328	2,019
26.0	Supplies and Materials	5	48	50
31.0	Equipment	408	1,967	692
42.0	Insurance Claims & Indemnities	3	0	0
	Other Object Classes	7,591	14,237	12,027
	Total	32,112	42,050	43,550
	TOTAL - National Endowment for the Arts	182,103	207,000	211,000

FY 2022 includes use of available funds carried over from prior years. Excludes reimbursable funding and obligations funded by the American Rescue Plan, along with those funded via the Gift and Donations account.

Appendix B: Awards and Recognition Data
(\$ in thousands)

Estimate of FY 2023 Salary Spending, excluding Senior Executive Service (SES), Political Appointees, and Expert Consultants	17,557
Estimate for awards spending in FY 2023	439
Estimate of FY 2023 Awards Spending as a Percent of FY 2023 non-SES Salary Spending	2.5%
Estimate of FY 2024 Salary Spending, excluding SES, Political Appointees, and Expert Consultants	20,059
Estimate for awards spending in FY 2024	501
Estimate of FY 2024 Award Spending as a Percent of FY 2024 non-SES Salary Spending	2.5%

Appendix C: Organizational Chart
(as of March 2023)



Appendix D: NEA's Racial Equity & Access Working Group

The Racial Equity and Access Working Group, formed in response to Executive Order 13985, is charged with defining the agency's equity strategy. In the NEA's Equity Action Plan of January 20, 2022, which is in alignment with the NEA's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, the agency identified the following five areas for increased focus in order to support equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice for all Americans in the United States:

- *Arts participation in underserved communities* to address and reduce the gap between availability of arts programming and the participation of underserved groups.
- *Community engagement* to expand engagement with underserved communities through webinars and key partner organizations.
- *Accessibility* to develop concrete policies and procedures for providing access accommodations for persons with disabilities and limited English proficiency.
- *Data* to determine the feasibility of expanding demographic data collection related to grant beneficiaries, staff, and leadership of grant recipient organizations.
- *Contracting and procurement* to increase awareness of contract and procurement opportunities to HUBZone and other underrepresented groups.

National Arts Equity Program (in support of EO 13985, 13988, 14020, 14035)

Building on the work we started in FY 2022, the NEA will continue to advance equity and inclusion via systems change and leadership development within the arts field, in conjunction with arts service organizations nationwide.

Arts service organizations, especially arts agencies at the regional and local levels, are strong and steady representatives of the arts community. These service organizations form scaffolding in which arts organizations can thrive. In 2020 and 2021, they provided much-needed economic relief to the arts field, through the CARES Act, the American Rescue Plan, and countless hours of technical assistance. Because many have spent years building relationships in every state and jurisdiction, these organizations have the ability to adapt quickly to the needs of their communities.

The NEA will continue investing in its partnership with arts service organizations as a pillar of its equity strategy. The agency multiplies its impact by working collectively with this network of arts service organizations.

Grants for Arts Projects (in support of EO 13985, 14035)

The agency plans to increase funding for grants projects that focus on underrepresented communities within the arts, including, but not limited to, increasing funding provided to Local Arts Agencies for subgranting, and arts education. Examples of *Grants for Arts Projects* awarded in FY 2022 include:

- **Austin, TX** - Ground Floor Theatre (GFT) received \$10,000 for a production of *Dot* by Colman Domingo. *Dot* focuses not only on a Black family in West Philly, but also

handles issues of aging, caretaking of elder parents, and dementia. This piece includes fully developed elderly characters, one of the areas most underrepresented in American theatre. GFT will also host a discussion with the playwright after one performance.

- **San Francisco, CA** - Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project received \$20,000 for Critical Juncture: Filmmaker Mentoring Program for LGBTQ+ Black/African Descent, Native American/Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, Latinx, multi-ethnic, women of color. The Critical Juncture project serves Emerging and Early Career filmmakers that are lesbian, bisexual, queer (LBTQ+), cisgender and transgender Black/African descent, Native American, Indigenous, women of color (LBTQ+ BIPOC women). QWOCMAP will combine creative and technical resources and support.
- **Elbert, CO** - Brink Literacy Project received \$10,000 to assist with publishing three print issues of *F(r)iction* every year. Each issue includes fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, comics, and illustrations from new and established artists. A women-founded and run project, *F(r)iction* is the publishing vehicle through which Brink amplifies literature from diverse and underrepresented voices, mentors emerging writers, and delves into themes that explore important social issues.
- **Boston, MA** - Project STEP, Inc. received \$50,000 to support Project STEP's Intensive Music Training Program for Talented Underrepresented Young People, an intensive music training program for talented children from backgrounds underrepresented in classical music, a Direct Learning project. Project STEP will provide 63 students (primarily Latinx and Black) in grades 1-12 with instrumental and ensemble instruction, personalized support and guidance, performance experiences, and opportunities to interact with professional musicians and hear concerts in Greater Boston.

Support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities

The NEA is committed to advancing the agency's work pertaining to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access, and fostering mutual respect for the diverse beliefs and values of all individuals and groups. Part of this commitment includes our partnership with the White House Initiative on HBCUs. Since 2018, the NEA has engaged with 74 out of 102 HBCUs. A few *Grants for Arts Projects* examples of successful applications from or involving HBCUs in FY 2022 include:

- **Dayton, OH** - Dayton Contemporary Dance Company received \$15,000 for Black Tour. DCDC's Black Tour reaches American cities having a civil rights museum that houses a Black visual art exhibit, a performing arts center, and education activities at the local Historically Black College and University (HBCU). The tour's purpose is to illuminate the Black experience through visual art and dance art, specifically, but not exclusively, through the civil rights movement. The tour is a community-oriented offering of art, history, celebration, and awareness. When touring to a community with a historically Black college or university, the company will provide students with dance classes and the opportunity to interact with company dancers and artistic leadership.
- **Accokeek, MD** - Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts received \$30,000 in support of a Master Class Series featuring Black classical musicians

conducting sessions free of charge to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). For the last six years, including 2020 during the covid-19 pandemic, CAAPA has collaborated with HBCU's music departments throughout the nation to work with underserved, diverse, and/or underrepresented students in music and the performing arts. The series will help students hone their musical skills through expert advice from professional musicians, one-on-one critiques, coaching, vocal lessons, and learning tools and techniques. The project will take place virtually and in-person at several historically Black colleges and universities such as Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland; Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia; and Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia.

- **Brooklyn, NY** - Museum of Contemporary African Diasporian Arts received \$20,000 for MoCADA Masters at Work: Co-Creating Black Theater with HBCUs, a residency program that supports the development of practicing and emerging Black artists to effectively and consistently create and present new bodies of work to the greater community. The project will elevate the power of Black theater, increase its visibility, and foster a new generation of artistic voices. Project activities will take place in New York City and HBCU communities. The organization will work with arts collective Black Theater Mechanics to curate performing arts career advancement opportunities for focusing on students from and alumni of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) nationwide. Activities will include commissions, playwriting contests, a summer theater intensive at HBCU Howard University, a digital showcase, and community-based events.

Appendix E: Native Arts, Traditional Arts, and Making the Arts Accessible

Native Arts and Culture

Working with Native-led national service organizations and an interagency federal working group, the NEA has carried out strategic outreach to Native communities and artists since 2016. Outreach includes nation-to-nation work with tribal governments, reservation communities, and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and at conferences and convenings of indigenous leaders and organizations. Outreach also includes recruitment of Native artists and community leaders to participate as panelists to review grant applications.

One outcome of this ongoing outreach was *Native Arts & Culture: Resilience, Reclamation, and Relevance*, a first-of-its-kind national convening that was hosted by the NEA, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Native Arts & Cultures Foundation in February 2020. U.S. Poet Laureate (and NEA Literature Fellow) Joy Harjo (Mvskoke) was the keynote speaker for the convening, which included break-out panels to discuss issues affecting Native arts and culture today, such as the need to use language, arts, and historic preservation to revitalize Native communities; the role of indigenous arts in social change; advancing the truth about Native culture through research and cultural resources; and reimagining Native visibility and identity in urban areas. Members from more than 40 tribal nations participated in the convening, as well as the heads of several federal agencies.

As building relationships with TCUs is a high priority for the NEA, the agency also works in coordination with the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education. The initiative, located within the Department of Education, seeks to support activities that expand education opportunities and improve education outcomes for all American Indian and Alaska Native students.

On April 7, 2021, the NEA hosted a tribal consultation to discuss President Biden's Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships. The purpose of this meeting was to update tribal leaders on the NEA's engagement with Native cultural leaders, to use the input of tribal leaders to inform our Nation-to-Nation consultation plan, and to inform our work related to the Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government. On August 10, 2021, the NEA hosted a tribal consultation for elected leaders of federally-recognized tribes to respond to the agency's [draft policy on Tribal Consultation](#); and, in October 2021, the NEA published its formal Tribal Consultation Policy based on these two nation-to-nation consultations with Tribal Leaders, and a series of community meetings with Native American and Alaska Native artists and arts/cultural organizations.

In the Fall of 2021, in coordination with the Departments of Interior and Health & Human Services, the NEA became one of ten participating signatory agencies on a [Memorandum of Agreement on Native Languages](#). In coordination with these agencies, the NEA is producing a 2nd edition of its free downloadable guide, [Federal Resources for Native Arts & Cultural Activities](#).

In October 2022, the NEA hosted its first in-person Tribal Consultation at the International Conference of Indigenous Archives, Libraries, and Museums in Temecula, California on the tribal lands of the *Pechanga* Band of Luiseño Indians.

Grants for Arts Projects examples of successful applications from or involving tribes in FY 2022 include:

- **Juneau, AK** - Sealaska Heritage Institute received \$50,000 in support of the Kootéeyaa Deiyí - Totem Pole Trail Design Project. Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) will work with 10 clans to design the first 10 (of 30) totem poles for the Kootéeyaa Deiyí (Totem Pole Trail) and 10 storyboards sharing the clan histories depicted on the totems. SHI and the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) will use this work to complete a design plan for the 2-mile pedestrian pathway in Juneau, Alaska's state capital. The Totem Pole Trail will create economic opportunities for Master artists and their apprentices, perpetuate an endangered art form, provide students with educational opportunities, and promote cultural tourism in Juneau.
- **Rapid City, SD** - First Peoples Fund received \$30,000 in support of a 4-day poet convening for youth involved in the Emerging Poets Fellowship across four Indigenous Communities - Pine Ridge Reservation, Cheyenne River Reservation, Lake Traverse Reservation, and Minneapolis. The convening and festival will be held at Oglala Lakota Artspace, the first facility on the Pine Ridge Reservation dedicated to the large community of artists and culture bearers, and provide an opportunity for youth to expand their networks and build community with one another.
- **Tsaile, AZ** - Dine' College, Navajo Nation Tribal Government received \$150,000 to support personnel expenses in response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional Project Description: The support will help the organization maintain operations during recovery from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Intended Beneficiaries: This assistance will benefit the organization's constituency, such as arts workers, artists, and audiences. Intended Outcome: Artistic activities and traditions are supported to strengthen the nation's cultural infrastructure.
- **Warm Springs, OR** - Warm Springs Community Action Team received \$125,000 to support public art installations and design plans for an outdoor pavilion and related spaces at a building reuse project on the Warm Springs Reservation. Additional Project Description: The project will be a partnership between the Warm Springs Community Action Team and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, which includes the Warm Springs, Wasco, and Northern Paiute tribes. The design will transform the former Bureau of Indian Affairs Commissary building and surrounding campus into a new facility that will house retail and co-working space, a small business incubator for tribal entrepreneurs, and arts programming. Intended Beneficiaries: The project will benefit members of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, as well as Commissary visitors. Intended Outcome: The arts are integrated into the fabric of community life.

National Folklife Network

In FY 2021, the NEA entered into a cooperative agreement with Southwest Folklife Alliance, Inc., to support the *National Folklife Network (NFN)*, an initiative to bolster the folk & traditional arts field through training, fieldwork, convenings, community collaborations, and cultural asset mapping. In the fall of 2019, the NEA released "[*Living Traditions*](#)," a portfolio analysis of the agency's Folk & Traditional Arts program. The report identified significant gaps in the map of national arts funding for the folk & traditional arts. From this reporting, the NEA identified seven regions on which to focus additional resources: rural areas of Northern Plains, Southern Plains, Rocky Mountain West, and Alaska, as well as three urban centers east of the Mississippi River. The report also articulated a need to identify and connect related organizations and individuals within these areas to promote and strengthen the folk & traditional arts.

The *NFN* will be established by identifying a cohort in each of the seven regions consisting of an anchor organization as well as related organizations and individuals, including but not limited to folk & traditional arts organizations, tribal communities or tribes, minority-serving institutions, federally-designated post-secondary institutions (e.g., HBCUs and Tribal Colleges & Universities), colleges and universities, and artists. Consultative services, training, and logistical support will be provided to the *NFN* regional cohorts on topics such as capacity building, financial management, general administration, fieldwork, archiving, cultural asset mapping, and fundraising. Additionally, technical assistance for federal, state, and regional funding opportunities will be promoted and provided as appropriate, and best practices will be identified and shared within and among the regional cohorts. An *NFN* website will also be developed and maintained.

Making the Arts Accessible

The NEA helps to make the arts accessible for people with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and people living in institutions by:

- Providing technical assistance to applicants, grantees, and the public to help them comply with accessibility laws and ensure access for all audiences to their arts activities.
- Funding projects that provide art experiences for older adults, as well as professional development for those interested in working with older adults.
- Identifying barriers for people with disabilities who are interested in pursuing careers in the arts, expanding career opportunities, and encouraging diversity in the arts.
- Supporting infrastructure, research, policy discussions, and practices around the arts and aging and demonstrating the need and value of arts experiences for, by, and with older adults.
- Leading and participating with other federal and nonprofit organizations in seeking solutions to challenges related to health and human development.

The NEA in partnership with Art Beyond Sight has created a series of six webinars that provide tools and information for people with disabilities seeking careers in the arts, as well as for arts

employers, arts educators, and arts funders. The webinars are part of a toolkit that will empower artists and other job seekers with disabilities to achieve career success in the arts, while educating arts employers, educators and grantmakers on the roles that they play in cultivating full inclusion. Webinars created to date include [*Careers in the Arts: Promoting Access, Equity, and Inclusion for People with Disabilities*](#); [*Navigating Your Arts Career: Resources and Financial Tools for People with Disabilities*](#); [*Preparing Students with Disabilities for Careers in the Arts: Approaches for Arts Educators*](#); and, [*Working as an Artist with a Disability: An Artist's Perspective*](#).

The NEA's Office of Accessibility also provides training and resources internally to agency staff. Information on laws, regulations, and guidelines is provided, as well as assistance on providing quality customer service, communication, and accommodations to people with disabilities.

Appendix F: Climate Justice

Executive Order 14008, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad”; Executive Order 13990, “Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis”; and Executive Order 14030, “Climate-Related Financial Risk” direct agencies to take a whole-of-Government approach to reduce climate pollution in every sector of the economy, increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, and protect public health. Through grantmaking, the NEA supports programming that engages the American public around the issue of climate change.

Examples of successful applications supporting climate change engagement in FY 2022 include:

- **Germantown, Tennessee** received a \$50,000 grant to support an environmental art installation and arts programming along the Wolf River Greenway. The project will include an art installation and associated arts programming local artists and is intended to inspire Germantown residents and students to learn more about their environment and build stronger social bonds to inform local strategies for future climate action.
- **Takoma Park, MD** - Dance Exchange, Inc. received \$10,000 to support Future Fields, a collaborative performance project cultivating communal exploration of climate change and agriculture. Future Fields is a multi-year cross-disciplinary dance project that explores how food is, or could be, grown and experienced in a changing world. The project takes place in rural, suburban and urban communities, and with partners in three locations across the U.S.

In addition, the NEA supports the recovery of arts and cultural communities devastated by major disasters through financial support, technical and policy assistance, and leadership. Since FY 2018, the NEA has served as a member agency in the federal Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Support Function (NCRRSF), working in coordination with other federal agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Interior. In recent years, NEA staff have been deployed multiple times to the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico to assist in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

The NEA conducts reviews of recommended grants as appropriate to ensure compliance with the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) and/or National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Some of the common project types that garner NEPA/NHPA review are:

- A project involving or occurring near a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object that is 50 years old or older and therefore included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.
- The commissioning and installation of temporary or permanent art such as a sculpture or mural, outdoor furnishings such as benches or market structures.
- An arts festival in a park.
- Design, planning and services for projects that may involve a historic site, structure, or district.

Appendix G: Effective Financial Management Emphasizing Automated Systems

The NEA is committed to the stewardship of the public funds and donations that it receives. To help ensure the appropriate oversight over these financial resources, the NEA utilizes a number of automated financial management systems, including:

- Leveraging the financial system expertise of U.S. Department of Transportation's Enterprise Services Center (ESC), which provides the NEA with an Oracle-based fully-compliant financial management system (Delphi) and full financial services support.
- Using an automated grants management system (eGMS) developed and supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) with economies of scale achieved through the use and funding by a cross team of cultural agencies.
- Using ESC's E2 travel system for online travel arrangements, authorizations, and associated payments.
- Utilizing the payroll processing operations of the National Finance Center to process staff pay and benefits.

This focus on automation also aids the agency in digitizing inputs, enabling electronic approvals and signatures, promoting data sharing, and meeting electronic records requirements. The agency's most recent assessment of improper payment risk, which included the review of preventive and detective payment controls, noted that NEA had an insignificant risk of significant improper payments. The agency's audits of Data Act reporting also found that the Agency submissions were complete, accurate, and timely.

Separately, it is worth noting that, for the 20th consecutive year, the NEA has received an unqualified audit opinion on its most recent financial statements (FY 2022).

Appendix H: Good Accounting Obligation in Government Act

In accordance with the Good Accounting Obligation in Government Act (P.L. 115-414), which requires each agency to include, in its annual budget justification, a report that identifies each public recommendation issued by Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the agency's inspector general that has remained unimplemented for one year or more, the NEA reports:

- No public recommendations of the Government Accountability Office.
- In regards to public recommendations for corrective action from the NEA's Office of Inspector General, no financial recommendations in a status of "open" or "closed, unimplemented" for a period exceeding one year preceding the submission of this budget justification.

The NEA continues to review and seeks to take appropriate actions in a timely manner in response to recommendations from the Government Accountability Office and the agency's Office of Inspector General. The NEA is currently working on corrective actions in response to public recommendations from the NEA's Office of Inspector General reported during the audits of the agency.

Appendix I: Leveraging of Shared Federal Services

The NEA continues to leverage the availability of technical/operational expertise and shared-services within the federal government to operate efficiently and effectively. The Agency currently has the following interagency agreements in place:

- Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for human resource staffing support. OPM provides human resource project planning and management support; candidate assessment and referral support; staffing consultation services; performance management system and support, and metrics and reporting services.
- U.S. Department of Interior's Interior Business Center for contracting and acquisition support services.
- Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency for employee security clearance services.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human services for Grants.gov.
- National Endowment for the Humanities for our electronic grants management system (eGMS).
- National Finance Center for the processing of employee timekeeping, pay and benefits.
- Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, Enterprise Services Center for Delphi, our Oracle-based financial management system.
- General services administration for web-based end to end travel and expense management tool.

Throughout 2022, the NEA also worked on user acceptance testing and preparing for the FY 2023 implementation of the Department of Treasury's government-wide G-invoicing system, a new system that is intended to help agencies manage intergovernmental buy/sell transactions.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

STRATEGIC PLAN
FY 2022-2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....1
- OVERVIEW.....1
- MISSION STATEMENT.....1
- VISION STATEMENT.....1
- STRATEGIC GOALS.....1
- CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVE.....3
- EXPLANATORY NOTEz.....4
- INTRODUCTION.....7
- MISSION.....9
- VISION.....10
- CONSULTATION.....11
- STRATEGIC GOALS.....12
 - Strategic Goal 1.....12
 - Strategic Goal 2.....22
 - Strategic Goal 3.....26
 - Strategic Goal 4.....33
 - Cross-Cutting Objective.....37



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS STRATEGIC PLAN – IN BRIEF:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

This National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) strategic plan covers fiscal years 2022 through 2026. The plan took shape while the agency was implementing provisions of the American Rescue Act of 2021, designed to bring direct relief to Americans enduring the health and economic crises of COVID-19. By including the NEA in this comprehensive relief strategy, Congress reaffirmed the NEA's capacity to support a vital and growing segment of the U.S. economy: the arts and cultural sector—including artists and other creative workers—on whose stability rests economic and job opportunities for people and places nationwide.

Amid this historic backdrop, the NEA is positioning itself as the lead agency within the federal government for social and economic change through the arts. The NEA will broaden and deepen its engagement with organizations that seek to extend the arts and the arts' benefits to underserved populations, even as the agency will support arts projects that aim to help improve individual health outcomes, or that use systems-level approaches to help strengthen or heal communities. The NEA also will invest in arts projects that support the training, research, technical assistance, and technologies needed for the sector to serve Americans wherever they live, and to benefit future generations. Ultimately, through effective operational practices—and with a dedicated focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility—the NEA will achieve the goals and objectives of its strategic plan.

MISSION STATEMENT

The arts strengthen and promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the National Endowment for the Arts fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts benefit everyone in the United States.

VISION STATEMENT

A nation in which the arts are essential to our democracy and to reaching our highest potential by nourishing creative enterprise, freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1. Support opportunities for all people to participate in the arts and arts education.

Objective 1.1 Expand public access to the NEA's programs and award-supported activities.

Description: By increasing opportunities for the public to encounter different artists, art forms, and artistic and cultural traditions, the NEA invites others to enlarge their aesthetic, emotional, and intellectual boundaries and to realize a greater understanding of the human condition. For the nation and for communities everywhere, these opportunities can awaken social, civic, and economic benefits. The NEA pursues strategies that enable arts participation by people from all backgrounds. Those participants include artists and other creative workers, who are integral to the work of this plan.

Objective 1.2 *Prioritize data-driven methods to broaden and deepen engagement with underserved communities.*

Description: *The NEA uses data and analysis to identify and address gaps in representation of underserved groups among the agency's grant applicants, grantees, and program beneficiaries. This evidence base permits the agency to conduct effective outreach and engagement and to make strategic investments and improve program designs to meet the needs of distinct communities that face persistent barriers in accessing or benefiting from arts programs.*

Objective 1.3 *Provide opportunities for people throughout the country to participate in arts education and to increase their knowledge and skills in the arts at all stages of life.*

Description: *By helping to foster public awareness and appreciation of various art forms and artistic and cultural traditions, the NEA boosts public capacity for lifelong participation in the arts. In particular, this objective supports arts education in and out of school, for students (including artists and arts instructors) at all phases of development, through formal and informal learning opportunities. For society at large, support of arts learning translates to acquisition of skills and competencies that are highly prized in today's economy and jobs market.*

Objective 1.4 *Ensure opportunities for the international exchange of artists and arts and cultural traditions.*

Description: *The United States produces artists and art forms that are recognized and celebrated the world over. The NEA works with the U.S. State Department and other entities to foster country-to-country exchanges in the arts—thus providing U.S. artists and art forms with greater international exposure, but also allowing people in the U.S. to experience other artistic and cultural traditions.*

Goal 2. Integrate the arts with strategies that promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities.

Objective 2.1 *Support arts projects with a focus on advancing the health and well-being of individuals.*

Description: *The NEA supports programs that address specific health conditions or that integrate the arts with strategies designed to improve individual health and well-being.*

Objective 2.2 *Embed the arts in system-wide initiatives that strengthen or heal communities.*

Description: *The NEA is building on initiatives that seek to advance systems change through the arts—such as the Arts Education Collective Impact grants program and the Our Town creative placemaking grants program—by encouraging projects that integrate the arts with broader strategies to produce thriving communities. The agency also encourages arts projects that promote community healing and/or recovery, or that strengthen a community's natural, cultural, and economic resources.*

Goal 3. Build capacity and infrastructure within the arts sector through knowledge-sharing, tools, resources, and evidence-based practices.

Objective 3.1 *Support the development of skills and strategies that will enable arts leaders to manage more effective organizations and agencies.*

Description: *Several factors have contributed to a demand for wide range of leadership skills and competencies for arts managers to address new and changing environments. These factors include the following needs: to lead arts organizations effectively in a COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 environment; to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts; and to ensure continuity of skills acquisition and learning for successive generations*

of arts leaders, including those working in policy and practice at the crossroads of the arts and other sectors (e.g., health, community development, the environment). To help fulfill such needs, the NEA supports peer-to-peer learning groups and workshops for emerging arts administrators.

Objective 3.2 Produce research, statistics, and general information about the arts for the benefit of the arts sector and beyond.

Description: By investing in research and evaluation, the NEA promotes empirical insights on the value and impact of the arts for individuals and communities. The NEA also circulates evidence, data, and research resources to support the ongoing work of cultural providers, funders, researchers, and policymakers. Through the Office of Public Affairs, the NEA regularly communicates with the arts sector and additional audiences about the arts as well as about ideas and topics of growing importance to arts practitioners.

Objective 3.3 Invest in the capacity of arts organizations and artists to serve a broader public through digital or emergent technology.

Description: Artists and arts organizations continue to use digital and emergent technology as a creative medium for expression and for audience engagement. Furthermore, artistic practice during the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for hybrid (in-person and digital) arts programming options and for bridging “digital divides” in the arts and in the communities served. The NEA supports investments in the capacity of arts organizations to integrate technology more effectively—and to improve conditions for accessibility—in the creation and delivery of art.

Goal 4. Pursue and adopt exemplary practices to support the agency’s mission.

Objective 4.1 Continue to be accountable and transparent to the public through effective operations that promote vigilant stewardship of funds.

Description: NEA staff design, implement, and refine work practices and systems that are efficient and transparent and deliver evidence of impacts to U.S. taxpayers.

Objective 4.2 Foster a skilled, agile, diverse, and cohesive workforce.

Description: The NEA is committed to embedding principles of diversity, equity, access, inclusion, and accessibility in its work practices and systems, creating an environment for employees to thrive. The NEA also invests in training and staff recognition programs, and promotes work-life balance so as to attract, develop, and retain a talented and diverse staff that is empowered and equipped to execute a shared mission and vision for the NEA.

CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVE

The NEA will model diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts through all of its activities and operations.

Description: The NEA makes it a priority to give underserved populations every opportunity to benefit from the programs and projects it supports. The agency accomplishes this cross-cutting objective partly by ensuring that grants are recommended in every Congressional District and by monitoring the presence of NEA-funded activities in urban and rural areas, and in high-poverty and other underserved populations. This work is amplified and extended through the NEA’s state and regional partnership agreements. In continuing efforts to identify and eliminate barriers to NEA grants, the agency also monitors a range of characteristics for organizations that receive NEA grants support, and it will explore methods for collecting demographic data associated with organizations receiving NEA funds. Moreover, in its own policies and practices for managing human resources, the agency ensures a diverse workplace free from barriers to opportunity.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the narrative section titled “Strategic Goals,” each goal is accompanied by a brief description, the title of a designated “Goal Leader” or “Lead Office,” and a list of “Strategies,” followed by a list of the “Contributing Programs” and “Cross-Agency Collaborations” that the strategies will invoke. Also included under each goal are “Performance Goals” and broader “Evidence-Building” strategies.

The NEA Strategic Plan applies to all agency activities, foremost among them grantmaking, but also to activities and functions such as leadership initiatives, convenings, training and capacity-building efforts, and strategic partnerships (with federal agencies, state arts agencies [SAAs], regional arts organizations [RAOs], and other public and private organizations), and to the agency’s internal operations.

The Office of the Chair will be deeply involved and engaged in the agency’s pursuit of all strategic goals and objectives.

PROPOSED NEA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: 2022-2026

MISSION

The arts strengthen and promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the National Endowment for the Arts fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts benefit everyone in the United States.

VISION

A nation in which the arts are essential to our democracy and to reaching our highest potential by nourishing creative enterprise, freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry.

GOAL 1

Support opportunities for all people to participate in the arts and arts education.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Expand public access to the NEA's programs and award-supported activities.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Prioritize data-driven methods to broaden and deepen engagement with underserved communities.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 Provide opportunities for people throughout the country to participate in arts education and to increase their knowledge and skills in the arts at all stages of life.

OBJECTIVE 1.4 Ensure opportunities for the international exchange of artists and arts and cultural traditions.

GOAL 2

Integrate the arts with strategies that promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Support arts projects with a focus on advancing the health and well-being of individuals.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 Embed the arts in system-wide initiatives that strengthen or heal communities.

GOAL 3

Build capacity and infrastructure within the arts sector through knowledge-sharing, tools, resources, and evidence-based practices.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 Support the development of skills and strategies that will enable arts leaders to manage more effective organizations and agencies.

OBJECTIVE 3.2 Produce research, statistics, and general information about the arts for the benefit of the arts sector and beyond.

OBJECTIVE 3.3 Invest in the capacity of arts organizations and artists to serve a broader public through digital or emergent technology.

GOAL 4

Pursue and adopt exemplary practices to support the agency's mission.

OBJECTIVE 4.1 Continue to be accountable and transparent to the public through effective operations that promote vigilant stewardship of funds.

OBJECTIVE 4.2 Foster a skilled, agile, diverse, and cohesive workforce.

CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVE

The NEA will model diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts through all of its activities and operations.



INTRODUCTION

“The arts... belong to all the people of the United States.”

- National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965

As the premier arts agency of the U.S. government, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has positioned itself as a vital and sustaining force in American culture, committed to serving all people throughout the nation by bringing the arts into their lives, schools, and neighborhoods. Another enduring role of the agency is to cultivate and elevate existing artistic and cultural traditions as critical assets within communities.

Over the past 50+ years, the NEA has become the largest funder of the arts and arts education nationwide and, as a catalyst of public and private support for the arts, an essential institution. Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA annually awards an average of approximately 2,400 grants and cooperative agreements exceeding \$129 million, funding the arts in all 50 states and six U.S. jurisdictions, including rural and urban areas. The NEA also exercises leadership by supporting key initiatives, research and evaluation, and domestic and international partnerships.

The arts’ tangible and intangible rewards extend to various realms of our lives. Among the more measurable benefits that the arts confer to society are job creation and economic growth. As of 2019, for example, arts and cultural production added 4.3 percent directly to the nation’s GDP, for a total approaching a trillion dollars (\$919.7 billion). In the same year, the sector employed 5.2 million wage-and-salary workers whose total compensation was \$447 billion.¹ NEA funding to organizations that provide the arts and arts education throughout the U.S. serves this greater economic good, catalyzing further investments in jobs and economic activity that can improve lives and livelihoods for Americans everywhere.

Most recently, in recognition of the NEA’s capacity to promote job growth and financial well-being across the sector—outcomes that translate to whole communities and to the nation itself—Congress appropriated additional funds to the NEA under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. This historic legislation is intended to fuel U.S. recovery from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NEA’s grantees are vital partners in extending these and other benefits. Eligible applicants to the NEA include nonprofit organizations; units of state and local government; federally recognized tribal communities or tribes; and, where permitted, individuals. Notwithstanding additional awards such as those administered under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the NEA makes dollar-for-dollar cost- share/matching grants to support exemplary projects in the following areas:

Artist Communities	Literary Arts	Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works
Arts Education	Local Arts Agencies	Research
Creative Placemaking	Media Arts	State & Regional Arts Organizations
Dance	Museums	Theater
Design	Music	Visual Arts
Folk & Traditional Arts	Musical Theater	
International	Opera	

1 <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/SummaryReportAccessLinks.pdf>. (Accessed Dec. 9, 2021.)

All grant applications to the NEA are reviewed on the basis of artistic excellence and artistic merit. Applications generally receive three levels of review. First, they are evaluated by advisory panels composed of a diverse group of disciplinary experts and other individuals, including at least one knowledgeable layperson. Panels make recommendations that are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts.

The National Council on the Arts, the NEA's standing advisory body, is comprised of nationally and internationally renowned artists, distinguished scholars, and arts patrons appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. The council also includes non-voting Members of Congress who are appointed by Senate and House leadership from both sides of the aisle. The council reviews and votes to approve or reject the applications. Its recommendations for funding are sent to the NEA chair, who reviews those applications and makes the final decision on all grant awards.

Forty percent of the NEA's grantmaking dollars are awarded to the nation's 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and the six regional arts organizations (RAOs). These funds are administered through Partnership Agreements with the SAAs and RAOs—an investment that catalyzes arts projects in thousands of communities across the country. Partnership Agreements allow the NEA to build and sustain local capacity for planning, programming, evaluation, and communications.

Through these agreements, moreover, the NEA supports creation and implementation of statewide and regionwide plans for strengthening arts education and fostering the arts in underserved communities. Each plan responds to the unique needs of the state or region and its constituents, whose views are solicited by each SAA/RAO through surveys, town hall meetings, arts practitioner convenings, policymaker consultations, and other forms of citizen engagement.

Together with the funding that the NEA's grants routinely leverage, the agreements vastly extend the agency's reach and impact, aligning national leadership with local practices and benefits. These partners are critical to the NEA's ability to fulfill its mission.

MISSION

Mission Statement: *The arts strengthen and promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the National Endowment for the Arts fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts benefit everyone in the United States.*

Arts participation means taking part in any number of activities that include the visual and performing arts, crafts and media arts, design, and literary arts and arts education. People engage with the arts as audience members, as viewers or listeners, as readers or learners, and as creators, curators, or performers. These diverse modes of arts participation—and different forms and genres of artistic expression—quicken and enlarge our sensibilities. The arts broaden and enhance our understanding and our connections to one another and to the greater world.

As with individuals, communities and society at large benefit from the arts and arts education— culturally, civically, and economically. The arts heal and unite: they nurture a sense of shared identity, but they also permit distinctive and often marginalized voices to be heard. It is the responsibility of the NEA to elevate artistic achievements throughout the country and to offer people from all backgrounds the opportunity to partake of this living cultural heritage. By performing these functions, the NEA will help to expand the number of arts participants nationwide and to extend the social, educational, and economic benefits of the arts to communities of every type.

VISION

Vision Statement: *A nation in which the arts are essential to our democracy and to reaching our highest potential by nourishing creative enterprise, freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry.*

By giving voice to unique talents and perspectives through creative expression, the arts embody and reflect the boldness of our democratic experiment. In remarks he gave at Amherst College on Oct. 26, 1963, President John F. Kennedy described how in the case of the poet Robert Frost, who had died earlier that year, “The artist’s fidelity has strengthened the fiber of our national life.” The president went on to champion the truth-telling powers of artists and the vision of “an America that commands respect not only for its strength but for its civilization as well.”

President Kennedy added: “If sometimes our great artists have been the most critical of our society, it is because their sensitivity and their concern for justice, which must motivate any true artists, make them aware that our nation falls short of its highest potential.” A nation that respects and celebrates the arts is unafraid of inquiring into its mores and behaviors, and re-imagining a more just future. The arts are vital, therefore, to our democratic process, just as they embolden creativity, innovation, and all free thinking.

CONSULTATION

This strategic plan is the result of thorough consultation with the agency's internal and external stakeholders. The first stakeholder consultation period took place in March 2021, prior to the development of the strategic framework. During this phase, feedback was solicited from agency staff and leadership, SAAs, RAOs, and national service organizations in the arts. Also consulted were NEA cooperators and a representative random sample (20 percent) of the agency's applicants and grantees from the past three years.

Internal stakeholder consultation was undertaken through six town-hall meetings of NEA staff. During the town-hall meetings, participants were guided to reflect on the agency's Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and measurable Results, using the SOAR model. Emailed comments also were encouraged during the internal stakeholder consultation period. At the same time, the agency solicited feedback from external stakeholders. Comments were solicited in three main ways: 1) email communications; 2) social media outreach; and 3) a *Federal Register* notice. From March 8 through March 31, 2021, the agency fielded 113 unique comments by email. Feedback came from a variety of external stakeholders, including: national service organizations in the arts, SAAs, city governments, nonprofit arts organizations, non-501(c)(3) arts organizations, and individual artists.

Collectively, this feedback shaped the FY 2022-2026 strategic framework. Members of the National Council on the Arts, along with the agency's leadership and staff, engaged with members of an NEA-wide Executive Working Group in discussions and emails about the strategic framework. After the second draft of the strategic framework was completed, another NEA staff town-hall meeting was held, allowing agency staff to respond directly to the framework and propose strategies for guiding the agency's work for the next four years.

A second stakeholder consultation period took place in August 2021, after the Executive Working Group completed a full draft of the FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. During this period, the draft strategic plan was circulated and comments solicited from the internal and external stakeholder groups listed above. The NEA also shared the draft plan with relevant Congressional offices. The agency fielded 107 unique comments from external stakeholders by email. Those comments were solicited in three main ways: 1) email communications; 2) social media outreach; and 3) a *Federal Register* notice. Further comments from the agency's leadership and Executive Working Group also were received and addressed.

CONSULTATION HIGHLIGHT

During the first and second stakeholder consultation periods, the NEA received several comments expressing interest in the role of the arts in addressing climate change and disaster readiness. In response, the NEA referenced climate change as part of its Strategic Objective 2.2 and committed to support projects that use the arts to protect and revitalize natural resources within communities and that reinforce trauma response and recovery efforts within communities and emergency preparedness planning within arts organizations.

STRATEGIC GOALS

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Support Opportunities for All People to Participate in the Arts and Arts Education.

The arts celebrate our differences while connecting us through shared experiences. Americans from all backgrounds can experience the arts by attending music, dance, and theater performances, visiting art and design exhibits, reading or listening to works of literature, and enjoying the arts via media and technology. Participation also can involve making art of one's own, whether alone or with other people, and acquiring an arts education—knowledge, skills, and competencies that can last a lifetime. All of these varieties of participation can and do occur anywhere, in formal or informal settings, whether inside or outside a specific cultural tradition.

Although the arts are a universal resource, long prized by nations for transmitting cultural identity and creative expression, there is no guarantee that everyone will have equal access to arts opportunities. In the U.S., socioeconomic and geographic factors play an outsized role in people's ability to participate in the arts.

Federal surveys consistently show that higher education and income levels, as well as urbanicity, are closely correlated with greater rates of arts participation. Most recently, a Survey of Public Participation in the Arts found that one in three U.S. adults could not agree with the following statement: "There are plenty of opportunities for me to take part in arts and cultural activities in my neighborhood or community." Among those most likely not to agree were Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos.²

By ensuring greater opportunities for everyone to take part in the arts and arts education, the NEA will extend the benefits of those activities to more Americans. Such benefits are not limited to aesthetic, emotional, or intellectual rewards. They translate to greater social, civic, and economic well-being in the lives of individuals, of whole communities, and of a nation itself.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.1

Expand Public Access to the NEA's Programs and Award-Supported Activities.

People connect with the arts by attending music, dance, and theater performances; by visiting architectural wonders and art exhibits; by reading works of literature; or by picking up a paintbrush or pencil to capture the world around them or to sketch their innermost thoughts. Today, they even carry in their pockets—in the form of smartphones—access to museums, concert halls, stages, and studios that enable individual arts experiences on demand. For artists and audiences alike, new pathways for participation abound. And yet, access to those in-person and/or digital pathways is by no means guaranteed.

The NEA addresses this need by providing opportunities for the public to engage with the arts through its grant programs, including through Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs. The agency's grantmaking is responsive to the changing landscape of arts participation and arts production. The NEA

² https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/US_Patterns_of_Arts_ParticipationRevised.pdf. (Accessed Dec. 9, 2021.)

rewards innovative strategies and models for engaging the public directly with arts experiences, for preserving them, and for making them accessible to all. At the same time, the NEA strives to promote funding and partnership opportunities to all eligible entities, whether or not they have experienced prior success in competing for these resources.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Deputy Chair for Programs & Partnerships

Strategies

The funding opportunities administered through the NEA's Programs & Partnerships offices are the primary vehicle for the agency's investment in projects that support artistic and cultural traditions in all 50 states and six U.S. jurisdictions.

Strategies include:

- Support grants and cooperative agreements that enable public access to arts activities throughout the U.S.—whether as audiences or artists/creators.
- Regularly review application guidelines and administrative requirements to ease public burden and increase access to NEA funding while ensuring compliance with government-wide regulations and laws.
- Publish and promote application guidelines and/or other agency materials in language(s) other than English.
- Ensure that grant application and review processes are accessible to people with disabilities.

Contributing Programs

The NEA provides new opportunities for rich and meaningful arts experiences. Foremost among the many funding programs coordinated by the NEA, Grants for Arts Projects (to eligible organizations) and Partnership Agreement grants (to SAAs and RAOs) bring artworks to the public and support jobs for arts and cultural workers. Supported activities include the following:

- Exhibitions, performances, concerts, and readings
- Film screenings
- Touring and outreach activities
- Art festivals
- Public programs that spotlight diverse artistic and cultural heritage
- Radio and television broadcasts, video games, mobile apps, live streaming audio- and video-on demand, podcasts, digital audio files, virtual reality, and other digital applications
- Publication, production, and promotion of digital, audio, or print publications; catalogues; and searchable databases
- Projects that address and reduce barriers to the arts for people with disabilities and that celebrate the work of disabled artists
- Projects that extend the arts to underserved populations, including those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, economics, race/ethnicity, or disability
- Projects that connect artists and designers with communities

Although the majority of the NEA's direct grantmaking supports arts projects that are undertaken by eligible organizations, the agency also offers a few awards and honorifics to individuals. These awards include:

- The NEA Literature Fellowships, grants to published creative writers that enable the recipients to set aside time for writing, research, travel, and general career advancement, and to translators who bring specific works from other countries to readers in the United States.
- The NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship is the highest honor that the U.S. bestows on jazz artists. Since 1982, the annual program has elevated to its ranks a select number of living legends who have made exceptional contributions to the advancement of jazz.
- The NEA National Heritage Fellowships are lifetime achievement awards that recognize the recipients' artistic excellence and support their continuing contributions to our nation's traditional arts heritage.

Additionally, the NEA helps to administer the National Medal of Arts, a White House program for the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the U.S. government. The National Medal of Arts is awarded by the president to individuals or groups who "are deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding contributions to the excellence, growth, support and availability of the arts in the United States."

Beyond direct grant support, the NEA provides technical assistance to help arts organizations understand and comply with federal accessibility requirements for people with disabilities, including the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended. NEA grantees are required to affirm their assurance of compliance with applicable laws. The NEA also provides professional development around cultural accessibility for SAAs and RAOs to build capacity for state- and regional-level accessibility initiatives and legal compliance efforts.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

The agency collaborates with several entities to stimulate greater arts engagement by the general public. Examples include:

- Blue Star Museums, a collaboration among the NEA, Blue Star Families, the U.S. Department of Defense, and museums across America. Each summer, Blue Star Museums offers free admission to the nation's active-duty military personnel, the National Guard and Reserves, and their families from Armed Forces Day through Labor Day.
- The NEA Big Read, an initiative of the NEA in partnership with Arts Midwest. The program supports community reading programs around the country every year, each designed around a single NEA Big Read selection.
- The NEA currently partners with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to provide artist-in-residence programs, primarily creative writing, at three federal prisons in New York, West Virginia, and South Dakota. The agency offers technical assistance and support to the teaching artists and helps the prisons in selecting community-based artists for the program.

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this objective are:

1. *The NEA increases the percentage of grant applications received from first-time applicants.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of award applications received and adjudicated by the NEA, by first-time applicant status. A secondary measure will be the success rate of such applications.
2. *The NEA increases the number of communities that host grantee organizations and NEA-supported project activities.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the number of unique communities that contain NEA grantee organizations and, separately, where NEA-supported project activities take place.

3. *The NEA supports projects that expand access to the arts through strategic partnerships.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of NEA-supported projects that identify, as strategic partners, organizations outside the arts sector. A secondary measure will be the percent of NEA-supported projects that identify minority-serving institutions of higher education as strategic partners.

The NEA also will explore the ability to report, during this strategic plan period, on factors related to the quality and depth of strategic partnerships effected through NEA awards, and/or of the public's engagement with NEA programs and award-supported activities. Primary methods for understanding these factors may include qualitative analyses of narrative data collected through NEA grantee reports.

Evidence-Building

Research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the agency's Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.2

Prioritize Data-Driven Methods to Broaden and Deepen Engagement with Underserved Communities.

Data and evidence are poised to improve the agency's administration of grants and programs so that even larger numbers of people—from more diverse backgrounds than before—can benefit from NEA programs and grant activities. Tools like U.S. Census Bureau data files and geospatial mapping will allow the agency to target historically underserved areas more effectively in its engagement efforts.³

One example of a NEA program dedicated to this type of engagement is Challenge America, which supports underserved populations through grants to primarily small and mid-sized organizations. Beyond this program, the agency routinely conducts outreach so that its programs and grant-supported activities can benefit people in every Congressional District. Through targeted outreach and award programs, the NEA extends economic opportunities through the arts and creativity to underserved communities and regions across the nation.

In recent years, moreover, the NEA has elevated opportunities for tribal nations—and for historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other minority-serving institutions of higher education—to participate in NEA programs. By consulting empirical data as the agency undertakes these and other initiatives, the NEA will achieve a greater likelihood of success in building and sustaining relationships with people and organizations that have been underserved by NEA programs.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Deputy Chair for Programs & Partnerships
Office of Research & Analysis

Strategies

The NEA makes grants and participates in strategic partnerships to ensure that NEA-funded activities reach a wide breadth of geographic locations and historically underserved populations nationwide. Specific strategies include:

³ For a definition of “underserved,” see the White House *Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government*, Jan. 20, 2021.

- Identify and address gaps in representation of historically underserved communities among NEA applicants, grantees, and beneficiaries. The agency’s Equity Action Plan includes strategies to improve data collection. Through its Offices of Research & Analysis (ORA), Guidelines & Panel Operations, and General Counsel, and working with the Department of Justice, the NEA will determine the feasibility of expanding data collection related to program beneficiaries, as well as to the staff and the leadership of recipient organizations. If feasible, adjustments will be made to program data collection forms to increase equity-related information available to staff. This strategy will be implemented through distinct actions addressing the agency’s direct grants and partnership agreements starting in FY 2022.
- Collect and act upon data on HBCUs in support of the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities. During FY 2022 and 2023, the agency will plan and conduct a mixed-methods study of HBCUs’ arts-related assets, including programs and facilities; identify funding streams supporting HBCU arts programs; and conduct a workforce development gap-analysis examining HBCU arts programs in relation to the communities where HBCUs reside. Findings will be included in a report to the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities on the agency’s progress on its HBCU competitiveness plan.
- Establish and cultivate ongoing relationships with Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), HSI partners (e.g., White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics), and related cultural partners to build awareness of the NEA, to share critical resources and information, with a focus on funding opportunities, and to build capacity for successful application to the agency from HSIs. To measure the agency’s efforts to increase HSI applications, a strategy will be developed to track HSI applicants across disciplines.
- Strengthen nation-to-nation relationships with tribal communities. In October 2021, the NEA published its formal Tribal Consultation Policy.⁴ The policy was built on two nation-to-nation consultations with tribal leaders, and a series of community meetings with Native American and Alaska Native artists and arts/cultural organizations. The policy accords with President Biden’s Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships and Executive Order 13175 and has been reviewed and approved by OMB.
- Explore methods to identify the needs of U.S. communities with limited access to arts experiences, so as to better understand their needs and to facilitate collaboration. See the dashboard development strategy discussed in the Evidence-Building section of this plan.
- Combine knowledge, data, and best practices with those of other federal entities serving these populations.

Contributing Programs

Data-driven methods to broaden and deepen engagement with historically underserved communities will be employed across the agency’s grantmaking, including the NEA’s Grants for Arts Projects. In addition, such methods will be used for Challenge America—grants that offer support primarily to small and mid-sized organizations for projects in all artistic disciplines, extending the arts’ reach to underserved populations. Challenge America features an abbreviated application and a robust element of technical assistance.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

- The NEA’s participation in the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through HBCUs provides opportunity for the agency to share and learn from other agencies’ data-driven methods to broaden and deepen engagement with HBCUs and other minority-serving institutions.

⁴ <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Tribal%20Consultation%20Policy%20NEA%202021%20Final.pdf>. (Accessed Dec. 20, 2021.)

- By serving on the federal Interagency Working Group for Youth Programs, the NEA will share and learn from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other federal agencies and departments about successful strategies for engaging with underprivileged youth.
- Through an agreement with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), the NEA receives analytical support for monitoring the presence of arts funding across different geographies. These empirical insights will inform Strategic Objective 1.2.

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this objective are:

1. *The NEA increases engagement with potential applicant organizations in underserved communities.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the number of organizations located in underserved communities and that are engaged through technical assistance (e.g., webinars or other events/services) provided by the NEA. Another performance measure will be the percent of applications received and adjudicated from NEA organizations located in underserved communities; a secondary measure will be the success rate for such applications.
2. *The NEA increases engagement with potential applicant organizations that primarily address underserved communities.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of applications received and adjudicated by the NEA from organizations primarily addressing underserved communities; a secondary measure will be the success rate for such applications.

Evidence-Building

In FY 2020, the NEA developed for internal use an interactive map of agency grantmaking and initiatives data, with high-level summary data on agency grant awards. These data include direct grants and subgrants, and national initiative activities for the preceding three-year period. The map, which also includes Census data on poverty and urbanicity, provides contextual information to NEA leadership; it features a dynamic dashboard showing summary statistics of grant funding and activities based on selected regions and other characteristics. This NEA data tool will be updated in FY 2022 to include additional information on underserved communities, including race and ethnicity, and will be updated annually during the term of this strategic plan. Dashboards also will be developed in FY 2022 and made available to agency staff. Easy access to timely, reliable data about agency grantmaking and initiatives is a prerequisite for knowing whom the NEA-supported arts projects are serving, and for better enabling the agency to broaden and deepen engagement with underserved communities.

Additional research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.3

Provide Opportunities for People throughout the Country to Participate in Arts Education and to Increase Their Knowledge and Skills in the Arts at All Stages of Life.

By helping to foster public appreciation and understanding of various art forms, genres, and artistic traditions, the NEA will build public capacity for lifelong participation in the arts. For audiences and learners, the outcome will be vibrant and transformative arts experiences. For artists and teachers, the NEA will facilitate the transfer of critical knowledge and skills that will enable them to refine and improve their work.

The arts are essential to a well-rounded education. Numerous studies have revealed the social and emotional benefits of arts education for early childhood development, and the ability of arts education to bridge gaps in academic achievement among teenagers and youth who come from less privileged backgrounds than others. Additionally, arts education contributes to students' acquisition and development of skills (e.g., the "four Cs"—communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and especially creativity) that have been closely associated with 21st-century job requirements. Further along the lifespan, older adults who engage with the arts have reported higher levels of cognitive ability and fewer limitations to their physical functioning.

The agency's grants support arts learning activities across a variety of artistic disciplines for people of all ages. Grants awarded by the NEA Arts Education office support standards-based learning in the arts for K-12 students. However, NEA grants, including from other offices, also support the integration of arts learning with other academic curricula, including STEM disciplines. Beyond grants for student learners, Arts Education grants support professional development opportunities for educators, including but not limited to arts instructors. Additionally, NEA programs such as Poetry Out Loud offer arts learning experiences for high school students (including, in this case, benefits that extend from poetry appreciation to language skills development).

Apprenticeships are time-honored programs allowing master artists to train apprentices, often over an extended period of time. These trainees then have the ability to teach others, sharing what they have learned with their own communities. Formal learning programs of this nature are instrumental in passing on cultural knowledge to the next generation. Through the NEA's continued support of state folklife programs and their apprenticeship awards, the agency ensures that traditional artists have the opportunity to pass on the techniques and cultural knowledge of their art forms, which can be as diverse as Mexican ballet folklórico, Northern Arapaho beadwork, gospel singing, and taiko drumming. The NEA also supports apprenticeships directly through its own grantmaking. As with the NEA's support of the arts and arts education more generally, such apprenticeships form a critical link in connecting economic and labor-related outcomes from artistic practice to communities at large.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Arts Education Division
Folk & Traditional Arts Division

Strategies

The funding opportunities administered through the NEA's Programs and Partnerships offices are the primary vehicles for the agency's investment in the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the arts at all stages of life.

Through awards and strategic partnerships, the NEA will support:

- Arts learning opportunities across various artistic disciplines, learning environments, and geographic locations
- K-12 standards-based arts education
- Job training programs and/or apprenticeships with master artists or practitioners

Contributing Programs

Projects that bring arts education to the general public are supported across the agency's grantmaking, including the NEA's Grants for Arts Projects program and Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs. The agency employs two approaches in its grantmaking for projects focused on providing opportunities to learn in and about the arts. One approach is the grant support offered by the NEA's Arts Education office. Representative project activities include:

- Standards-based arts education activities for pre-K-12 students through long-term, in-depth projects
- Professional development to improve arts instruction by equipping artists, school superintendents, principals, teachers, and other education providers with the skills and confidence to effectively engage students in high-quality arts learning
- Assessments and evaluations of arts learning

The second approach is broader. It supports opportunities for Americans in more informal learning contexts across the lifespan. Representative project activities include:

- Lifelong learning activities for youth, adults, and intergenerational groups
- Online courses and training
- Lectures and symposia
- Production, publication, and distribution of teachers'/ facilitators' guides
- Innovative practices in arts learning for all ages
- Engagement with living artists and designers (e.g., in the classroom and/or through apprenticeships)
- Informal education programs, workshops, and demonstrations
- Arts learning programs for older adults in community settings, residential settings, and healthcare/long-term care settings
- Arts learning programs and approaches that promote full access and participation in the arts for youth and adults with disabilities

In addition, through strategic partnerships, the NEA leads national initiatives that support arts learning. They include:

- Poetry Out Loud, a national recitation competition for high school students. Created by the NEA and the Poetry Foundation, the competition is administered in partnership with the SAAs of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, and American Samoa.
- Shakespeare in American Communities, which supports high-quality theater productions and educational activities in middle schools, high schools, and juvenile justice facilities throughout the United States.
- The Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge, a national contest for high school students with a passion for musical theater songwriting and for the wide range of musical styles represented in contemporary musicals.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

- The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) is the nation's hub for arts and education leaders, building their leadership capacity to support students, educators, and learning environments through research, reporting, counseling, and convening. AEP has been supported by the NEA and the U.S. Department of Education since 1995 and is administered by the Education Commission of the States.

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this objective are:

1. *The NEA engages underserved youth in arts education through activities supported by its awards and partnerships.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of arts education projects located in underserved communities and that directly engaged youth. A secondary measure will be the percent of arts education projects supported by subawards through the NEA's Partnership Agreements, that were located in underserved communities, and that directly engaged youth.

2. *The NEA supports the arts education sector with convenings, research, and technical assistance.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the number of NEA-supported convenings, research products, and technical assistance opportunities made available to the arts education sector.

Evidence-Building

Research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.4

Ensure Opportunities for the International Exchange of Artists and Arts and Cultural Traditions.

According to the founding legislation for the NEA, the United States' reputation as a world leader must not "rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must be solidly founded upon worldwide respect and admiration for the Nation's high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit."

Nowhere are these traits better exemplified than in America's artistic and cultural contributions. International demand for U.S. artists and their artworks is best captured by a single statistic. In 2019, the most recent year for which such data are available, the U.S. exported \$33 billion more in arts and cultural goods and services than it imported from other countries.⁵ Unlike many other segments of the nation's economy, arts and culture is running a trade surplus.

By working with the State Department and other entities to enable nation-to-nation exchanges of artists and artworks, the NEA assists in providing U.S. artists and their wares with exposure to international artists and cultural traditions, and to global markets and audiences. Concurrently, international exchanges permit U.S. audiences, artists, and communities to experience vibrant cultural traditions and artists from abroad.

Apart from fostering such exchanges, the NEA communicates regularly with international scholars, policymakers, and arts administrators who seek to learn about U.S. infrastructure for domestic arts programs. All of these activities help to advance the federal government's efforts at cultural diplomacy. They also nourish the capacity of artists and audiences everywhere to realize their shared humanity through various forms of creativity and cultural expression.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of International Activities

Strategies

Through its grantmaking, the NEA will continue to invite project proposals that a) seek to promote the diversity of U.S. artists and artworks for audiences abroad, and/or b) seek to provide U.S. audiences and artists with opportunities to experience international artistry in the U.S. As described below, however, the majority of these activities will occur through strategic partnerships with arts organizations, and in consultation with the U.S. Department of State. The NEA will monitor survey data to ascertain whether the NEA's investments under this objective are resulting in positive experiences by U.S. artists who engage with such programs, and the agency will track the representation of such projects within the NEA's grants portfolio, based on performance targets that will be created alongside this plan.

5 <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/SummaryReportAccessLinks.pdf>. (Accessed Dec. 9, 2021.)

Contributing Programs

Projects that support opportunities for the international exchange of artists and artworks are supported by the NEA's Grants for Arts Projects program and by Partnership Agreement grants to RAOs. The NEA also contributes, either through funding or administrative support, to the following programs:

- USArtists International, which is committed to ensuring that the impressive range of the performing arts in the U.S. is represented abroad, and that American artists can enhance their creative and professional development through participation at international events.
- The United States/Japan Creative Artists Program, which provides three- to five-month residencies in Japan for five individual creative artists in any discipline. While in Japan, artists work on an individual project which may include the creation of new work or pursuit of their individual artistic goals.
- The Performing Arts Global Exchange, which brings exemplary international music, dance, and theater to audiences across the U.S. Every year a new region of the world is highlighted. Fee-support grants are available to nonprofit presenting venues and units of state, local, or tribal government (based anywhere in the U.S. or its territories) who book artists from a curated roster.
- NEA Literature Fellowships in translation, which awards grants to published translators for rendering specific works of prose, poetry, or drama from other languages into English.
- The Arts & Artifacts Indemnity Program, which provides indemnification against loss or damage for eligible art works, artifacts, and objects in domestic and international exhibitions.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

The NEA's Office of International Activities (OIA) coordinates activity with the U.S. Department of State, especially to connect U.S.-based arts organizations with cultural attachés. Additionally, the OIA is a key point of contact for international cultural visitors from the State Department's International Visitors Leadership Program. OIA works with the State Department's Foreign Service Institute to educate new cultural attaché officers about the NEA as they prepare to report to U.S. Embassy posts.

Historically, too, the NEA has partnered with the State Department by managing the peer review process for the selection of participating U.S. artists and architects for the Venice Biennale, an international art exhibition, and by administering the grant review process for participating arts organizations.

Finally, the NEA periodically coordinates programming with the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), a global network of arts councils, ministries of culture, and government agencies representing more than 70 countries that advance arts and culture.

Performance Goals

The performance goal for this objective is:

The NEA supports opportunities for the international exchange of artists and arts and cultural traditions, which yield demonstrable benefits for the arts and artists.

This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of artists participating in the NEA-supported USArtists International program who report benefits for their professional and career development. Secondary measures will be the number of NEA awards that support the international exchange of artists and arts and cultural traditions, and the percent of NEA awards that support the translation of specific works of prose, poetry, or drama from other languages into English.

The NEA intends to examine the impacts of international exchanges on the careers of U.S. artists. Beginning in FY 2022, the NEA will implement an annual survey of grantees under the USArtists International (USAI) program, with a goal of developing a richer understanding of the program’s short- and longer-term impacts on artists’ careers. Additional research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Integrate the Arts with Strategies that Promote the Well-Being and Resilience of People and Communities.

Over the last few years in particular, the nation has been tested with extreme pressure on its healthcare system, its economy and environment, and its sense of fairness and social justice. Throughout such traumas as COVID-19, racial violence, and natural disasters, the arts have been a force for healing and repair. Through direct grantmaking and strategic partnerships, the NEA will continue to support projects that integrate arts-based strategies in health, community development, and emergency preparedness and responsiveness. These systems-based approaches to achieve positive outcomes for towns and neighborhoods already have been central to arts-and-public health initiatives, to the arts’ deployment in disaster relief, to collective efforts to achieve equitable access in arts education, and to a variety of activities known as creative placemaking—the integration of arts, culture, and design with comprehensive community development. This strategic goal will permit more focused investments in communal spaces—but it also will bring greater visibility to the use of design and arts programs and therapies in improving health and well-being for individuals and communities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.1

Support Arts Projects with a Focus on Advancing the Health and Well-Being of Individuals.

In partnership with U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs and state and local arts agencies, the NEA directs Creative Forces[®]: NEA Military Healing Arts Network. The initiative places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at clinical sites throughout the country, including telehealth services, and increases access to community arts activities to promote health, wellness, and quality of life for military service members, veterans, and their families and caregivers. Furthermore, in partnership with the Mid-America Arts Alliance, the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant program aims to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military-connected populations by empowering creative expression, building social connections, and improving resilience.

The lessons learned from implementing Creative Forces will inform other strategies to advance individual health and well-being through the arts. The networking, technical assistance, and the evaluation and learning that occur across the Creative Forces program are typical of the field-building activities necessary to realize this strategic objective for broader population groups. At the federal level, the NEA models this knowledge transfer by leading the Interagency Task Force on the Arts and Human Development, which meets quarterly to examine research projects and evidence-based practice at the intersection of the arts, health, and human development.

Indeed, apart from Creative Forces, the NEA regularly supports not only creative arts therapies (e.g., art therapy, music therapy, dance/movement therapy, and drama therapy), but also arts-in-health programs that occur in clinical and non-clinical settings. Additionally—through direct grants and through partnerships with SAAs and RAOs—the agency funds arts projects that support healthy aging and healthy childhood and youth development, as well as rehabilitation and recovery for people in trauma, or those in prison or juvenile justice settings.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Senior Advisor on Innovation to the Chair
Office of Accessibility
Office of Research & Analysis

Strategies

- Through awards and strategic partnerships, support creative arts therapies or arts-in-health strategies—including projects that seek to assist with healthy aging and healthy childhood and youth development or with rehabilitation or recovery services, or that address currently and/or formerly incarcerated populations.
- Expand the NEA's Creative Forces initiative (through clinical and community-based projects) to new target populations or focus areas within military and veteran populations exposed to trauma. Supporting this effort, the NEA and its partners have conducted discovery-phase literature reviews and scans to better understand the needs of families of military service members and veterans and guard and reserve populations as part of Creative Forces' program development cycle.

In addition, the NEA chair will bring field-specific expertise related to the pursuit of this objective.

Contributing Programs

Projects that integrate the arts with strategies to improve individual health and well-being are supported by the NEA's Grants for Arts Projects program and by Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs. In addition, the NEA offers:

- Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network, a leadership initiative that seeks to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military and veteran populations exposed to trauma, as well as their families and caregivers.
- Shakespeare in American Communities: Juvenile Justice, a leadership initiative in partnership with Arts Midwest, enabling theater companies and organizations to engage youths within the juvenile justice system with the works of Shakespeare through theater education programs nationwide.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

- Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network is conducted in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs and the state and local arts agencies. Current partners also include the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, Americans for the Arts, and Mid- America Arts Alliance.

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this objective are:

1. *The NEA supports projects and partnerships that engage individuals in activities with the intent of advancing their health and well-being through the arts.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the number of people who participated (in person or virtually) in NEA-supported activities focused on advancing the health and well-being of individuals through the arts. Two other performance measures will be the number of service members served by Creative Forces clinical creative arts therapists, and the number of therapeutic encounters facilitated by Creative Forces clinical creative arts therapists.

2. *Through convenings, research, and technical assistance, the NEA supports practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers at the intersection of the arts and health and well-being.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the number of NEA-supported convenings, research products, and technical assistance opportunities made available to practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers seeking to advance individual health and well-being through the arts.

Evidence-Building

Through a cooperative agreement with the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, the Creative Forces program is investing in a comprehensive evaluation of its clinical programs and projects. Investments in these activities will lead to the identification of outcomes associated with Creative Forces clinical programs/projects and will determine the effectiveness of these activities. Evaluation activities also will support continuous improvement and help to ensure that the programs/projects are achieving their goals and objectives. Further, the evaluation findings will be used by Creative Forces and other organizations to determine which Creative Forces clinical programs/projects should be expanded to other sites and populations.

In a similar vein, the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant program is launching in late FY 2021. Open to nonprofit organizations, units of state or local government, or federally recognized tribes or tribal communities, the program will make awards for non-clinical arts engagement projects for military-connected populations. Starting in FY 2024, data will be collected from subgrantees to monitor the program's outputs, grantee outcomes, and participant outcomes, as well as the role of arts engagement in advancing health, well-being, and quality of life for Creative Forces target populations.

Separately, and with a different population, the NEA will work cooperatively with Arts Midwest in FY 2022 to establish systematic data collections to support performance and outcome measurement for the Shakespeare in American Communities Juvenile Justice (SIAC/JJ) program. Through an agency contract, a data collection plan will be developed and relevant forms prepared and cleared through the federal Paperwork Reduction Act clearance process. The contractor will provide technical assistance, written guidance, and resources that will prepare Arts Midwest to implement the data collection plan.

Additional research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.2

Embed the Arts in System-Wide Initiatives that Strengthen or Heal Communities.

Beyond supporting arts projects that advance individual health and well-being, the NEA rewards grassroots partnerships that integrate the arts with long-term strategies to heal a whole community, or to protect or revitalize its natural, cultural, and economic resources. On a local level, these strategies often take the shape of creative placemaking programs—such as those supported by the NEA's Our Town initiative—but they also involve collective impact models that ensure equitable access to arts education within K-12 school systems. Whether such projects contribute to community planning and development, a new national infrastructure for folk and traditional arts, emergency preparedness and recovery, or responses to climate change, they invariably require public-private partnerships that the NEA can help to catalyze and sustain across multiple sectors.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Design & Creative Placemaking Division
Arts Education Division

Strategies

This strategic objective is envisioned as a growth area for the NEA. For now, through its Arts Education and Design & Creative Placemaking divisions, the NEA supports discrete grant programs that seek to achieve positive outcomes for communities through systems-level change. Beyond these programs, which are described below, the agency will start to welcome grant project proposals that aspire toward systems-level change through the arts. The NEA also will start to welcome projects that use the arts to protect and revitalize natural, cultural, and economic resources within communities; and it will welcome projects related to emergency preparedness planning for arts organizations, the building of their protective capabilities, and trauma response and recovery efforts within communities.

In addition, the NEA chair will bring field-specific expertise related to the pursuit of this objective.

Contributing Programs

Projects that use system-wide approaches to strengthen or heal communities or the environment will be supported by the NEA's Grants for Arts Projects program and by Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs. Examples of contributing programs include:

- Arts Education Collective Impact Grants, which transform schools and communities by providing access and engagement in the arts for all students through collective, systemic approaches. Projects aim to ensure that all students across entire neighborhoods, schools, school districts, and/or states—in communities of all sizes—participate in the arts over time.
- Our Town, the NEA's flagship creative placemaking grants program. Through project-based funding, we support projects that integrate arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes.
- The Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD), a leadership initiative of NEA in partnership with the United States Conference of Mayors. Since 1986, MICD has helped transform communities through design by preparing mayors to be the chief urban designers of their cities.
- The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD), a leadership initiative of the NEA in partnership with the Housing Assistance Council. Focusing on communities with populations of 50,000 or less, CIRD empowers local citizens to use their unique artistic and cultural resources to guide local development and shape the future design of their communities.
- The National Folklife Network, a new NEA strategic partnership that will cultivate the development of seven pilot folklife programs—four in rural areas and three in urban areas. The four rural regions are the Northern Plains, Southern Plains, Intermountain West, and Alaska, while the three urban folklife programs will be in cities on or east of the Mississippi River. Each location faces its own unique challenges, including weak infrastructure, a diffuse population, and deeply ingrained poverty.
- The NEA provides financial support, technical assistance, and national leadership following man-made disasters and natural disasters such as hurricanes and wildfires. NEA staff have deployed multiple times to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands through the Interior Department and FEMA to work with state and local agencies on assessing and repairing damage to cultural and historical resources and to help advance the recovery of arts and cultural sectors. These functions have included capacity-building for nonprofit arts organizations so they are better prepared for future calamities.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

- Appalachian Gateway Communities Initiative offers targeted technical assistance, cultural heritage and tourism assessments and planning, arts and culture workshops, and small grants for project implementation for these communities. The NEA works in partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission to support this initiative.

- Save America’s Treasures awards grants to preserve nationally significant historic properties and collections that convey our nation’s rich heritage to future generations. The program is administered by the National Park Service in cooperation with the NEA, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).
- The NEA is partnering with the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the CDC Foundation to support community-based arts and cultural organizations in engaging the arts to build vaccine confidence nationwide.
- As part of the National Disaster Recovery Framework, the NEA works closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Economic Development Administration, and other agencies to demonstrate how the arts can revitalize communities after natural and man-made disasters—including those resulting from climate change—and ensure that recovery policies in development include the arts sector. The agency also helps to ensure that the sector has access to recovery resources. The NEA is a supporting agency in the Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Support Function and has worked extensively with the Economics and the Community Planning and Capacity Building Recovery Support Function teams in response to COVID-19. In addition, the agency is a member of the Heritage Emergency National Task Force, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and FEMA. Beyond these obligations, the NEA serves on the steering committee of the National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (NCAPER), a public-private partnership that was formed “in response to the significant losses and devastation suffered by artists and creative economies in the wake of 21st century disasters,” as the group’s website notes.
- The NEA participates in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Interagency Working Group on Equitable Long-Term Recovery and Resilience, and in its Analytic Measurement subgroup.

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this objective are:

1. *The NEA supports grassroots partnerships that integrate the arts with long-term strategies to heal a whole community, or to protect or revitalize its natural, cultural, and economic resources.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the number of unique communities, across the strategic plan period (FY 2022-2026), in which organizations were awarded NEA funds for the purpose of embedding the arts in system-wide initiatives that seek to strengthen or heal communities.
2. *Through convenings, research, and technical assistance, the NEA strengthens the integration of the arts in system-wide initiatives.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the number of NEA-supported convenings, research products, and technical assistance opportunities made available to practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers seeking to integrate the arts with system-wide initiatives to strengthen and heal communities.

Evidence-Building

Research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Build Capacity and Infrastructure within the Arts Sector through Knowledge-Sharing, Tools, Resources, and Evidence-Based Practices.

Arts organizations, funders, and cultural policy-makers frequently look to the NEA for guidance on issues confronting the arts sector, and for research and information that can support their practice. Especially in the wake

of the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic hardships, the arts sector will require greater leadership, empirical insights, and technological capacity to rebuild better while serving all people and communities nationwide.

For the third consecutive five-year period, the NEA will launch a research agenda seeking to promote research about the value and impact of the arts. In conjunction with these projects, the NEA will support the creation and distribution of evidence-based guides, data tools, and other resources to assist cultural researchers and practitioners.

Leadership development for emerging, mid-career, and late-career arts leaders at organizations of all sizes will be essential to the arts sector's sustainability. Through grantmaking and strategic partnerships, the NEA will support these training opportunities in order for arts professionals to better navigate a shifting landscape for nonprofit arts organizations and their beneficiaries.

In response to other recent changes to the U.S. arts landscape, the agency will heighten investments in projects that use digital technology in the creation and/or delivery of art. Greater support for tech-centered artistic practice and for digital capacity-building within arts organizations also can yield positive results for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. This type of support will help to bridge digital divides within different segments of the arts sector—even as it will allow artists and audiences to contribute to and benefit from technological breakthroughs in arts creation and delivery.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1

Support the Development of Skills and Strategies that Will Enable Arts Leaders to Manage More Effective Organizations and Agencies.

Although the NEA is primarily a grantmaking agency, it also provides leadership within the broader arts ecosystem—as noted in Strategic Objective 3.2, which emphasizes research and communications in the field. Another form of assistance centers on professional development and training opportunities for arts leaders.

Several factors have contributed to a demand for new and different skills and competencies for arts leaders than may have been required in the past. These factors include the following needs: to lead arts organizations effectively in a post-COVID-19 environment; to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts; and to ensure continuity of skills acquisition and learning for successive generations of arts leaders, including those working in policy and practice at the crossroads of the arts and other sectors (e.g., health, community development, the environment). To help fulfill such needs, the NEA will support peer-to-peer learning groups and workshops for arts administrators.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Deputy Chair for Programs & Partnerships

Strategies

Through awards or strategic partnerships, the NEA will support:

- Development of a peer-to-peer network of experienced and emerging arts leaders.
- Technical assistance workshops in arts management, professional development and career transitions, grant writing, and board development.

In addition, the NEA chair will bring field-specific expertise related to the pursuit of this objective.

Contributing Programs

The NEA supports arts leadership training opportunities through the Grants for Arts Projects program and through Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs. In addition, the NEA currently offers the following initiatives:

- The Creative Placemaking Technical Assistance Program is designed to help Our Town grantees and prospective applicants to the program implement successful creative placemaking projects that lay the groundwork for longer-term systems change.
- The annual Professional Development Institute for SAA arts education and folk and traditional arts managers, providing meaningful leadership development and technical assistance for this field.
- The State Education Agencies Directors of Arts Education (SEDAE), an annual leadership grant that supports professional development for state education agency directors of arts education.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

Regarding this objective, the NEA will explore—during the strategic plan period (FY 2022-2026)—formal and informal partnerships with federal entities such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Department for Housing & Urban Development, and the General Services Administration.

Performance Goals

The performance goal for this objective is:

The NEA supports the development of skills and strategies that will enable arts leaders to manage more effective organizations and agencies.

This goal will be measured by tracking the number of grantees reporting that NEA funding enabled them to build the capacity to manage more effective organizations and agencies. Another performance measure will be the percent of participants expressing satisfaction with the quality and value of services provided through NEA-supported leadership training and technical assistance initiatives (e.g., convenings, curricular assets).

Evidence-Building

Research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.2

Produce Research, Statistics, and General Information about the Arts for the Benefit of the Arts Sector and Beyond.

In addition to supporting leadership training and skills development within the wider arts sector, the NEA builds capacity for arts organizations through research and evaluation. Evidence-based practice guides, literature reviews, and statistical reports can assist arts organizations in more equitably serving the American public. The NEA also supports studies about the value and impact of the arts to individuals. This category of research can boost public recognition of the arts' benefits for society—thus validating the work of artists and arts organizations in terms meaningful to funders, policymakers, and cross-sectoral partners.

Beyond using research and evaluation to measure the arts' impacts, or to promote effective practices in the arts, the NEA communicates constantly with the arts and cultural sector and the general public about a range of topics, themes, programs, and opportunities in the arts. The NEA's Office of Public Affairs publishes this content on traditional and social media platforms, facilitates interviews between NEA staff and media outlets to further promote the arts, and supports convenings, speeches, and other events featuring the NEA. The NEA's website carries up-to-date information and resources for audiences and organizations from all backgrounds.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of Research & Analysis
Office of Public Affairs

Strategies

1. Through dedicated staff and awards and strategic partnerships, support priority goals aligning with the NEA's five-year Research Agenda.
 - Award guidelines for the Research Grants in the Arts and NEA Research Labs programs encourage:
 - experimental and quasi-experimental studies of the arts' impact on the health and human development of individuals, on education, and on economic growth and innovation; and
 - studies using diverse methodologies (including community-based participatory research) to examine the following topics: the arts' role in community healing and transformation; diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts; and the changing arts ecology.
 - Through the Creative Forces clinical program, support studies and publications about the impact of creative arts therapies on the health and wellness of military and veteran populations.
 - Through research partnerships with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis, support research awards and/or data collection or analysis that will benefit arts practitioners and others.
 - Through staff-conducted research and analysis, or through contracts, publish periodic research reports, briefs, and data visualizations that support the NEA Research Agenda.
2. Develop evidence-based tools and research and data resources that will benefit communities of artistic practice.
 - In award guidelines for the Research Grants in the Arts and NEA Research Labs programs, encourage development of these products and services for the greater arts community.
 - Engage a Technical Assistance Center to support evaluation, learning, and data science for arts practitioners at different levels of size and capacity.
 - Through the Creative Forces clinical and community engagement programs, support a National Resource Center featuring resources and information for creative arts therapists and community arts practitioners.
 - Through the Arts Education Partnership, support ArtsEdSearch, a clearinghouse of research about arts education.
 - Through the Sound Health Network, support a national clearinghouse of studies about music, neuroscience, health, and wellness, and promote networking and learning opportunities for researchers and practitioners at this intersection.
 - Engage a National Arts Statistics & Evidence-Based Reporting Center to serve alongside the NEA's National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture.
3. Through the NEA website and traditional and social media, showcase and discuss exemplary arts practices and projects, including but not limited to those supported by the NEA.
 - Place high-impact stories about NEA-funded activities in newspapers and magazines nationwide, place op-eds by the chair as appropriate, and monitor press coverage of the NEA specifically and of the arts generally.
 - Use social media channels to directly reach hundreds of thousands of people regarding important arts happenings and issues.

- Use the NEA’s blog and podcast series to provide information on exemplary art projects and artists across the country, encourage arts participation, and engage the public in national conversations about the arts to demonstrate their importance to individuals and communities.
 - Use the NEA’s magazine, *American Artscape*, to present detailed information on exemplary arts projects and artists across the country, showing how the arts impact communities large and small across the nation.
 - Produce and distribute fact sheets, infographics, and publications about various NEA programs and activities.
 - Produce and distribute monthly newsletters to constituents to update them on NEA activities, issues in the arts, new arts content on the NEA website and elsewhere on the internet, and upcoming events.
4. Convene arts practitioners, researchers, funders, and policymakers to network and discuss timely issues in the arts.
- Use webcasts to make the National Council on the Arts meetings open to the public; to broadcast special convenings on the arts in various artistic disciplines; and to share special NEA events with the public.
 - Make the NEA chair and discipline directors available in traditional and social media to discuss arts issues and position the NEA as a leader in the arts sector.
 - Work with the chair’s and chief of staff’s offices, as well as other NEA staff on travel throughout the United States, to encourage media coverage of events that demonstrate how the NEA supports the arts in American communities.

In addition, the NEA chair will bring field-specific expertise related to the pursuit of this objective.

Contributing Programs

- Research Grants in the Arts fund research studies that investigate the value and/or impact of the arts, either as individual components of the U.S. arts ecology or as they interact with each other and/or with other domains of American life.
- NEA Research Labs fund transdisciplinary research teams grounded in the social and behavioral sciences, yielding empirical insights about the arts for the benefit of arts and non-arts sectors alike.
- Sound Health Network is a partnership of the NEA with the University of California, San Francisco in collaboration with the NIH and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Sound Health Network was established to promote research and public awareness about the impact of music on health and wellness.
- Creative Forces[®]: NEA Military Healing Arts Network invests in clinical research on the impacts and benefits—physical, social, and emotional—of creative arts therapies as innovative treatment methods.
- The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) operates ArtsEdSearch, an online database of research focused on the outcomes of arts education. AEP is supported by the NEA and the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the Education Commission of the States.
- Creative Economy State Profiles and a database of state-level studies of the creative economy are maintained by NASAA, under an agreement with the NEA.
- The National Arts Statistics & Evidence-Based Reporting Center will analyze and report on national arts-related datasets according to a published schedule, and will produce evidence-based practice guides and topical reports for arts practitioners.
- The National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture is a NEA-funded public repository of arts-related datasets and publications.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

- The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) is a cross-sectional survey that occurs roughly every five years in partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau. In addition, the NEA partners with the Census Bureau to conduct a short-form version—the Arts Basic Survey— between waves of the SPPA.
- The U.S. Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account is directed in partnership with the Bureau of Economic Analysis to report, on a yearly basis, national and state-level data about the arts’ contributions to the U.S. economy.
- Sound Health, a partnership between the John F. Kennedy Performing Arts Center and the NIH, in association with the NEA, promotes research and public awareness about the potential impact of music on neuroscience, health, and well-being. In partnership with NIH, the NEA supports research grants on “Music and Health.”
- Currently, the NEA is partnering with the NSF to support a research workshop on the value of the arts to computer science education. The NEA also partners with NSF in supporting an Arts Module on the periodic General Social Survey.
- The Interagency Task Force on the Arts and Human Development, a group consisting of members from 15 federal entities, strives to encourage more and better research on how the arts can help people reach their full potential at all stages of life.

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this objective are as follows:

1. *The NEA promotes the arts and engages with communities in every state, territory, and the District of Columbia through traditional media, social media, and the agency’s website and publications.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of states and U.S. jurisdictions, including the District of Columbia, in which NEA-related articles appeared in news outlets. Another performance measure will be to track the percent of states and U.S. jurisdictions whose residents interact with the NEA through the agency’s website.
2. *The NEA advances research in the arts through the social and behavioral sciences to investigate priority topics established in the agency’s five-year research agenda.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of NEA website users who express satisfaction with the value of research information and publications on the agency’s website. Another performance measure will track the mean citation rate for projects resulting from NEA awards for research.

The NEA also will explore the ability to report, during this strategic plan period, on the various ways in which NEA-supported research is used by scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers within and outside the arts. Primary methods for understanding these factors may include the survey mentioned above, and/or qualitative analyses of narrative data collected through NEA research grantee reports.

Evidence-Building

The NEA’s five-year Research Agenda (FY 2022-2026), which stemmed from a planning study and consultations with internal and external stakeholders, articulates priority topics and sample questions that will guide the agency’s investments in knowledge-building about the value and/or impact of the arts in American life. This agenda is distinct from the NEA’s Learning Agenda, which is used to identify and pursue research questions pertaining to the agency’s own activities and operations. For example, future evaluation of progress on the NEA’s research agenda, and of the agenda’s ability to affect the work of policy-makers and practitioners in the arts nationwide, may be included ultimately as a Learning Agenda item.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3

Invest in the Capacity of Arts Organizations and Artists to Serve a Broader Public through Digital or Emergent Technology.

For decades, artists and arts organizations have experimented with the use of digital and emergent technology as a creative medium, creating a dynamic but consistently under-resourced field of artistic practice. A NEA research report, *Tech as Art: Supporting Artists Who Use Technology as a Creative Medium* (2021), analyzes this field and the historic barriers and opportunities that have defined it. The report also highlights the cross-sectoral practices of tech-centered artists, their engagement with the larger societal issues of our time—ranging from racial justice to climate change—and their capacity to network and innovate.

Although data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis suggest that web streaming and web publishing are among the highest-growth categories of all arts-related industries, the work of tech-centered artists is poorly represented across the U.S. arts funding landscape, as shown by the Tech as Art report. And yet, the inclusion of these artists in the work of arts organizations promoting different artistic disciplines has become more critical than ever, now that the COVID-19 pandemic has forever altered the shape of arts programming and presentation. As in-person events came to a halt in early 2020, organizations were forced to turn to digital and hybrid programming. Over the next few years, the NEA will invest in greater capacity for arts organizations and artists to harvest lessons from the pandemic and offer digital opportunities for arts participation—inclusive of hybrid programming—to reach a broader and more diverse public.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Media Arts Division

Strategies

Through awards and strategic partnerships, the NEA will support:

- Tech-centered creative practices and artist-driven explorations of digital or emergent technology across all artistic disciplines.
- Arts organizations' capacity to deliver tech-centered, digital, and hybrid arts and cultural programs to audiences and learners.
- Opportunities for professional development in tech-centered creative practices.
- The exploration of field-building initiatives that develop networks across artistic disciplines and relevant entities for investing in tech-centered creative practices and artist-driven use of digital or emergent technology.
- The exploration of strategies to share information among peer networks—and to raise awareness about—creative solutions and best practices for using digital technology, including accessibility requirements for websites, virtual programs, and other tech-centered activities.

Contributing Programs

Projects that support tech-centered artistic practice and greater opportunities for arts participation via technology are supported by the NEA's Grants for Arts Projects program and by Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs. This support is provided across all artistic disciplines.

In particular, through the Media Arts office, organizations can apply for funds to support digital and emergent technology projects across any artistic field, from dance, musical theater, and visual arts to arts education initiatives. The Media Arts program has a stated priority to support exemplary models and emerging practices in

digital storytelling; performance, visual, and cinematic arts; net art, or art that uses the internet as its medium; as well as immersive and interactive media, open-source software toolkits, and other forms of data visualization or computation, across all artistic disciplines, genres, and forms.

In addition, the NEA's Media Arts office and Office of Research & Analysis have conducted a national field scan on arts and technology, in partnership with the Ford Foundation and the Knight Foundation. The resulting publication, *Tech as Art: Supporting Artists Who Use Technology as a Creative Medium* (2021), is accompanied by ten commissioned essays from arts practitioners. The materials highlight historic barriers and opportunities for the field—illustrating, for example, how tech-centered creative practice can support greater equity and inclusion in STEM learning.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

- Through a cooperative agreement in partnership with the Sundance Institute, the NEA supports a national field-building network that promotes filmmaker-friendly policies, best practices, and strategies and creates a sustainable infrastructure that will strengthen the independent film and new media field through knowledge exchange, cross-sector collaboration, and research.
- Currently, the NEA is partnering with the NSF to support a research workshop on the value of the arts to computer science education.

Performance Goals

The performance goal for this objective is:

NEA grantees report that NEA funding enabled them to build the capacity for serving a broader public through digital or emergent technology or for supporting tech-centered creative practices.

This goal will be measured by tracking the number of grantees reporting that NEA funding enabled them to build capacity serving a broader public through digital or emergent technology. Another performance measure will track the number of grantees reporting that NEA funding enabled them to build capacity for supporting tech-centered creative practices.

Evidence-Building

The need to collect higher-quality data on virtual arts engagement increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to an unprecedented expansion of virtual arts programming. Since FY 2015, the agency has asked awardees to report the number of unique visitors that accessed online programming and mobile applications during the award period. As a result of data quality concerns over the years, the NEA has periodically made small modifications to these indicators. During this strategic plan period, and due to the growing need for finer-tuned measures of virtual engagement, the NEA expects to make a significant effort to improve how awardees are currently asked about virtual engagement activities.

Additional research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Pursue and Adopt Exemplary Practices to Support the Agency's Mission.

The NEA is a small, independent federal agency with a big impact and is committed to effectively carrying out its mission. The NEA is a responsible steward of its resources, building a workforce that is committed to its mission and service to the American people, and using resources such as technology strategically.

The NEA is the sole arts funding entity, public or private, whose funding reaches every Congressional District in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. jurisdictions, supporting activities within the arts and culture sector such as arts presentations, artist residencies, arts education and healing arts projects, research, creative placemaking, and technical assistance for organizational capacity building. With such an ambitious mission and extensive roster of programmatic activities, the NEA can succeed only because of its commitment to its employees and organizational excellence. Creating and maintaining a highly functioning organization allows the NEA to fulfill its considerable responsibilities to the American people.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.1

Continue to be Accountable and Transparent to the Public through Effective Operations that Promote Vigilant Stewardship of Funds.

Bearing in mind the NEA's accountability to U.S. taxpayers, and to facilitate its mission, the NEA's staff engage in work practices and design work systems to be effective, efficient, measurable, and transparent. The agency maintains and continually improves upon policies, processes, and systems that ensure optimal transparency and accountability. Chief among these is the NEA's grant application review process, at the heart of which are review panels comprised of citizen panels—both experts in the various arts fields, as well as laypersons with knowledge in the relevant fields.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of Deputy Chair for Management & Budget
Office of Information Technology Management
Office of Guidelines & Panel Operations

Strategies

- Ensure use and effectiveness of the grant adjudication processes through sound panel selection and review processes.
 - Ensure adequate diversity and geographic representation on agency panels.
 - Streamline panel processes and facilitate increased accessibility for panelists to participate in the process.
- Invest in technology solutions to enable efficient, effective, accurate, accessible, and secure business operations in remote and office locations.
 - Improve cloud-based information technology operations.
 - Ensure the security of NEA information technology systems and the data they contain.
 - Ensure 508 compliance and full accessibility of systems and hardware for employees and the public.
 - Leverage proven systems and operations through shared services, e.g., financial management services through the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Enterprise Services Center (ESC), electronic grants management system (eGMS) through the NEH, and electronic travel services through ESC.
 - Inform agency staff about real-time technology changes.
- Monitor agency processes to ensure efficient, effective internal controls, integrity of work products, and compliance with NEA policies and government laws and regulations.
 - Annually review agency enterprise risk strategies and identify risk areas that need enhancement.

- Conduct regular reviews of the NEA's data systems to verify accuracy and compliance with the Privacy Act and records retention policies.
- Assess our work processes, work flow, and current internal controls to improve upon the transparency, accessibility, and effectiveness of our operations.
- Cooperate fully with government oversight officials and auditors in their work to support good governance and promote risk mitigation activities.
- Improve the NEA's compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d), as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220).
- Provide timely, accurate, informative, and accessible data through agency reporting, website updates, publications, and other materials.
 - Make data about grant awards, contracts, and research readily available to the public on the NEA website, USASpending.gov, and the National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture website.
 - Improve the quality of the NEA's administrative data, including data collected through NEA grant programs and from the NEA's national initiatives through a review and alignment of data elements across agency application and reporting forms.
 - Provide meaningful access for Limited English Proficiency individuals to NEA programs through increased translation of agency webpages and materials into other languages.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

The NEA collaborates with numerous agencies in pursuit of effective operations that promote vigilant stewardship of public funds. As an example, the NEA partners with similarly sized NEH in developing and operating the eGMS at a fraction of the cost of purchasing the service from one of the large agency- shared providers.

The NEA also leverages proven systems and operations through the use of numerous shared service agreements, with the larger ones including financial services through the FAA's ESC, employee payroll and benefit processing through the Department of Agriculture's National Finance Center, contracting services and Indirect Cost Rate agreement negotiations through the Department of the Interior's Business Center, and travel services through ESC. The agency continually reviews operations to identify opportunities for partnering with government service providers to implement more efficient and cost- effective processes.

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this objective are:

1. *The NEA is a vigilant steward of funds through accountable, transparent, and effective operations.*
This goal will ensure annual receipt of an unmodified audit opinion and that the data and deliverables submitted to USASpending.gov and other required federal data systems are certified as accurate, complete, and in accordance with government-wide data standards. Another performance measure will track improvements to the agency's cybersecurity posture through the development and implementation of a zero-trust architecture and by upgrading the agency's infrastructure in alignment with the agency's multi-year IPV6 migration plan.
2. *The NEA recruits and engages citizens as panelists who reflect the nation's geographic and racial/ ethnic diversity.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of U.S. states and territories, including the District of Columbia, represented by individuals serving on NEA panels. Secondary measures are the percent of individuals, by race/ethnicity, serving on NEA panels; and the percent of NEA panelists who express satisfaction with their participation in the panel process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.2

Foster a Skilled, Agile, Diverse, and Cohesive Workforce.

Believing that the agency's most important asset is its people, NEA is committed to embedding principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access into the agency's work practices, to foster a safe place for employees to thrive. The NEA also invests in training, and staff recognition programs, and promotes strong employee morale and work-life balance in order to attract, develop, and retain a talented and diverse staff who are empowered and equipped to execute a shared mission and vision for the agency.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Deputy Chair of Management & Budget
Office of Human Resources
Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity

Strategies

Strategies supporting this objective include staff recruitment, development, and retention strategies and actions to ensure optimal work conditions for the NEA workforce. Specific strategies include:

- Recruit and retain a highly motivated, diverse, and talented workforce.
 - Review staffing and succession plans to ensure adequate internal capability to meet current and future agency goals, and analyze these goals in conjunction with diversity and outreach goals.
 - Thoroughly analyze vacancy opportunities and potential areas for recruitment and areas where diversity can be enhanced.
 - Consistently consider a variety of hiring options and available flexibilities to recruit a talented and diverse workforce able to meet the NEA's mission.
 - Comply with OPM recruitment requirements to include consideration of current NEA qualified employees for employment opportunities.
 - Provide opportunity for staff input on planning/policies/processes across the agency.
- Ensure that all agency staff are developed and trained for opportunities to succeed while employed at the NEA.
 - Communicate and provide targeted opportunities for staff professional development and career advancement within the NEA.
 - Require managers and supervisors to annually communicate and work with their respective employees to develop comprehensive individual development plans that bolster strengths and minimize weaknesses so that employees are able to perform at peak levels.
 - Seek out innovative training and employee development methods that are compatible with the unique mission of the agency, including cross-training opportunities.
- Develop and maintain a work environment that is safe, diverse, and inclusive, with an emphasis on open communication and the well-being of NEA staff.
 - Develop work, health, and safety protocols, and policies and procedures designed to keep employees safe and thriving during the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic period.
 - Ensure that all employees are trained annually in various aspects of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

- Maintain a no-tolerance policy for any behavior that infringes on the principles of achieving racial diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in NEA operations.
- Engage and foster free-flowing and open communication with staff regarding NEA activities.

In addition, the NEA chair will bring field-specific expertise related to the pursuit of this objective.

Contributing Programs

In addition to government-wide benefits—including the NEA’s Incentive & Awards Program, which consistently recognizes valuable performers for their efforts and achievements—other programs include family-friendly leave policies and flexible/alternative work schedules (including telework when appropriate). The NEA also provides wellness services—both health center access and an expansive Employee Assistance Program, through an interagency agreement with Federal Occupational Health. Similarly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the NEA has participated in cross-agency meetings (e.g., the Small Agency Council) and has consulted informally with other agencies on best practices for addressing the effect of COVID-19 on workplace operations and workplace safety.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

The NEA manages its workforce with support from other government agencies. In addition to the support in payroll processing provided by the NFC discussed under Objective 4.1, the NEA also works on staff recruitment with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) through an interagency agreement. The NEA works with the NEH to provide staff programs in connection with special emphasis observances implemented by Presidential Proclamation, Executive Orders, and Public Law, such as African American History Month, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, and National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

Performance Goals

The performance goal for this objective is:

NEA employees report a positive work culture and a high degree of satisfaction working at the NEA.

This performance goal will be measured by tracking index scores for employee engagement and intrinsic work experience on OPM’s annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey.⁶

CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVE

The NEA will Model Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Arts through All of Its Activities and Operations.

In its founding legislation, the NEA was charged with the responsibility of widening the availability of art, particularly to historically underserved populations—those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. Since its creation, the NEA has dedicated resources, developed leadership initiatives, and strengthened its partnerships with SAAs and RAOs to realize the agency’s mission to foster and sustain an environment in which the arts belong to everyone in the United States.

The NEA continues to make progress in lifting barriers to arts participation across the nation. Most recently, an analysis showed that more than 43 percent of arts activities sponsored by NEA grants are held in census tracts where 20 percent or more of the population live below the poverty line. In addition, the NEA’s Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs include funds for responding to the needs of underserved populations within states and regions.

⁶ Adjustments to this measure may be required if FEVS indexes are changed in future years.

The agency will monitor the distribution of grants in support of widening its reach among diverse demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic groups. It also will explore methods for tracking and enlarging the diversity of organizations represented in the NEA's applicant pool and grants portfolio. Related factors may include the demographic characteristics associated with applicant/grantee organizations, their missions, budget sizes, geographic locations, and first-time applicant status.

This cross-cutting objective also refers to the NEA's internal operations. In its day-to-day functioning, the agency aspires to model the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and equal employment opportunity principles to ensure effective management and accountability of federal resources.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity

Strategies

To support this cross-cutting objective, the NEA will hew closely to the Equity Action Plan it submitted to OMB in January 2022. The document outlines new and ongoing activities, potential barriers, and mechanisms for tracking progress on equity in five domains: arts participation in underserved communities; community engagement; accessibility; data; and contracting and procurement. In FY 2023, moreover, the NEA will develop a long-term monitoring and evaluation strategy using outcomes data to assess overall effectiveness of the Equity Action Plan.

In addition, the NEA chair will bring field-specific expertise related to the pursuit of this objective.

Regarding staff operations as a whole, the NEA will establish a model Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program that will serve as the foundation on which the agency will execute its mission. Integral to this program will be the creation of a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Strategic Plan and the monitoring of its implementation.

Contributing Programs

Among the agency's funding programs, Grants for Arts Projects (to eligible organizations), Challenge America, and Partnership Agreement grants (to SAAs and RAOs) are expected to contribute toward the accomplishment of this cross-cutting objective.

The Office of Accessibility will coordinate with agency offices and the public to ensure access to the grant process, agency programs, and public engagement for people with disabilities.

Internally, the NEA's EEO program will be a significant contributor to this cross-cutting objective. The EEO office serves as a resource to agency managers and employees by providing direction, guidance, and monitoring of key activities to achieve a diverse workplace free of barriers to equal opportunity. The NEA's EEO program thus will help to maintain a workplace free from discrimination in any of its management policies, practices, or procedures, better enabling the agency to pursue its mission. In addition, the EEO office co-leads trans-agency working groups that will implement the NEA's Equity Action Plan and will develop a DEIA Strategic Plan.

Cross-Agency Collaborations

NEA staff routinely participate in the following Executive Agency-level groups:

- OMB Equity Learning Community
- White House Equity Legal Working Group

Performance Goals

The performance goals for this cross-cutting objective are:

1. *The NEA supports projects and partnerships that engage populations reflecting the nation's demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic diversity.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the percent of NEA awards supporting projects that engaged diverse demographic groups. A secondary measure will track the percent of subawards, through Partnership Agreements, supporting project activities that engaged diverse demographic groups. Two other performance measures will track: the percent of Congressional Districts in which organizations receive a NEA award; and the percent of NEA awards that supported project activities in rural areas or high-poverty neighborhoods. A secondary measure will track the percent of subawards that supported project activities in rural areas or high-poverty neighborhoods.
2. *The NEA will establish a model EEO program based on development of internal benchmarks.*
This goal will be measured by tracking the completion of the six essential elements for a model EEO program as described in MD-715.⁷

Evidence-Building

Through the grant application and final report processes, the agency collects self-reported data on the beneficiaries of federal funds awarded through its direct grant and Partnership Agreement programs. These records, however, do not include data on all the populations featured in the President's Executive Order (EO) on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities. In addition, the agency does not currently collect data on the leadership or staff of awardee organizations.

During FY 2022, the NEA will undertake projects to improve data collection methods that can support diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) indicators. The agency will determine the feasibility of creating new fields on its grantmaking forms (including for SAAs and RAOs) to collect better data on the populations served, and, to the extent appropriate, on the leadership and staff of applicant and grantee organizations. The NEA further will expand its analytical capability to use existing data sources for identifying and reporting on underserved communities. Additional research and evaluation activities for this objective will be identified annually through the Learning Agenda process.

⁷ MD-715's model EEO program, pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq., and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 791 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-325).

