

Framing Paper

National Endowment for the Arts Tribal Consultation October 25, 2023

Agency Brief

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is an independent federal agency whose funding helps to support cultural programs nationwide. Established in 1965, the NEA's operating budget in FY23 was \$207 million, which is utilized in the form of project and partnership grants, special initiatives, and honorific fellowships to support arts learning, affirm and celebrate America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and to extend and promote equal access to the arts in every community.

The NEA recognizes the critical role that lifeways and cultural fluency play in the health and vitality of Native youth and tribal nations, as well as the important place the arts hold in tribal economies. In alignment with President Biden's [Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships](#) and [Executive Order 13175](#), the NEA has convened three Tribal Consultation sessions, two in 2021 (April and August), one in 2022 and [published its Tribal Consultation Policy](#) in October of 2021.

Background Reading

Reports:

First Peoples Fund's; [Brightening the Spotlight](#): A 2022 report published by First Peoples Fund (Rapid City, SD) documenting the practices and needs of American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native creators in the performing arts. The report shares key findings and lessons from extensive interviews with 46 Native creators and experts across various creative art forms, geographic locations, tribal affiliations, and years of experience. Research was conducted in partnership with [NORC at the University of Chicago](#) and with financial support provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

[Native Arts & Culture: Resilience, Reclamation, and Relevance](#): A 2021 report from Native Arts & Cultures Foundation summarizing the recommendations of Native arts and humanities leaders from over 40 tribes who participated in a first-ever NEA/NEH national convening of Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian cultural leaders and tribal elders. Key recommendations for future action can be found on pages 4-5. Conference takeaways can be found on pages 66-70.

[Sustaining and Advancing Indigenous Cultures: Native Artists Summit](#): A virtual summit co-hosted by ATALM and NEA on May 18, 2021. The summit built upon – updating and expanding upon - ATALM’s 2012 report, [Sustaining Indigenous Culture: The Structure, Activities, and Needs of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums](#) (see below).

[Investing in the Indigenous Arts Ecology](#): A 2018 report published by First Peoples Fund. The report finds that small investments (grants ranging from \$5,000-\$10,000) coupled with tailored technical assistance help artists increase their annual income by an average 20 percent. The data also demonstrates that when artists are well supported and achieve financial security for themselves and their families, they turn their gifts and energy toward their communities, passing on their skills and knowledge. This report builds on a groundbreaking 2013 [market study by First Peoples Fund](#), which shows that more than half (51 percent) of the reservation-based households in the study rely on a home-based business to support themselves, and 79 percent of those home-based businesses consist of traditional art forms.

[Sustaining Indigenous Culture: The Structure, Activities, and Needs of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums](#): Ground-breaking report published in 2012 based on a national needs assessment survey conducted by the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) in 2010–2011. The report is a part of ATALM’s ongoing efforts to assess the status and needs of Native cultural organizations and develop a progressive plan that guides future programs, services, and funding in support of the work of indigenous archives, libraries, and museums.

Resource Guide:

[Federal Resources for Native Arts & Cultural Activities](#): The NEA collaborates with other federal agencies to produce this resource guide, a consolidation of opportunities offered by federal agencies for organizations looking for funding and other resources to support Native arts and cultural activities. The resource guide, first published in 2020, is free for download. The resource guide is updated annually.

AGENDA

National Endowment for the Arts 2023 Tribal Consultation

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

2:30 – 3:30 PM CDT

2023 International Conference of Indigenous Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

1. NEA Resources:

- a. The NEA, established by Congress in 1965, is an independent federal agency that is the largest funder of the arts and arts education in communities nationwide and a catalyst of public and private support for the arts. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the NEA fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts benefit everyone in the United States. This is accomplished primarily by providing resources to support the creative lives of all communities in the United States. Grants are awarded for specific projects to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, federally recognized tribes, or units of state or local government. Individual makers, artists, and culture bearers are recognized and supported through programs such as the National Heritage Fellowship, Jazz Masters, and Creative Writing Fellowships. Forty percent of the NEA's program budget is granted to State Arts Agencies and Regional Arts Organizations, which make subgrants to support additional arts activities across the nation.
 - i. What is your awareness of our agency's work?
 - ii. Have NEA resources impacted your community? If so, how?
 - iii. To what extent do you see the arts and cultural activities of your tribal community reflected in the resources we offer?
 - iv. The review criteria for our primary grant program, Grants for Arts Projects, includes artistic excellence, which is defined as "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." How does this definition of artistic excellence resonate with the artistic and cultural activities of your tribal community?

2. Tribal Engagement:

- a. In recent years, the NEA has made grants to tribal governments and Tribal Colleges & Universities (TCUs). We also have recognized Indigenous artists with National Heritage Fellowships. These direct grants to tribes, tribal citizens, and TCUs are in addition to the grants we make to Native-serving nonprofits.

- i. How can the NEA expand on this engagement with tribes and increase awareness of these opportunities?
 - ii. If the NEA has the resources to send staff representation to in-person events, where would our participation be most effective?
- b. The NEA annually updates the [Federal Resources for Native Arts & Cultural Activities](#), which is a consolidation of opportunities offered by federal agencies for organizations looking for funding and other resources to support Native arts and cultural activities.
 - i. Have you ever accessed this publication?
 - ii. Is this publication a useful resource to make available to tribal communities?
 - iii. How can we increase awareness of this resource guide?

3. Partnerships with tribal-serving organizations:

- a. **Tribal Arts Councils:** At the last NEA Tribal Consultation session, the NEA discussed the possibility of supporting the work of Tribal Arts Councils, bodies organized to support arts and cultural activities at the regional level by providing programs and support services. These Tribal Arts Councils could be similar in form to State, Regional or Local Arts Agencies, and would support the identified need for greater regional tribal resources.
 - i. How would you see a tribal arts council benefiting your community?
 - ii. What regional needs would apply to tribal arts councils?
 - iii. Would a government point of contact specific to arts grants be beneficial?
 - iv. What support would Tribal Arts Councils require from NEA?
 - v. Do you currently work with your State and/or Local Arts Agency?

Directions for Submitting Comments

Please join us for the consultation on October 25, 2023 beginning at 2:30 PM Central Time, and/or submit any written comments by November 15, 2023 to NativeArts@arts.gov.

Consultation Details

Date: Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Time: 2:30 PM CT

Location: 2023 International Conference of Indigenous Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums hosted by ATALM; Oklahoma City, OK

For more detailed information please visit the conference website at:
<https://www.atalm.org/node/573>

Please RSVP for this meeting by emailing NativeArts@arts.gov.