

Established by Congress in 1965, the **National Endowment for the Arts** is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the Arts Endowment supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America.

The National Endowment for the Arts is the only funder, public or private, to support the arts in all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. The agency awards more than \$120 million annually with each grant dollar matched by up to nine dollars from other funding sources.

Economic Impact of the Arts

The arts generate more money to local and state economies than several other industries. According to data released by the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the arts and cultural industries contributed \$804.2 billion to the U.S. economy in 2016, more than agriculture or transportation, and employed 5 million Americans.

FUNDING THROUGH THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS MUSICAL THEATER PROGRAM:

Fiscal Year 2018 marked the return of musical theater as its own discipline for grant award purposes. From 2014-2017, grants for musical theater were included in the theater discipline and prior to 1997, were awarded with opera as the opera/musical theater discipline. The numbers below, reflect musical theater grants awarded only when there was a distinct musical theater program.

Direct grants awarded, 1997-2013 plus 2018:

\$17.8 million

Direct grants awarded, 2018:

\$725,000

2018 FUNDING EXAMPLES

Adapting great novels to the stage: **Goodspeed Opera House Foundation in East Haddam, Connecticut**, to support a new adaptation of *Cyrano*. Goodspeed Musicals will collaborate with Erica Schmidt and members of the indie-rock band The National to adapt Edmond Rostand's classic play *Cyrano De Bergerac*.

Serving children with autism: **Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey**, to support a series of theater programs that serve the needs of children with autism and other social and cognitive disabilities. Project activities will include outreach performances, autism-friendly performances, a year-long creative drama class for children with disabilities, and a teacher training initiative.

Working with artists and reaching audiences that are deaf: **Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City**, to support a production of *Fun Home* in which the role of Joan will be played by a deaf actress who will use American Sign Language. Nationally certified ASL interpreters will translate at rehearsals and will lead ASL classes for Lyric's staff.

Supporting the production of new musicals: **Portland Playhouse in Portland Oregon**, to support the world premiere of *Scarlet*, a new musical by Portland composer and lyricist Michelle Horgen based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's classic work *The Scarlet Letter*. The project integrates individuals with disabilities into the production.



NATIONAL INITIATIVE

In partnership with the American Theatre Wing, the Arts Endowment manages the Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge, supporting the next generation of American songwriters. This national contest is for high school students with a passion for writing songs that could be part of a musical theater production and the wide range of musical styles represented in contemporary musical theater including hip-hop, rock, R&B, country, jazz, and more. Students from across the country submit an original song from which six finalist songwriters are selected to work one-on-one with professional musical theater artists to develop their song into a Broadway-stage-ready composition. School scholarships are awarded while all finalists have their song published by Samuel French. 2019 marks the second year of the national program.

BUILDING THE MUSICAL THEATER FIELD

National Endowment for the Arts-supported musicals have transferred to Broadway, extending the life and commercial success of new work and connecting those works with bigger audiences. Examples of Arts Endowment-supported musicals that transferred to Broadway include:

- *The Band's Visit* that won 10 Tony Awards in 2018, including Best Musical, was presented earlier by the Atlantic Theater Company.
- *Hamilton* that won 11 Tony Awards and 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, was presented earlier at the Vassar Reading Festival.
- *Fun Home* that won five Tony Awards in 2015, including Best Musical, was presented earlier by the Sundance Theatre Lab and the Public Theater's Public Lab.
- *Next to Normal* that won the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, was presented earlier by Arena Stage.

RESEARCH

The NEA's report *U.S. Trends in Arts Attendance and Literary Reading: 2002-2017* (2018), is a first look at results from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, a partnership of the NEA with the U.S. Census Bureau. The report found that adult attendance at musical theater productions held steady from 2012 to 2017 despite a five percent increase in U.S. adult population. In 2017, 16.5 percent of U.S. adults (40.2 million people) attended a musical theater performance.

RESOURCES

NEA Roundtable: Creating Opportunities for Deaf Theater Artists (2016) summarizes a roundtable conversation hosted by the National Endowment for the Arts on creating opportunities for Deaf theater artists. More than 50 artists, administrators, academics, and funders gathered in New York City in January 2016 to discuss barriers, needs, and opportunities for American Deaf theater artists.

For more information on musical theater at the NEA, go to [arts.gov/artistic-fields/musical-theater](https://www.arts.gov/artistic-fields/musical-theater). For more information on the NEA and its programs, go to [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov). The NEA is on Twitter @NEAarts as well as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and iTunes.

