

Frequently Asked Questions

America250-Related Projects

Does my grant application have to include an America250-related project in order to receive funding this year?

No. We are encouraging, but not requiring, applicants to consider celebrating and honoring America250 as part of their project activities. We will certainly continue to fund projects that do not include an America250 focus or related programming.

What is an America-250 related project?

For applicants that choose to focus on this milestone, we are interested in projects that celebrate and honor the nation's rich artistic and cultural heritage as part of America250. For example, projects could examine the work of American artists, present or create art recognizing this important milestone, or undertake educational activities or related programming. We aim to fund a wide range of projects—large and small, in all artistic disciplines, and in communities of all sizes across the country—that celebrate and honor this important milestone.

Does my project have to focus entirely on celebrating America250?

No. If you decide to submit an application for America250-related activities, your project may focus exclusively on celebrating and honoring the anniversary, or it may incorporate a special America250-related component or focus within a larger project that you are planning to undertake. For example, an organization applying for a broader musical series might devote a performance or educational activity to celebrating America250.

Do all America250-related activities have to take place only in 2026?

No. We recognize that project schedules vary based on your organization's unique needs. As such, America250-related activities can take place anytime during your award's period of performance in 2026-2027.

Late or Incomplete Applications

We missed the application deadline. Can I submit a late application?

Late, ineligible, and incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Please review the information under Exceptions to the Submission Deadlines in the GAP Program Details.

Will you contact me if my application is missing anything?

No. Because of the volume of applications, the NEA has a strict approach to incomplete applications. For your application to be considered complete, every required item **MUST** be included in your application, which must be submitted no later than the application deadline date. **NEA staff will not contact applicants to request missing material.** Do not wait until the

day of the deadline to submit! The NEA suggests setting an internal application deadline for your organization that is 24-48 hours before the actual application deadline.

If my application is determined to be incomplete, may I add the missing item(s) and resubmit the application?

No. An organization cannot add missing items and resubmit the application after the application deadline.

Eligibility and Allowable Activities/Costs

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 [NEA staff](#) 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 can't 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 can't be restricted to only Native Hawaiians.

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

You can apply for costs related to updated technology if they support the proposed project activities. Costs could include:

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

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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, and 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.

How can I make sure that my project is in compliance with Federal civil rights laws?

Projects may reach a particular group or demographic (such as sex, disability, economic status, race, color, or national origin, including limited English proficiency), however, projects may not be exclusionary under Federal civil rights laws and policies prohibiting discrimination. This nondiscrimination requirement 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](#) which outlines the relevant federal statutes, NEA regulations, and executive orders.

Can my partner organizations also apply for NEA funds to support our collaborative work?

A partnering organization may apply for funds to support a joint effort but there can be no overlapping project costs or activities between the applications. For example, if you are a dance company, and you are applying for the development of a new work and a presenting organization/theater is also applying for a residency/performance project that includes your company and the presentation of the new work, you must ensure that the costs are kept separate. You cannot include as cost share/match any income derived from a federal grant made to another entity (e.g., if a presenter includes your artist fees as an expense in their budget, you cannot use that as income in your own budget). You should communicate closely with your partners to be sure that you are each clear on the division of costs and activity between the applications.

Can my organization submit an additional application in the GAP category through the Film & Media Arts discipline for the July deadline?

No. Organizations may submit only one application to the FY 2026 Grants for Arts Projects program (i.e., one application per calendar year) with limited exceptions made only for Parent (and Related) Organizations. The NEA limits the number of applications an organization may submit to ensure that our award funds extend to a variety of organizations, including first-time applicants and organizations serving communities of all sizes.

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Although there is no longer the opportunity to submit an additional application through the Film & Media Arts discipline for the July deadline, the NEA remains committed to supporting existing and new technology-centered creative practices across all artistic disciplines and forms.

The NEA will continue to accept applications for projects that support this work in any relevant artistic discipline within the GAP category.

In the past my organization submitted an additional application to Film & Media Arts, what should we do for FY26?

The NEA recommends that you either focus your application on activities appropriate for the Film & Media Arts program, *or* apply to one of the other disciplines for a project that suits their accepted project types. Many of the other disciplines accept projects that utilize technology-centered creative practices, as well as build arts organization's capacity to serve a broad public by providing access, training, and other resources to engage with digital technologies. You can read more about what kinds of projects are accepted by reviewing the individual discipline instructions documents. If you have questions, we encourage you to [contact NEA staff](#).

Subgranting

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

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

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

Congress prohibits the NEA from making awards for subgranting activity, with exceptions only for state arts agencies, regional arts organizations, and local arts agencies designated to operate on behalf of local governments.

Designated local arts agencies are eligible to apply for subgranting through the Local Arts Agencies discipline of the Grants for Arts Projects category. Designated local arts agencies must meet additional eligibility requirements, provide additional documentation in the application, and follow additional reporting and compliance requirements. Designated local arts agencies are encouraged to contact [Local Arts Agencies staff](#) to discuss eligibility and application requirements when preparing a subgranting application.

My organization wants to apply for support of its apprenticeship program. How can I clarify in my application that my project does not include awarding subgrants even though my budget may include fees to individual artists?

The key to avoiding the appearance of subgranting is the involvement of your organization in carrying out the project activities. For example, an apprenticeship program might include fees paid to artists. These fees are not considered subgranting if your organization provides substantive supervision of and involvement in the mentor-apprentice relationship. This might include:

- Planning a detailed description of the individual master-apprentice course of study.
- Monitoring and evaluating the progress of the activity including conducting site visits.
- Documenting apprenticeship activities including reports from masters and apprentices.
- Arranging public exhibition or performance opportunities for masters and apprentices.
- Archiving material related to the apprenticeships and publicly distributing information about the apprenticeship program and its activities.

Note that simply "checking in" on the activity, including obtaining progress and final reports, does not qualify as substantive involvement in the project.

You can provide evidence of your organization's substantive involvement in the project through project-related information on your website, announcements and evaluations of public events, and archival documentation.

Competitive Projects

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

No. Projects do not have to be new. Existing projects can be just as competitive as new activities. Projects do not need to be big either; the NEA welcomes small and medium-sized 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.

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, you *may* re-apply to the NEA for additional funding to support a later phase. However, each application must clearly describe the specific phase of work to be supported, and there can be NO overlapping project costs or activity between the awards.

Period of Performance (Support)

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 my project start before this date?

No. Proposed project activities for which you're requesting support cannot take place before this date. You may only request that the NEA fund the portion of your project that will take place after the "Earliest Start Date."

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. Many applicants request a period of performance somewhere between 12 and 24 months. 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.

Generally, an organization may apply to the NEA for another project (with totally different project costs) the following year even if a previous NEA-supported project is still underway. You are responsible for ensuring that there are no overlapping costs or activities between the projects. Note that this may affect when you can start your new proposed project.

Other federal funding

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

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

- AmeriCorps
- Institute of Museum 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

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

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the source of funding. When completing your project budget, be sure to indicate that these funds are non-federal.