



PROCESSING

What is the next step in the process once an application has been recommended for funding?

Generally you will receive a request to update your project and budget. After you return the forms requested by the discipline specialist, the material and application is forwarded to the Grants & Contracts Office. We review the recommended application to ensure that the project and budget are consistent with the Council's recommendation and comply with government-wide and Arts Endowment regulations, policies, and procedures. Grants Management Specialists work closely with the discipline staff and you, the applicant, to resolve any problems that may be identified while processing an award. The Grants Management Specialist may contact you for further information and additional budget data. Once all is resolved, the Grants & Contracts Office mails out an awards package. This administrative review can take several months from the date that the application was received in the Grants & Contract Office until the date the award package is mailed.

I received the grant letter. Where is the form to sign accepting the grant?

The NEA does not require you to return a formal letter accepting the grant. Instead, the first time you request funds for the project constitutes your agreement to comply with all the terms and conditions of the award.

PAYMENT

The award letter came. Where is my money?

Funds are not automatically released; a Payment Request must be submitted. The form is available on our website, www.arts.gov/manageaward/index. Instructions for completing the form are there, too, along with a brief video tutorial to help you get started. Be sure to read the Payment Request Instructions and review the tutorial first; then, if you still have questions, contact the Grants & Contract Office. Don't forget to include your bank account information; all payments are made through the Automated Clearing House payment system (ACH). Payment Requests may be e-mail to grants@arts.gov or submitted by fax to (202) 682-5609 or (202) 682-5610. Please do not mail them as this delays processing significantly.

When will we get our award funds?

After you submit your Payment Request form to the Grants & Contracts Office, you should allow up to six weeks for receipt of funds. If the form is completed correctly, with no errors in the banking information, you can often expect payment sooner.

How will we know when our money has been transferred to our bank?

You can track receipt and processing of your Payment Request form online at www.arts.gov/mygrant. Generally payment is made no later than 20 days after the "date approved."

When contacting your bank, be sure to ask whether the bank has received an ACH (automated clearinghouse) payment to your account. If you use any other terminology, the bank may not be able to locate the funds.

If Item 2 of www.arts.gov/mygrant shows a "date approved" and "amount" but your bank confirms there is no record of an ACH payment, contact us so that we can request additional information from our Finance office.

I submitted a Payment Request and see it as received in the table in Box 2 on the My Grant page but the amount is not listed. Why?

The amount in the table does not appear until the review is completed and the "Date Approved" is entered into the database by the Grants & Contracts Office.

Do we have to raise the matching funds before we can request payment?

You may spend our money first. You may request reimbursement for money spent on the project after the start date of the period of support. You may also request an advance for expenses to be incurred within 30 days from the date you submit the Payment Request form. All expenses must be incurred within the period of support listed on your grant award letter, or as amended.

Can we draw down all of our funds at once?

You can only draw down funds as they are needed -- either as a reimbursement as outlined above, or as an advance to cover your immediate cash needs. (We generally define this as funds needed within the coming 30 days.) Remember, it is illegal to hold Federal funds -- so you cannot draw down funds that won't be disbursed immediately.

AMENDMENTS

We want to make changes to our project. What do we need to do?

All requests for changes, such as the need to have more time to finish a project, or the scope of your approved activities or artists are changing, must be submitted by an authorizing official in writing to the Grants & Contracts Office before implementation. Sending requests to any office other than Grants & Contracts will delay review and approval. No other Arts Endowment office has the authority to approve or issue changes. For more specific information on what to submit, see the [General Terms](#). It can take up to 6 weeks for a grantee to receive a response. Change requests submitted after programming is complete, or changes identified in a Final report, are not guaranteed to be approved, and may result in our requesting return of funds.

What should I do if I want to change the consortium member for my grant or if they drop out? (For grant numbers beginning with 12-xxxx-xxxx, 11-xxxx-xxxx, etc.).

Changing the consortium member requires serious Arts Endowment review. Please refer to the [General Terms](#). Approval is not guaranteed. You will need to clearly outline the circumstances that necessitate a change in Consortium Member, and submit anew [Consortium Partner Information form](#) which is available online. Remember, too, that the new member must meet all of the same eligibility requirements.

What should I do if I want to change the primary partner in my Our Town grant? (Our Town grants beginning with 11-4292-7xxx, 12-4292-7xxx, etc.).

If changes to the Our Town grantee partner are necessary, you must seek written approval from the NEA before any changes are made. Approval is not guaranteed. You will need to clearly outline the circumstances that necessitate a change in the partner, and submit a new **Consortium Partner Information form** which is available online. Remember, too, that the new member must meet all of the same eligibility requirements.

The lead artist we booked for our performance is ill and cannot perform; our event is next week -- what do we do?

You should contact the Grants & Contracts Office as soon as possible if you know an artist substitution might be needed. Such changes require *prior* Endowment approval but we realize this can be challenging under such circumstances. Provide us with a brief justification as to why the change is necessary, along with a bio of the new artist, and we will do our best to expedite the review of your request.

Our address has changed; who should we tell?

The Grants & Contracts Office can update your address in our agency database. But, remember that this information will also have to be changed in your Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) registration. Once your record is updated with D&B, the information will automatically be updated in SAM (the System for Award Management, formerly known as CCR.) It is important that information on file with the IRS and D&B match, as the SAM system will attempt to validate your record against the IRS database, and it may affect your registration status, and ability to apply for federal grants, if it determines there is a mis-match.

We've changed our business name; who should we tell?

It depends on whether you have legally changed your organization name or whether you are operating under a popular name or "DBA" name. NEA awards are issued to your IRS Legal Name. If you've changed your legal name with the IRS, please provide a copy of the new IRS determination letter with the new name and we will update our database. Remember, though, that this information must also be changed with DUNS and SAM, so that the organization's name is consistently identified in each system. Any mis-matches may affect your registration status, which, in turn, will affect your ability to apply for awards or draw down funds.

MATCHING FUNDS

Can other Federal funds be used as match for our grant?

NO. Matching contributions must come from non-Federal sources.

Can we use an award from our State Arts Agency to match our NEA grant?

If your State Arts Agency identified their grant or part of the funds to you as a National Endowment for the Arts subgrant, you may NOT claim that award or portion as match for your Arts Endowment grant. (You may not use Federal money, even if it comes to you indirectly, to match a NEA award.) If your State Arts Agency did not identify NEA funds in their award to you, then you may use their grant to match ours if related to the approved project.

What happens if we have a change in the source of matching funds?

Once the grant has been awarded you may make changes to the source of your matching funds as long as your continue to meet the required minimum match from non-Federal sources and the source of the funds are allowable. Remember, all match requirements must be met during the period of support.

What documentation must be kept for the expenditure of Federal or matching grant funds?

You must retain as much detailed information as possible to explain the expenditures on a grant (e.g., cancelled checks, receipts, procurement requests, invoices, contracts, bank statements, credit card statements, etc.). Only verifiable costs can be claimed and you, the grantee, bear the responsibility of documenting the allowability of all costs claimed. In the event of an audit, you will be required to produce supporting documentation of all allocable and allowable costs claimed. Without proper documentation, funds may have to be returned to the Arts Endowment.

What are in-kind contributions? Is there a "cap" or percentage limit for in-kind contributions as matching funds?

In-kind contributions are goods and services that are donated to the project by individuals or organizations *other than* the applicant (see below). In-kind contributions can be donated space, supplies, volunteer services, etc. To qualify as matching resources, these items also must be listed in the project budget as direct costs. The dollar value of these non-cash donations should be calculated at their verifiable fair-market value.

There is no formula for how much of the required match can be in-kind.

In-kind contributions are provided by a third party, not your organization. Many applicants mistakenly designate as in-kind contributions items that are actually cash contributions. For example, applicants often list their own contributions to the project (such as supplies, rent, and staff salaries) as in-kind. Generally, these items are considered cash donations. They do not qualify as in-kind because they are being "contributed" by the applicant and not a third party. For an applicant's staff salary on a project to qualify as in-kind, an employee would have to donate his or her time beyond the regularly compensated work schedule.

Remember, if you use donated space, supplies, and/or volunteer services (i.e., in-kind contributions) as part of your match, you need to maintain proper documentation. For help, see our sample format for recording in-kind (third party) contributions. This is available in the Forms section of [Manage Your Award](#).

What are the regulations on in-kind costs?

See [OMB Circular A-110 \(2 CFR 215\) for Non-profits, and Colleges and Universities](#) or [A-102 \(2 CFR 230\) for States, Locals, and Tribal Governments](#).

ALLOWABLE & UNALLOWABLE COSTS

Our award package included a copy of our budget, but it said that certain costs were unallowable. What does that mean?

Certain costs are unallowable under Federal awards and may not be supported by your NEA funds or included as part of your match. Most commonly, these include the costs of food for receptions, items intended for

resale, development (fundraising) staff, gifts or donations to others, etc. Be sure you take note of any costs that have been removed from your budget; these may not be reflected in future financial reports for your award.

If a cost is unallowable for Federal funds, may we still include it in the budget but cover it with matching funds?

No. If it is an unallowable cost for Federal funds, it is also unallowable for matching funds, and cannot be included in your NEA project budget at all, or reflected in financial reports for your award.

We paid an artist retainer prior to our project period start date. The artist is integral to the funded project. Can we claim that expense?

NO. Pre-award costs are unallowable. Many organizations contract artists well in advance of the period of support in order to ensure availability. Those pre-award costs cannot be included in your application budget or claimed on your Payment Request form or Federal financial report.

May international artists be included in our project budget?

Yes, as long as those artists were pre-approved and costs related to their compensation and travel are in compliance with regulations issued by the U.S. Treasury Department Office of Foreign Asset Control (see <http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/>).

A request to change artists must follow the Agency's procedures for a scope amendment as outlined in the [General Terms](#).

GENERAL

Who owns the equipment purchased (with prior approval) with NEA grant funds?

The grantee organization.

Why did I receive an e-mail informing me that I was delinquent on submitting my final reports when we sent them last week?

Verify that we did receive the final reports by going to www.arts.gov/mygrant and entering your 10-digit grant number. Item 3 displays when your final reports are due and whether they have been logged into our database. The e-mail and reports may have crossed in the mail. Please note the date on the delinquent e-mail.

The Final Descriptive Report form requests information about the "Arts Endowment outcome" addressed. What "outcome" is relevant to my project?

You can see the outcome you selected and discussed in your application at www.arts.gov/mygrant. Just enter your 10-digit grant number. For grant numbers beginning with 12-xxxx-xxxx, 13-xxxx-xxxx, etc. the outcome is also on the award letter.

What is the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for my award?

45.024 - **Awards to Organizations and Individuals**

45.025 – **Partnership**

CFDA numbers are visible for all awards at www.arts.gov/mygrant, in the **General Terms**, and on your award letter.

ACCESSIBILITY

Go to www.arts.gov/resources/Accessibility/index for assistance on questions regarding accessibility.

Does our project need to be accessible?

Yes, all projects funded by the Arts Endowment must comply with Section 504 and the Americans with Disability Act. The Office for AccessAbility has many resources to help you meet these requirements.

Our grant supports publication of books. What do we need to do for publications with regards to accessibility?

Publications funded by the NEA must be made accessible to people who are blind or have low vision through accessible electronic versions, CDs or other recordings, Braille or readers, and/or large print versions, upon request.

Do all our performances, lectures, readings, workshops have to be sign language interpreted?

You must offer, advertise, and provide at least one presentation of each production or event in sign language or oral interpretation.

Our group does not own the theaters/venues where we perform and/or tour. We don't need to worry about access accommodations, do we?

Facilities that do not comply with the ADA cannot be legally used for public programs, regardless of whether they are being supported with Federal funds. As a Federal grant recipient, though, it is your responsibility to ensure compliance with the law for any activities supported by your grant or matching funds. If the facility is not accessible, you should hold your activities in another accessible location, such as an accessible first floor, or temporarily relocate your activities to an accessible space, or provide at least one in an accessible location. People with disabilities should have equal access to a project or programming as people without disabilities.

What is the Section 504 self-evaluation and do we have to do it?

Section 504 self-evaluation is required of all grantees to meet the terms of the Federal award. All grantees must keep this assessment up to date. For each Federal award, review your Section 504 self-evaluation to ensure that it still valid. The lack of a Section 504 self-evaluation is one of the most common findings referenced by our Inspector General when conducting an audit review. The Arts Endowment has developed a *504 Self Evaluation Workbook* (which covers programs, activities and facilities) that you may use to determine if you are in compliance with 504 requirements. If you have not previously conducted this self-evaluation or

wish to update the results of previously conducted evaluations, you may obtain the *Workbook* on the NEA's AccessAbility Office's web page: <http://www.arts.gov/about/504Workbook.html>.

REGISTRATION IN GRANTS.GOV, SAM, AND DUNS

What are these and why do I have to be registered?

The government is increasingly requiring use of various data systems to share and validate information related to Federal grants and contracts. Because these systems pull information from one another, their successful interaction depends on constituents' ongoing maintenance of the data in each account.

Grants.gov is the system used for initial application submission. Prior to applying, and throughout the life of an award, recipients must also maintain active registration in SAM (the System for Award Management, formerly known as the Central Contractor Registration or CCR) and have a valid DUNS number. For more information on how these systems interact, and how to register or check on your registration status, see **An Overview of Grants.gov/SAM/DUNS**.

I can't remember my Grants.gov (or SAM or DUNS#) password. Can you reset it for me?

NEA staff do not have access to these systems. If you need your password reset or have another technical problem, please call the respective help desk personnel. For Grants.gov help, contact support@grants.gov or call 800-518-4726. For SAM help, visit the *Federal Service Desk* at www.fsd.gov or call 866-606-8220. For DUNS help, e-mail govt@dnb.com or call 866-705-5711.

I need to update our SAM registration but I don't know the username or password for our organization. What do I do?

In the SAM system, there are two kinds of accounts -- an overall **entity registration**, and an **individual user account**. Multiple people can create accounts and be authorized to update the overall SAM account for their organization. It's important to remember that by creating or updating your own individual user account, you are not necessarily updating/renewing the overall entity account. This entity registration must be renewed annually. Be sure that the people listed in SAM as the Points of Contact for your organization are current; they are the ones who will be sent reminders of an expiring registration. They also must approve the designation of individuals to edit/update the SAM account and to submit grant applications via Grants.gov. We recommend you do not use the same individual for all Points of Contact, because if they are unavailable or move on from the organization, you may have difficulty updating the account in time to meet a grant application deadline, etc.

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