

National Endowment for the Arts

Notice of Funding Opportunity: FY26 Challenge America

Grant Program Details

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Access for individuals with disabilities:



Contact the Office of Accessibility at 202-682-5532 / accessibility@arts.gov or the Office of Civil Rights at civilrights@arts.gov to request an accommodation or an alternate format of the guidelines at least 2 weeks prior to the application deadline.

Challenge America

Basic Information

Federal Agency Name	National Endowment for the Arts
Funding Opportunity Title	Challenge America
Announcement Type	Modification of previous announcement
Funding Opportunity Number(s)	2025NEA01CA
Assistance Listing Number(s)	45.024
Agency contact information	challengeamerica@arts.gov

Details in the chart below are estimates. Actual figures may vary.

FUNDING DETAILS	AMOUNT <i>(Contingent upon availability of funds)</i>
Total amount of funding expected to award	\$2,800,000
Anticipated number of applications	600
Anticipated number of awards	280
Expected dollar value of awards (range)	\$10,000

Executive Summary

Challenge America supports projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved groups/communities. The program welcomes applications from applicants that are primarily small organizations, first-time applicants to the NEA, and/or returning Challenge America applicants.

Eligible applicants include: nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organizations; units of state or local government; Federally recognized tribal communities or tribes; and applicants that have not been recommended for funding in any of the three most recent Fiscal Years in the NEA's Grants for Arts Projects, Our Town, or Research Awards grant programs. Funding in this category is not available for individuals, fiscally sponsored entities, commercial/for-profit enterprises, State Arts Agencies (SAA), or Regional Arts Organizations (RAO).

Applications are evaluated based on the published [Review Criteria](#).

COMPONENTS OF THIS NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO):

- **CHALLENGE AMERICA GRANT PROGRAM DETAILS (*this document*)**: Essential information about Challenge America, including a grant program description, unallowable activities and costs, eligibility, review criteria, award amount and cost sharing, and post-award requirements and administration, among others.
- **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS DOCUMENT**: Navigate to the “Application Instructions” section on the [Challenge America webpage](#) for a document containing complete information on application requirements and how to submit your application.

KEY DATES:

Applying for and managing a federal grant is a significant undertaking and the process is competitive. We estimate that after completing the required registrations, which can take several weeks to finalize, the process to draft and submit an application will take approximately 26 hours.

Step	Date
Grant Program Details and Application Instructions Published	Early December 2024
Part 1 Application Package Available on Grants.gov	Early December 2024
Part 1: Grants.gov Submission Deadline	April 24, 2025 11:59 pm ET
Part 2: NEA Applicant Portal Opens to applicants	April 29, 2025 9:00 am ET
Part 2: NEA Applicant Portal Submission Deadline	May 13, 2025 11:59 pm ET
Notification of recommended funding or rejection	November 2025
Earliest project start date	January 1, 2026

NEA grant programs are not the only way to access funding within the nation’s arts and culture ecosystem. In some cases, you may wish to consider applying to local, [state](#), [regional](#), or philanthropic funders if their resources are better aligned with your work.

Challenge America Program Description

Program Goals and Objectives

Challenge America supports projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved groups/communities. This program welcomes applications from applicants that are primarily small organizations, first-time applicants to the NEA, returning Challenge America applicants, or applicants that have not been recommended for funding in any of the three most recent Fiscal Years (FY 2023, 2024, or 2025) in Grants for Arts Projects, Our Town, or Research. The program is rooted in principles that include, but are not limited to, the NEA's recognition that:

- Some communities have limited grant funding opportunities, and/or have been underserved by national arts funding;
- Some small organizations may face barriers to accessing grant funding; and
- Some applicants to the NEA may benefit from enhanced technical assistance resources.

Challenge America seeks to address these potential barriers for organizations seeking funding for their projects.

How does the NEA define underserved groups/communities?

The term "underserved," as defined by the NEA's legislation and agency policy, refers to those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited relative to: **geography, ethnicity, economic status, or disability**. At least one of these characteristics must be evident in the proposed project. Projects that serve other groups such as veterans, or age-specific groups (e.g., youth, seniors), **must also** include one of the four underserved categories listed above to be eligible to apply for this program.

Projects

Challenge America supports arts projects from a range of arts and non-arts organizations in artistic disciplines that include Artist Communities, Arts Education, Dance, Design, Film & Media Arts, Folk & Traditional Arts, Literary Arts, Local Arts Agencies, Museums, Music, Musical Theater, Opera, Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works, Theater, and Visual Arts.

Projects must extend the reach of the arts to underserved groups/communities. Projects may consist of one or more specific events or activities but cannot cover all of an organization's seasonal programming. **The NEA does not fund general operating support or support for an entire season of programming.**

Project activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Arts programming, including the commissioning or presentation of artists or artwork;
- Audience and community engagement, including educational activities;
- Marketing and promotional activities; and
- Organizational planning.

As applicable, engagement with the following constituencies is encouraged (in accordance with White House Executive Orders), including but not limited to:

- [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#),
- [Tribal Colleges and Universities](#),
- [American Indian and Alaska Native tribes](#),
- [Predominantly Black Institutions](#),
- [Hispanic Serving Institutions](#),
- Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and
- Organizations that support the independence and lifelong inclusion of people with disabilities.

To view examples of the types of Challenge America projects the NEA has previously funded, visit our [Recent Grants Search tool](#).

Characteristics of Competitive Proposals

Competitive proposals will address elements as stated in the application review criteria, and:

- Clearly detail the project's support for underserved communities, defined as those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited relative to geography, ethnicity, economic status, and/or disability.
- Clearly articulate the project activities, timeline, goals, desired outcomes, and processes for engaging with, and supporting, artists, audiences, and communities, as defined in the application. (Note: Applications are not evaluated on writing or grantsmanship, but on the clarity of the information provided and alignment with published review criteria.)
- Define the relationship to, and/or mutually beneficial partnership with, the groups or communities being served.
- Additionally, applicants applying for arts education and arts learning projects should underscore teaching artist and instructor expertise, detail desired learning outcomes for participants, and demonstrate accessible programming for students and learners from a range of backgrounds and communities.

Period of Performance

NEA support of a project can start no earlier than January 1, 2026.

Grants awarded in this program generally may cover a period of performance of up to two years. **The two-year period is intended to allow an applicant sufficient time to plan, execute, and close out its project, not to repeat a one-year project for a second year.**

No pre-award costs are allowable in the Project Budget. Project costs incurred before January 1, 2026, will be removed from the Project Budget. Any project planning costs included in the budget must be incurred within the period of performance.

A recipient may not receive more than one NEA award or other federal support for the same project/activities during the same period of performance.

Legal Requirements and Assurance of Compliance

The [Legal Requirements](#) section on our website provides information about key legal requirements that may apply to an applicant or recipient. It is not an exhaustive list. More details may be found in Appendix A of the [General Terms and Conditions](#).

By signing and submitting the application form on Grants.gov, the Applicant certifies that it is in compliance with the statutes outlined in the [Assurance of Compliance](#) and all related National Endowment for the Arts regulations, and that it will maintain records and submit the reports that are necessary to determine its compliance.

It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that you are compliant with all legal, regulatory, and policy requirements applicable to your award.

Non-discrimination Policies

The NEA is committed to supporting arts projects for the benefit of all Americans. Projects may focus on reaching a particular group or demographic (such as gender, disability, economic status, race, color, or national origin, including limited English proficiency); however, they may not be exclusionary under Federal civil rights laws and policies prohibiting discrimination as outlined in the [Assurance of Compliance](#). This extends to hiring practices, artist selection processes, and audience engagement. Your application should make it clear that project activities are not exclusionary. Please review the [Assurance of Compliance](#), as well as [NEA Civil Rights guidance](#) on our website, including this archived webinar: [Things to Know Before You Apply: Federal Civil Rights and Your Grants Application](#).

Accessibility

Federal regulations require that all NEA-funded projects be accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may be artists, performers, audiences, visitors, teaching artists, students, staff, and volunteers. Funded activities should be held in a physically accessible venue, and program access and effective communication should be provided for participants and audience members with disabilities. If your project is recommended for funding, you will be asked [to provide detailed information](#) describing how you will make your project physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities. See [Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#) for more information.

National Historic Preservation Act and National Environmental Policy Act Review

Recommended projects may be subject to the [National Historic Preservation Act](#) (NHPA) and/or the [National Environmental Policy Act](#) (NEPA) compliance review.

Some of the common project types requiring a review are:

- Projects involving a building over 50 years old. This also includes structures such as bridges; or objects such as sculptures; or a landscape that is historically significant.
- The commissioning and installation of temporary or permanent outdoor artworks or structures, such as: sculptures, statues, murals, or permanent signs.
- Outdoor arts/music festivals or activities requiring ground disturbance.
- Maintenance or rehabilitation of landscapes and gardens.
- Design services and planning for projects that may affect historic properties.

See more information about NHPA/NEPA review under [Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#).

Subject Matter

Per the NEA's legislation, projects or programs that are determined to be obscene are without artistic merit and shall not be funded. 20 USC 952(j)-(l); 20 USC 954(d),(l).

Authorizing Statutes

The NEA offers this funding opportunity under the authority of 20 U.S.C. § 954.

Staff Assistance/Contacts

Contact: challengeamerica@arts.gov or 202-682-5700.

The NEA understands that applying for federal funding is a significant undertaking. Our staff strives to ensure that every applicant receives the support they need to understand every step of the application process.

We are available to answer questions you might have about Challenge America. Reach out to us if you have questions about whether your organization and proposed project are a good match for the Challenge America program, or about any other aspect of the application process. We strongly urge you to complete and submit the Grant Application Form and upload materials outside of the hours of heaviest usage, which are generally 8:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day of the deadline. NEA staff will not be available after 5:30 p.m., Eastern Time.

Be sure to check out the [Applicant Resources](#) section in the left sidebar of the Challenge America page. The NEA conducts regular online Office Hours to answer questions. Dates and times are located in this section.

Technical support for Login.gov, Grants.gov, and SAM

Login.gov Help: Call 1-844-875-6446, consult the information posted in their [Help Center](#), or use their online form to [submit a question](#).

Grants.gov Contact Center: Call 800-518-4726, email support@grants.gov, or consult the information posted on the Grants.gov website at [Support](#) or [Help](#). The Grants.gov Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

SAM Federal Service Desk: Call 866-606-8220 or see the information posted on the SAM website at [SAM User Help](#).

Program Description: Unallowable Activities/Costs

The activities and costs listed below are **not** allowable and must not be included as part of your project activities or budget. This includes activities/costs covered by cost share/matching funds. Applicants should carefully review the [General Terms and Conditions](#) (GTC) which detail other information about allowable costs.

Unallowable Activities

- General operating support or support for a full season of programming.
- Direct grants to individuals.
- Direct grants to individual elementary or secondary schools -- charter, private, or public, or their booster clubs and similar organizations dedicated to supporting individual elementary or secondary schools. See Eligibility for more information.
- Projects that replace or supplant arts instruction provided by an arts specialist.
- Generally, courses/coursework in degree-granting institutions.
- Literary publishing that does not focus on contemporary literature and/or writers.
- Generally, publication of books, exhibition of works, or other projects by the applicant organization's board members, faculty, or trustees.
- Generally, exhibitions of, and other projects that primarily involve, single, individually-owned, private collections.
- Projects for which no curatorial, juried, or editorial judgement has been applied to the selection of artists or art works.
- Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities such as receptions, parties, galas, community dinners, picnics, and potlucks. Generally, this also includes activities at venues such as bars, wineries, and breweries where the consumption of alcohol/social activity is the primary purpose of the venue.
- Awards to individuals or organizations to honor or recognize achievement.
- Commercial (for-profit) enterprises or activities, including arts markets, concessions, food, T-shirts, artwork, or other items for resale. This includes online or virtual sales/shops.
- Lobbying, including activities intended to influence the outcome of elections or influence government officials regarding pending legislation, either directly or through specific lobbying appeals to the public.
- Voter registration drives and related activities.
- Construction, purchase, or renovation of facilities, or the purchase of land. Design fees, preparing space for an exhibit, installation or de-installation of art, and community planning are allowable.
- Subgranting or regranting.

Certain Unallowable Costs

- Cash reserves and endowments.
- Costs for the creation of new organizations.
- Costs to bring a project into compliance with federal grant requirements. This includes environmental or historical assessments or reviews and the hiring of individuals to write assessments or reviews or to otherwise comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and/or the National Historic Preservation Act.
- Expenditures related to compensation to foreign nationals and/or travel to or from foreign countries when those expenditures are not in compliance with regulations issued by the [U.S. Treasury Department Office of Foreign Assets Control](#). For further information, contact our Office of Grants Management at grants@arts.gov.
- Project costs supported by any other federal funding. This includes federal funding received either directly from a federal agency (e.g., National Endowment for the Humanities, Housing and Urban Development, National Science Foundation, or an entity that receives federal appropriations such as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or Amtrak); or indirectly from a pass-through organization such as a state arts agency, regional arts organization, or a grant made to another entity.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Purchase and/or use of gift cards and gift certificates to support project costs.
- Gifts and prizes, including cash prizes and other items (e.g., electronic devices, gift certificates) with monetary value.
- Stipends/fees to individuals who are incarcerated.
- Contributions and donations to other entities, including donation drives.
- General miscellaneous or contingency costs.
- Fines and penalties, bad debt costs, deficit reduction.
- Marketing expenses that are not directly related to the project.
- Audit costs that are not directly related to a Single Audit (formerly known as an A-133 audit).
- Rental costs for home office workspace owned by individuals or entities affiliated with the applicant organization.
- The purchase of vehicles.
- Visa costs paid to the U.S. government.
- Costs incurred outside of the official period of performance.

Eligibility

Applicants meeting the eligibility requirements below may be arts organizations, local arts agencies, arts service organizations, local education agencies (school districts), or other organizations that can help advance the goals of the NEA. **Late, ineligible, and incomplete applications will not be reviewed.**

ELIGIBLE

The following **are eligible** to apply:

- Nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organizations;
- Units of state or local government; and
- Federally recognized tribal communities or tribes.

To be eligible, **the applicant organization also must:**

- Meet the NEA's [Legal Requirements](#) including nonprofit, tax-exempt status at the time of application.
- Have an active registration with the [System for Award Management](#) (SAM) and have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) at the time of application. Applicants must maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and throughout the life of an award.
- Have completed a three-year history of arts programming prior to the application deadline.
 - Programming may have taken place prior to when the organization incorporated or received nonprofit, tax-exempt status.
 - Programming is not required to have taken place during consecutive years. Applicants will provide examples of previous programming in the application.
 - Organizations that previously operated as a program of another institution may include arts programming carried out while part of that institution for its three-year history.

NOT ELIGIBLE

The following are **not eligible** to apply:

- Individuals;
- Commercial and for-profit enterprises;
- Applications using a fiscal sponsor/agent (organizations must apply directly on their own behalf); and
- State and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs), and Regional Arts Organizations (RAOs). SAAs and RAOs may serve as partners in projects. However, they may not receive NEA funds through Challenge America.

Additional Eligibility Requirements for Challenge America

To be **eligible** for the Challenge America grant category, **the applicant organization must also:**

- Be a first-time applicant to the NEA, *or* a previous Challenge America, American Rescue Plan (ARP), and CARES Act applicant or recipient; *and*
- Have **not** received or been recommended for awards in **Grants for Arts Projects, Research Awards, or Our Town** in any of the previous three fiscal years:
 - FY23 (application deadlines in 2022);
 - FY24 (application deadlines in 2023); or
 - FY25 (application deadlines in 2024).

PREVIOUS APPLICANTS: CHECK YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NEA FUNDING HISTORY

Use the [Recent Grants Search](#) tool:

- Enter your organization's legal/IRS name in the "Organization Name" field.
- In the "From Fiscal Year" field, select **2023**, and in the "To Fiscal Year" field, select **2025**
- Click "Display Results."
- Grant Fiscal Years will be indicated by an NEA award number that ends with "-23, -24, or -25".
- If there are FY23, FY24, or FY25 grants listed for any of the following three programs: Grants for Arts Projects, Research Awards, or Our Town, then your organization is **NOT** eligible to apply for Challenge America funding.

Reference Past Offer Notifications:

- Recommendations for funding in FY23, FY24, or FY25 are indicated by an Offer Letter dated from November 2022 or later.
- Organizations that applied to FY25 Grants for Arts Projects in July 2024 or FY25 Our Town in August 2024 will receive notification of recommendation or rejection in early April 2025. Afterward, these recommendations will be posted to Recent Grants.

Contact us at challengeamerica@arts.gov or 202-682-5700 if you have questions.

"Friends of" and Other Affiliated Fundraising Organizations

An organization whose primary purpose is to channel resources (financial, human, or other) to an affiliated organization may only apply if the affiliated organization does not submit its own application. This prohibition applies even if each organization has its own 501(c)(3) status. For example, the "Friends of ABC Museum" may not apply if the "ABC Museum" applies. Fiscally sponsored organizations and projects are not eligible for NEA funding, see more information about Fiscal Sponsors below.

Elementary and Secondary Schools

Individual elementary or secondary schools - charter, private, or public, **are not eligible** to apply. Booster clubs and similar organizations dedicated to supporting individual elementary or

secondary schools **are not eligible** to apply. Schools may participate as partners in an eligible organization's project.

Local education agencies (LEAs), school districts, and state and regional education agencies **are eligible to apply**. If a single school also is a local education agency, as is the case with some charter schools, the school may submit documentation that supports its status as a local education agency.

Fiscal Sponsors

Fiscally sponsored organizations and projects are not eligible for NEA funding. An organization or individual may not use a fiscal sponsor/agent for the purpose of applying. The NEA does not fund unincorporated or for-profit entities or individuals that use non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) U.S. organizations; units of state or local government; or federally recognized tribal communities or tribes to apply for grants on their behalf.

If your organization does not have its own nonprofit status, you may still participate in a project submitted by another eligible organization, but you may not submit your own application.

An organization that provides fiscal sponsor/agent services that otherwise meets the eligibility criteria above may apply for its own programs and projects. In this case, the organization must clearly demonstrate that it is applying only for its own programmatic activities.

What is a fiscal sponsor/agent?

A fiscal sponsor/agent is an entity that oversees the fiscal activities of another organization, company, or group of independent artists or projects. These activities may include bookkeeping, filing of W2s or 1099s, daily banking, or grant preparation.

An application must demonstrate the active involvement of the applicant organization in the proposed project activities. This might include:

- Producing or co-producing.
- Partnering on creative direction or development.
- Organizing workshops, public showings, or distribution of work.
- Providing social networking strategies or web implementation.

The NEA may review your website and other materials in addition to your application to determine the eligibility of the application.

Cost Sharing/Matching Requirement

Applications that do not demonstrate the minimum required cost share/match will be marked ineligible. See [Award Amounts and Cost Share/Matching](#) below for more information related to cost share/matching requirements.

Eligibility: Application Limits

An organization may submit **only one** application at Challenge America's April 24, 2025, deadline. An organization **may not** apply to *both* the Challenge America category and the [Grants for Arts Projects](#) category during the same calendar year.

Project participants such as individuals (project staff or artists) or partner organizations may participate in more than one application, if there is no overlap in proposed costs or activities.

Exception: Parent Organizations with Independent Components (IC)

Exceptions to the one-application rule are made only for parent organizations that have separately identifiable and independent components (e.g., a university campus that has a presenting organization and a radio station); this includes city or county governments.

A parent organization may apply for each eligible independent component. In addition, a parent organization also may submit one application on its own behalf for a **project that is different from any project submitted in an application by its independent component(s)**.

The application for the independent component must be for a project of the component. For example, if a university campus applies for its art museum as an independent component, the project must be for the art museum. The art museum cannot be used as a passthrough entity for projects from other areas of the university, nor can the university's own application be a submission to support a second art museum project.

Independent Component (IC) Eligibility

An eligible IC must be a unit that is both programmatically and administratively distinct from the parent organization. To qualify it should be equivalent to a stand-alone institution. The independent status is demonstrated by the component's:

- Unique mission, separate and distinct from the parent entity;
- Separate, dedicated staff, with duties specific to the mission of the component;
- Independent board, mostly consisting of members not associated with the parent entity. The board should generally function with substantial oversight and management of the component;
- Separate budget, maintained by the component; and
- Three-year history of arts programming undertaken by the component.

A parent organization should consult with NEA staff to verify the eligibility of the component before preparing an application. If an application is submitted by a parent organization on behalf of a component that the NEA determines does not to meet the criteria for an IC, that application may be marked ineligible, unless the parent applicant has not submitted any other applications to the NEA in the same calendar year.

The following **do not qualify** as eligible ICs:

- Academic departments of colleges and universities.
- Programs, initiatives, and projects of organizations.
- Collaboratives or consortiums of multiple organizations.

For example:

- **Eligible IC:** An art museum on a university campus serves the public and does not grant degrees. The museum board, not the university trustees, manages the museum's budget, staff, and programming. In this example, the art museum essentially is a stand-alone organization and qualifies as an independent component.
- **Ineligible IC:** A symphony association sponsors a youth orchestra in addition to its professional orchestra. Some symphony musicians serve as faculty for the youth orchestra; there is some overlap of membership between the symphony trustees and the youth orchestra's advisory board; and the executive director for the symphony association serves as CEO for both the professional and youth orchestras. In this case, the youth orchestra is not equivalent to a separate institution and therefore does not qualify as an independent component.

The parent organization must meet the eligibility requirements for all applicants. An affiliated organization that performs grant administration duties for a parent organization (e.g., a college foundation that administers grants awarded to a college and its components) may submit applications for components and the parent organization in lieu of such applications being submitted by the parent. The affiliated organization must meet the eligibility requirements for all applicants.

Award Amounts & Cost Share/Matching

All funded projects must adhere to federal rules and regulations. Familiarize yourself with the requirements of managing a federal award by reviewing the [Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#) section of this document, as well as the General Terms and Conditions and reporting requirements found in [Manage Your Award](#).

Award Amounts

All awards are for \$10,000.

We reserve the right to limit support of a project to a particular portion(s) or cost(s).

Cost Share and Matching Funds

All awards require a nonfederal cost share/match of at least 1 to 1. For example, if an organization receives a \$10,000 grant, the total eligible project costs must be at least \$20,000 and the organization must provide at least \$10,000 toward the project from nonfederal sources.

Cost share/matching funds may be all cash, all in-kind (third-party) contributions, or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions.

Cash cost share/match refers to cash contributions (including items, services, or organizational cash that are provided by the applicant), grants, and revenues that are expected or received for the project.

In-kind cost share/match refers to donated space, supplies, volunteer services, etc. that are donated by individuals or organizations other than the applicant.

Cost share/matching funds cannot include funds from any NEA or other federal awards, including federal funds subgranted through State Arts Agencies and Regional Arts Organizations.

Cost share/matching funds do not need to be committed at the time of application, but applicants will be asked to provide potential sources of funding in the project budget section of the application.

Contact us at challengeamerica@arts.gov or 202-682-5700 if you have questions about what constitutes an allowable cost share/match.

Application Contents & Format

Applying is a multi-step process. We estimate that after registering, the process to draft and submit an application takes approximately 26 hours.

Application Instructions

A detailed instructions document outlining how to complete and submit both parts of the application, including all application questions, can be found on the [Challenge America](#) page, under the *Application Instructions* section.

Registration

Before applying, applicants must finalize required registrations detailed on the next page. **All three required registrations must be active to submit Part 1 of the application through Grants.gov.**

Application Part 1, Grants.gov

Part 1 of the application is submitted through Grants.gov. All applicants must submit the “Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organization Form.” This is a brief form that will collect basic information about your organization.

A direct link to the Part 1 Grants.gov Opportunity Package where you will complete this form is included on the [Challenge America](#) page, under “How to Apply.” You must successfully submit Part 1 in order to move on to Part 2.

Application Part 2, NEA Applicant Portal

Part 2 of the application is submitted via the NEA’s [Applicant Portal](#). This is a separate website from Grants.gov.

All applicants must complete the “Grant Application Form (GAF)” and upload items through the portal. Information is submitted via a web form, where you will enter the majority of your application material, including information about your organization’s history and budget, and project details including a project description, timeline, budget information, and work samples.

Applications Recommended for Funding

Applicants whose projects are recommended for funding must submit additional information, which may include: a project activity update, a revised project budget, [an accessibility form](#), and if required by your project activities, information about compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and/or the National Environmental Policy Act.

See [Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#) for more information on Accessibility and NEPA/NHPA compliance.

Submission Requirements & Deadlines

Pre-Application Required Registrations

Before applying all applicants must register with [Login.gov](#), [Grants.gov](#), and the System for Award Management (SAM) at [SAM.gov](#). Applicants must provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in their application; and continue to maintain an active registration in SAM.gov with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal agency. **All three required registrations must be active to submit Part 1 of the application through Grants.gov.**

Returning applicants must renew or verify that their registrations are up to date prior to the application deadline.

Registering and maintaining accounts with Login.gov, SAM, and Grants.gov is always FREE.

The **Registration Guidance document** available on the [Challenge America webpage](#) provides detailed information about the registration process, including links to each registration site and support resources.

Registration can take several weeks. Give yourself plenty of time to get registered. We suggest allowing up to four weeks to complete registration.

Submission Methods

Application materials must be submitted electronically. See Application Instructions above.

Contact Information

For assistance with application requirements, [contact NEA staff](#).

Login.gov, SAM, and Grants.gov Help

The NEA does not have access to your Login.gov, SAM, or Grants.gov accounts. If you have any questions about or need assistance with these sites, including questions regarding electronic accessibility, you must contact them directly:

- **Login.gov Help:** Call 1-844-875-6446, consult the information posted in their [Help Center](#), or use their [online form](#) to submit a question.
- **SAM Federal Service Desk:** Call 1-866-606-8220 or see the information posted on the SAM website at [SAM Help](#).
- **Grants.gov Contact Center:** Call 1-800-518-4726, email support@grants.gov, or consult the information posted on the Grants.gov website at [Support](#). The Grants.gov Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Application Submission Dates and Times

Step	Date
Grant Program Details and Application Instructions Published	Early December 2024
Part 1 Application Package Available on Grants.gov	Early December 2024
Part 1: Grants.gov Submission Deadline	April 24, 2025 11:59 pm ET
Part 2: NEA Applicant Portal Opens to applicants	April 29, 2025 9:00 am ET
Part 2: NEA Applicant Portal Submission Deadline	May 13, 2025 11:59 pm ET
Notification of recommended funding or rejection	November 2025
Earliest project start date	January 1, 2026

The NEA cannot provide a status update on your application before the announcement date listed above.

Late, ineligible, and incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Exceptions to the Submission Deadlines

Exceptions to the submission deadlines will be considered **only** for registration or renewal issues or technical malfunctions that are the result of failures on the part of Login.gov, SAM, Grants.gov, or NEA systems, as determined by the NEA. To be considered for this exception, you must provide documentation of a Login.gov, SAM, Grants.gov, or NEA systems failure that prevented your submission by the deadline.

In the event of a major emergency (e.g., a hurricane or Login.gov, SAM, Grants.gov, or NEA systems technological failure), the NEA Chair may adjust application deadlines for affected applicants. If a deadline is extended for any reason, an announcement will be posted on our website.

Exceptions to the deadline **will not be considered** for reasons such as:

- User error, including but not limited to, failing to register or apply on time, or failure to verify that your application was successfully submitted to Grants.gov and/or the Applicant Portal.
- Problems with computer systems or Internet access at the applicant organization.

Please note:

- Permission for late application submission cannot be granted in advance. If you feel you have a case for an exception, contact staff as soon as possible after the deadline with documentation of the issues you encountered.
- Applications submitted late or outside the Grants.gov system (e.g., an emailed SF-424) will not be processed, reviewed, or considered for funding.

Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs Executive Order 12372.

Application Review

Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on the criteria below, with equal weight assigned to artistic excellence and artistic merit. While proposals need not address each criterion marked “as applicable,” applicants may wish to consider all the criteria when developing their project proposals.

Proposals must be for arts projects with specific, definable activities. The application may be rejected if it does not sufficiently describe the project activities.

For more information about how these criteria relate to the Challenge America program, contact the Challenge America staff.

Artistic Excellence

The **artistic excellence** of the project includes:

- The quality of the artists and other key individuals, creative process, works of art, organizations, arts education providers, artistic partners, and/or services involved in the project and their relevance to the audience or communities the project aims to serve.

Artistic Merit

The **artistic merit** of the project includes:

- The ability of the project to reach and meaningfully engage with underserved groups/communities —those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited relative to: geography, ethnicity, economic status, or disability.
- The value and appropriateness of the project to the organization’s mission, artistic field, artists, audience, community, and/or constituency.
- The ability to carry out the project based on such factors as the appropriateness of the budget, clarity of the project activities, the resources involved, and the qualifications of the project's personnel and/or partnerships.
- Clearly defined goals and/or proposed outcomes and an appropriate plan to determine if those goals and/or proposed outcomes are met.
- Evidence of direct compensation to artists, makers, art collectives, and/or art workers.

Review & Selection Process

Applications are checked for completeness and eligibility by NEA staff. Eligible applications are reviewed according to the Review Criteria listed above by a diverse group of arts professionals with broad knowledge of the specific types of projects in this funding area. Following further staff review, these recommendations are forwarded to the NEA Chair.

The Chair reviews the recommendations for grants in all funding categories and makes the final decision on all grant awards. Applicants are then notified of funding decisions.

After notification of funding decisions, applicants may contact the staff with questions.

Risk Review

All recommended applications undergo a review to evaluate risk posed by the applicant prior to making a federal award. This may include past performance on grants, meeting reporting deadlines, compliance with terms and conditions, audit findings, etc.

Award Notices

The "Notification" date for your category in the [Application Submission Dates and Times](#) tells you when we expect to announce award decisions.

Notifications are sent via email. Applicants recommended for funding will receive a preliminary congratulatory message, with a request for project and budget updates. Applicants not recommended for funding will receive a rejection notice via email.

The official award notification (i.e., a notice of action authorized by the NEA Office of Grants Management) is the only legal and valid confirmation of award. Receipt of your official award notification may take several months depending on a number of factors such as changes to your project, the number of awards to be processed, whether the NEA has its funding appropriation from Congress, etc. **All NEA awards are contingent on active SAM registration. The NEA will not be able to issue an award if you have an expired SAM.gov registration on September 1 of the fiscal year listed on this funding opportunity.**

Final Reports for Previous Awards

Before the NEA issues any award, organizations must have submitted acceptable Final Report packages by the due date(s) for all previous NEA award(s).

Post-Award Requirements and Administration

General Terms & Conditions

Federal government-wide and agency-specific requirements that relate to NEA awards are highlighted in our [General Terms & Conditions](#) (GTCs). The GTCs incorporate the adoption of 2 CFR Part 200 by reference. The document also explicitly identifies where the NEA has selected options offered in the regulation, such as budget waivers and requirements for use of program income. It also includes requirements for cost share funds, reporting requirements, amendment processes, and termination actions. **Recipients must review, understand, and comply with these requirements.** Failure to comply with the GTCs for an award may result in termination of an award, and/or returning funds to the NEA, among other consequences.

Implementation of Title 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

The guidance under 2 CFR Part 200 from the federal government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) establishes clarity and consistency of the pre- and post-award requirements applicable to federal award recipients. The NEA has adopted the OMB Guidance in [2 CFR part 200 under §3255.1 Adoption of 2 CFR Part 200](#). The NEA's adoption of 2 CFR Part 200 gives regulatory effect to the OMB guidance, including any updates to it.

Crediting Requirement

Recipients must clearly acknowledge NEA support of the project in their programs and related promotional material, including publications and websites. Additional acknowledgment requirements may be provided later. The NEA does not fund general operating support, so you must ensure that the NEA is only credited with funding the specific project, and not your entire organization or its operations.

Changes in Projects

Pre-Award: Applicants must notify the NEA of any significant changes in their project that occur after applying. If the project or the organization's capacity to carry out the project changes significantly before an award is made, the NEA may revise or withdraw the funding recommendation.

Post-Award: Recipients are expected to carry out a project consistent with the project approved for funding by the NEA. If changes to the project are required, the recipient must request written approval from the Office of Grants Management, **which is the only office authorized to amend or change an NEA award. Written and/or verbal approval of proposed project changes from any other NEA office does not constitute an approved change to an award** Detailed information is included in the NEA's [General Terms & Conditions](#) for Grants to Organizations.

Accessibility

As outlined in the [Assurance of Compliance](#), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the NEA's implementing regulation, all NEA-funded projects are required to be accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may be artists, performers, audiences, visitors, teaching artists, students, staff, and volunteers. Funded activities must be held in a physically-accessible venue, and program access and effective communication must be provided for participants and audience members with disabilities.

If your project is recommended for funding, you will be asked to provide detailed information describing how you will make your project physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities:

- Buildings and facilities (including projects held in historic facilities) must be physically accessible. The following are some examples, but are not an exhaustive list:
 - Ground-level/no-step entry, ramped access, and/or elevators to project facilities and outdoor spaces;
 - Wheelchair-accessible box office, stage/backstage, meeting, and dressing rooms;
 - Wheelchair-accessible restrooms and water fountains;
 - Directional signage for accessible entrances, restrooms, and other facilities; and
 - Accessible workspaces for employees.
- The programmatic activities must be accessible either as part of the funded activity or upon request, where relevant. The following are some examples, but they are not an exhaustive list:
 - Accommodations for performances, tours, virtually streamed events, conferences, and lectures, such as sign language interpretation, real-time captioning, and audio description;
 - Print materials in alternative formats, such as large-print brochures/labels/programs, braille, and electronic/digital formats;
 - Accessible and screen reader-compatible electronic materials, documents, websites, and virtual platforms, and inclusion of alternative text for images;
 - Closed/open captioning and audio/visual description for video, film, television broadcasts, and virtual events;
 - Auxiliary aids and devices, such as assistive listening devices.

Costs associated with project-related programmatic accommodations, such as those listed above, may be included in an NEA grant budget. However, costs associated with physical construction or renovation expenses may not be included in the grant budget.

In accordance with the General Terms & Conditions, a Section 504 self-evaluation must be on file at your organization, and you must have a designated 504/accessibility coordinator on staff.

For technical assistance on how to make your project accessible, contact the Accessibility Office at accessibility@arts.gov, 202-682-5532; or the Civil Rights Office at civilrights@arts.gov, 202-682-5454; or see our online [Accessibility Resources](#).

National Historic Preservation Act and/or the National Environmental Policy Act Review

All awards are subject to review and compliance with the [National Historic Preservation Act](#) (NHPA) and the [National Environmental Policy Act](#) (NEPA). The NEA will conduct a review of your project to ensure that it is in compliance with NHPA/NEPA and other Federal environmental laws.

If you are recommended for an award which may have historic preservation or environmental concerns (NHPA/NEPA), you will be notified and asked to provide [additional information](#). This review and approval process takes time to complete and may delay your project's start date, and/or our ability to release award funds, the NEA cannot release award funds until the NHPA/NEPA review is complete.

Once notified that additional NHPA/NEPA review is needed, be sure to include thorough and complete information for all project activities and locations, which will help expedite the review. If project activities and locations are not yet finalized, you must provide the timeline for determining project activities and locations as these details are required to complete the NHPA/NEPA review.

For projects requiring ground disturbance or impacting buildings over 50 years old, you may be instructed to continue the NHPA review with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Some of the project types that may require additional information or SHPO review include:

- Projects involving a building over 50 years old. This also includes structures such as bridges; or objects such as sculptures; or a landscape that is historically significant.
- The commissioning and installation of temporary or permanent outdoor artworks or structures, such as: sculptures, statues, murals, or permanent signs.
- Outdoor arts/music festivals or activities requiring ground disturbance.
- Maintenance or rehabilitation of landscapes and gardens.
- Design services and planning for projects that may affect historic properties.

Project Reporting and Evaluation

Before applying, carefully review the reporting requirements for the agency's [Final Reports](#). If you have any questions about the NEA's objectives or the required final reports, contact NEA staff.

All recipients are required at minimum to submit a Final Descriptive Report (FDR), a Federal Financial Report (FFR), and a Geographic Location of Project Activity Report (GEO) within 120 days of the end of their award's period of performance. The estimated time burden for

completing final reports is 5 hours. You are required to maintain project source documentation, including financial records, for three years following submission of your final reports.

Beyond the required final reports for all recipients, some recipients may be asked to assist in the collection of additional information to help the NEA determine the degree to which agency objectives were achieved. You may be asked to share project accomplishments such as work samples, community action plans, cultural asset studies, programs, reviews, relevant news clippings, and playbills.

Responsible Conduct of Program Evaluation and Research

NEA recipients should comply with all applicable laws and regulations governing the responsible conduct of research in the United States.

NEA PROGRAM EVALUATION ETHICS REVIEW: In limited cases, the NEA may conduct a review of your project prior to making an award if your project activities include *formal program evaluation*, *research that involves directly collecting personal information from program participants*, and/or *activities involving vulnerable populations*. Examples include activities that require program participants to provide sensitive and/or confidential information about themselves, and/or that involve systematic studies to assess a program's benefits for participants.

INFORMAL PROGRAM EVALUATION AND DATA COLLECTION FOR FINAL REPORTING: Many NEA-funded projects include informal evaluation, such as conducting *anonymized surveys* of program participants about their satisfaction with a program, or *basic field observations* of program participants such as counting the number of audience members or tickets sold. **These types of activities are typically exempt from a program evaluation ethics review.** Data collection activities related to completion of the [Final Descriptive Report \(FDR\)](#) are exempt from a program evaluation ethics review.

Questions: Contact our Office of Research and Analysis (ORA) at research@arts.gov. ORA has compiled [Resources on Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement](#) to help applicants and awardees document the effectiveness and impact of their arts programs.

Legal Requirements and Assurance of Compliance

The [Legal Requirements](#) section on our website provides information about key legal requirements that may apply to an applicant or grantee. It is not an exhaustive list, more details may be found in Appendix A of the [General Terms & Conditions](#).

By signing and submitting the application form on Grants.gov, the Applicant certifies that it is in compliance with the statutes outlined in the [Assurance of Compliance](#) and all related National Endowment for the Arts regulations, and that it will maintain records and submit the reports that are necessary to determine its compliance.

It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that you are compliant with all legal, regulatory, and policy requirements applicable to your award.

Civil Rights

Projects may focus on reaching a particular group or demographic (such as gender, disability, economic status, race, color, or national origin, including limited English proficiency); however, they may not be exclusionary under Federal civil rights laws and policies prohibiting discrimination as outlined in the [Assurance of Compliance](#). This extends to hiring practices, artist selection processes, and audience engagement. Your application should make it clear that project activities are not exclusionary. Please review the [Assurance of Compliance](#), as well as [NEA Civil Rights guidance](#) on our website, including this archived webinar: [Things to Know Before You Apply: Federal Civil Rights and Your Grants Application](#).

The NEA's Office of Civil Rights investigates complaints about compliance with accessibility standards as well as other federal civil rights statutes. For further information and copies of the nondiscrimination regulations identified above, contact the Office of Civil Rights at 202-682-5454 or civilrights@arts.gov.

For inquiries about limited English proficiency, go to <http://www.lep.gov>, or contact the Office of Civil Rights at 202-682-5454 or civilrights@arts.gov.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Notice

Disclosure Notice: The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) may share a copy of awarded applications and/or related materials submitted to the NEA by the applicants, with the public or other third parties, where required or permitted by law.

Standards for Service

The NEA has set the following standards for serving applicants. We pledge to:

- Treat you with courtesy and efficiency.
- Respond to inquiries and correspondence promptly.
- Provide clear and accurate information about our policies and procedures.
- Provide timely information about funding opportunities and make guidelines available promptly.
- Promptly acknowledge the receipt of your application.
- Ensure that all eligible applications are reviewed thoughtfully and fairly.

We welcome your comments on how we are meeting these standards. Email: webmgr@arts.gov, attention: Standards for Service.

For questions about these guidelines or your application, see [Agency Contacts](#). In addition, applicants may receive an invitation to participate in a voluntary survey to provide feedback on the grant application guidelines on our website and any experiences consulting with our staff.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at an average of 26 hours per response. This includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. We welcome any suggestions that you might have on improving the guidelines and making them as easy to use as possible. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: webmgr@arts.gov, attention: Reporting Burden. Note: Applicants are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

ALN 45.024

OMB No. 3135-0112 Expires 10/31/25

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I find out when new guidelines are released?

NEA guidelines are updated every year. [Sign up](#) for the notification service provided by Grants.gov, the federal government's online application system. [Sign up to receive our discipline-specific newsletters.](#)

What do you mean by “small-sized” organizations?

The NEA does not specifically define “small-sized,” as the term can mean different things in various places around the country, depending on the geographic location of an organization and the artistic discipline.

Challenge America reviewers should be able to understand your organization within its own unique environment. Including area demographics can help your application illustrate that environment. If you are unsure whether your organization and your project is a good fit for the Challenge America, please reach out to a staff member to discuss.

Is there a minimum/maximum project size?

The minimum eligible project budget size is \$20,000 (\$10,000 NEA award plus the 1:1 cost share/match). We recommend that your total project costs not exceed \$100,000.

Applicants may choose to submit a budget that covers a small portion of a larger project. Costs paid for by NEA funds and/or the cost share/matching funds must be allowable, reasonable, and directly support project activities.

Can my organization apply through a fiscal agent if we do not have our own 501(c)3 status?

No. Organizations without nonprofit status are not eligible to apply for an NEA grant. However, organizations without nonprofit status may serve as partners in applications from another eligible organization.

How can I make sure that my project is compliant with national civil rights laws Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibit discrimination (such as on the grounds of race, color, or national origin)?

Projects may focus on reaching a particular group or demographic (such as gender, disability, economic status, race, color, or national origin, including limited English proficiency); however, they may not be exclusionary under Federal civil rights laws and policies prohibiting discrimination as outlined in the [Assurance of Compliance](#). This extends to hiring practices, artist selection processes, and audience engagement. Your application should make it clear that project activities are not exclusionary. Please review the [Assurance of Compliance](#), as well as [NEA Civil Rights guidance](#) on our website, including this archived webinar: [Things to Know Before You Apply: Federal Civil Rights and Your Grants Application.](#)

Does my project have to be new? Does it have to be big?

No. Projects do not have to be new. Excellent existing projects can be just as competitive as new activities. Projects do not need to be big either; we welcome small projects that can make a difference in their community or field.

Does my project have to be outside the scope of my regular programming?

No, a project can be a part of an applicant's regular season or activity. For example, a performance by a guest artist that is part of a concert hall's regular season could constitute an acceptable project. Other projects might be a workshop production of a work-in-progress or a charrette sponsored by a community design center. What is important is the specificity of the activities involved. Also, there can be no overlapping activities or costs with projects for which you already are receiving other NEA or federal funds.

The NEA does not provide seasonal support, but my organization only undertakes one project per year. Is this project eligible?

Yes. Some organizations only undertake one project in the course of a year as part of their mission, such as an organization that specifically coordinates a festival. In this example, allowable costs associated with the festival, would be eligible for support.

Does the space for my project need to be ADA compliant?

Yes. The NEA cannot issue an award if the venue(s) where the project activities will take place and programming are not accessible.

Federal regulations require all NEA-funded projects be accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities may be audiences, visitors, artists, performers, teaching artists, students, staff, and volunteers. Funded activities should be held in a physically accessible venue, and program access and effective communication should be provided for participants and audience members with disabilities. If your project is recommended for funding, you must provide detailed information describing how your is physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities.

What if my organization ends up not being able to carry out the project activities in our application?

If you are recommended for an award, you will have an opportunity to request changes (e.g., a time extension, a modification to project activities) at that stage of the process. If you receive an award, you may request project changes later in the process, as outlined in the [How to Manage Your Award Handbook](#).

While we try to accommodate changes to your project, **approval is not guaranteed**. If you need to request a change to an active award, please contact the NEA Office of Grants Management to discuss what is possible. Cancellation costs are not allowable.

How soon after the "Earliest Start Date" for my deadline does my project have to begin?

The NEA's support can start any time on or after that date.

Can I apply for more NEA funding for a project supported by an earlier grant?

Yes. If you have previously received a grant to support an earlier phase of a project (for example, for research for a documentary, or early development work on a new play or choreographed work) you *may* re-apply to the NEA for additional funding to support a later phase (for example, the post-production/editing/distribution phase of the documentary, or the final development/premiere of the new play or dance). However, each application must clearly describe the specific phase of work to be supported, and there can be NO overlapping project costs or activities between the awards.

Will you contact me if my application is missing anything?

No. Because of the volume of applications, we have a strict approach to incomplete applications. For your application to be considered complete, every item that is required **MUST** be included in your application package, which must be submitted no later than the application deadline date. **NEA staff will not contact applicants to request missing material.** Use the Instructions to make sure that you have included every item.

Allow at least six weeks to prepare your application, the work samples, and other supplementary information. **Do not wait until the day of the deadline to submit!** We suggest setting an internal application deadline for your organization that is 24-48 hours before the actual application deadline.

Can my project start before this date?

No. The NEA cannot support proposed project activities before this date. Ask the NEA to fund only the portion of your project that will take place after the "Earliest Start Date." If you include project costs incurred before this date in your Project Budget, they will be removed.

How long can my project last? May I apply for another project during this period?

The NEA generally allows a period of performance of up to two years.

If you get close to the end of your grant period and think you need more time to complete approved project activities, you may request an extension from our Office of Grants Management, but approval is not guaranteed.

If it meets all other eligibility requirements, an organization may apply for another project (with totally different project costs) the following year even if a NEA-supported project is still underway. Note that if you receive an extension on a previous year's project, it may affect your grant period, budget, or timeline for your new proposed project.

Can federally recognized tribes apply?

Yes. In keeping with federal policies of [Tribal Self Governance](#) and [Self-Determination](#), we may provide support for a project with a primary audience restricted to enrolled members of a federally recognized tribe. Applicants (federally recognized tribal governments, non-profits situated on federally recognized tribal lands, or other non-profits whose mission primarily

serves federally recognized tribal enrollees) should consult with us to verify their eligibility before preparing an application.

Can non-federally recognized tribes apply?

Yes, if the applicant is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organization. Projects for non-federally recognized tribes and indigenous groups may be supported, but project participation cannot be restricted to only tribal members.

Can Native Hawaiian groups apply?

Yes, if the applicant is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organization. Projects for Native Hawaiians may be supported, but project participation cannot be restricted to only Native Hawaiians.

The "Unallowable Activities/Costs" section says that subgranting is not allowed. What is subgranting?

Subgranting is defined as regranting funds to an individual or organization for activities that are conducted independently of the applicant organization and for the benefit of the subawardee's own program objectives. A subrecipient is not directly employed by or affiliated with your organization. Examples of subgranting include:

- Awards and prizes.
- Payment to an individual or organization to obtain training or technical assistance for their own benefit with little or no involvement from your organization.
- Production funds awarded to an individual or organization through a competitive review process with little or no subsequent involvement from your organization.
- Emergency relief funding for housing or food.

Can my organization use funds we have received from a Regional Arts Organization (RAO), State Arts Agency (SAA), or Local Arts Agency (LAA) as part of the cost-share/match for an NEA grant?

Yes, if those funds *did not* originate at the federal level from the NEA or another federal agency (such the ones listed above). Your program officer at the RAO, SAA, or LAA will be able to tell you if the award you received from them includes any federal funds. It is up to you to ascertain the source of funding. When completing your project budget, be sure to indicate that these funds are non-federal.

Can our organization use funds we received from other federal agencies as cost share/match for an NEA grant?

No. Federal funds are not allowed to be used as cost share/match for federal grants. This includes the Paycheck Protection Program and Shuttered Venues Operators Grants (SVOG) from the Small Business Administration (SBA), as well as other federal funding, including funding from:

- Corporation for National and Community Service (e.g., AmeriCorps)

- Institute of Museums and Library Services
- National Endowment for the Humanities
- National Park Service
- National Science Foundation
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Education (e.g., 21st Century Community Learning Centers)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Or an entity that receives federal appropriations such as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or Amtrak

Our project may need updated technology to support quality virtual programming. Can these costs be included in the project budget, and do we need to distinguish between supplies or equipment costs?

You can apply for updated technology costs if they fit into the proposed arts project. Costs could include:

- Equipment, purchase, or rental;
- Hardware;
- Software, e.g., timed ticketing software;
- Increased internet bandwidth;
- Streaming subscriptions; and
- Specialized audio-visual equipment for performers.

The distinction between supplies and equipment is determined by cost and useful life. A justification for the cost is required in some cases.

If you intend to **purchase** equipment that costs \$10,000 or more per item with an estimated useful life of more than one year, clearly identify the equipment and you will need to provide a justification for this expenditure either in the Project Budget form or in your narrative.

Digital devices or other technologies are considered supplies if they are less than \$10,000 per item, regardless of the length of useful life; no additional justification is required.

Can my project budget include the cost of open or closed captions or sign language interpretation for virtual events?

Yes.