

Frequently Asked Questions/Tips for Grants to Organizations

Processing

1. What is the next step in the process once an application have been recommended for funding?

Once the National Council on the Arts has concluded the Discipline Staff sends out a tentative notice of recommendation. Included in the notification is a Request for Application Update where you have the opportunity to revise the project budget, scope, or time frame if necessary due to a reduced funding amount or other factors. After you return the forms the application is forwarded to the Grants & Contracts Office. Here a Grant Specialist will 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 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 Specialist may contact you for further information and additional budget data. Once all is resolved the Grants & Contracts Office obligates the award and mails out an awards package. This administrative review can take from 45 days to 4 months from the date that the application was received in the Grants & Contract Office until the date the award package is mailed.

Payment

2. 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. Grantees must submitted a Payment Request. Read the Payment Request Instructions first then, if you still have questions, contact the Grants & Contract Office. You must include bank account information because payments are sent through the automated clearing house payment system (ACH).

3. When will we get our award funds?

After you fax your signed payment request form to the Grants & Contracts Office, you should allow up to 6 weeks for receipt of funds. If a progress report is not required and the form is completed correctly, you can often expect payment within 4 weeks.

4. 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."

You can call your bank and 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 give you the information you want.

5. 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.

6. 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 sign the payment request form.

Amendments

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

All requests for changes, such as a time extension or project scope change, 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 only slow the process down. No other Arts Endowment office has the authority to approve or issue any 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.

8. What should I do if I want to change the consortium member or the consortium member dropped out?

Changing the consortium member requires serious Arts Endowment review. Please refer to the **General Terms**. Approval is not guaranteed. One requirement is a new **Consortium Partner Information form** which is available online.

Matching Funds

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

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

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

If your state arts agency identified their grant to you as a National Endowment for the Arts subgrant, you may NOT claim that award as match for your Arts Endowment grant. (You may not use Federal money to match a NEA award.) If your state arts agency did not identify your award as NEA money, you may use their grant for the project to match ours.

11. 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 you 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.

12. 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 the 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.

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

In-kind contributions can be donated space, supplies, volunteer services. In-kind contributions are goods and services that are donated to the project by individuals or organizations *other than* the applicant (see below). 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 in doing this, see [our sample format](#) for recording in-kind (third party) contributions in the [General Terms](#).

14. 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

15. 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.

16. 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](#).

17. If an item of 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.

General

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

The grantee organization.

19. Why did I receive a letter informing me that I was delinquent on submitting my final reports when we sent them last week?

The letter and reports may have crossed in the mail. Please note the date on the delinquent letter. To verify receipt of your final reports, go to www.arts.gov/mygrant and enter your 10-digit grant number. Item 3 displays when your final reports are due and whether they have been logged into our database.

20. What happened to the Geographic Location of Project Activity form (GEO)?

The Geographic Location of Project Activity form (GEO) is now Part III of the **Final Descriptive Report**. For questions about completing the GEO call the Research & Technology Office at 202-682-5424.

21. 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 when you submitted your application at www.arts.gov/mygrant. Just enter your 10-digit grant number.

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

Since 2005 the NEA has made awards under two CFDA numbers only:

[45.024](#) - Awards to Organizations and Individuals

[45.025](#) - Partnership

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

Accessibility - Go to <http://www.arts.gov/resources/Accessibility/index.html> for assistance on questions regarding accessibility.

23. Does our project need to be accessible?

Yes, all projects funded by the Arts Endowment must comply with Section 504 and the American with Disability Act. The Office for AccessAbility has many resources to help you meet these requirements. Go to <http://www.arts.gov/resources/Accessibility/index.html>.

24. Our grant supports publication of books. What do we need to do for publications?

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.

25. Do all our performances, lectures, readings, workshops have to be signed interpreted?

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

26. 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. It is your responsibility to work with the owners to encourage and assist compliance with the law. 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. People with disabilities should have equal access to a project or programming as people without disabilities, for example, a performance in an inaccessible venue must also be offered at least once in a fully accessible venue

27. 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, CCR, and DUNS

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

The government is increasingly using various online databases 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 the Central Contractor Registration (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/CCR/DUNS**.

29. I can't remember my Grants.gov/CCR/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 CCR help, visit the [Federal Service Desk](#) at www.fsd.gov or call 866-606-8220. For DUNS help, call 866-705-5711.*

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