

Framing Paper

National Endowment for the Arts Tribal Consultation
August 10, 2021

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 FY20 was \$162million, 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. After a five-year listening tour with Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian leaders, organizations, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and cultural practitioners, the NEA – in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Native Arts & Cultures Foundation – co-hosted a [national convening of Native cultural artists and leaders](#) in Washington, DC on February 14, 2020. The purpose of the convening was to showcase innovative cultural work, discuss common challenges, and to articulate needs and goals broadly held by Native arts and cultural practitioners, communities, and organizations. A summary report of the 2020 convening – including key recommendations for future action – was published in March 2021 and provides an important foundation that can help to inform NEA's service to Native peoples and communities. In May 2021, NEA and the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) co-hosted a virtual summit of Native artists and cultural leaders to assist ATALM with the goal of establishing a sustainable structure for helping tribal communities, cultural facilities, educational institutions, funders, and others improve support for Native artists. A summary report from the summit is expected in December 2021.

On April 7, 2021, the NEA convened a Tribal Consultation with the goal of developing a formal Tribal Consultation Policy. The draft policy accompanies this document, and will be the basis of our August 10 consultation call.

Background Reading

Reports:

[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. While a summary report is forthcoming, a listing of the agenda, participants, and other supporting materials is publicly accessible via ATALM's website.

[Investing in the Indigenous Arts Ecology](#): A 2018 report published by First Peoples Fund (Rapid City, SD) First Peoples Fund 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. ATALM and NEA will host a virtual convening in Spring 2021 that builds upon – updating and expanding upon – this 2012 report.

Media:

[Wayne Valliere, Anishinaabe Birch Bark Canoe Maker and NEA National Heritage Fellow](#): Wayne Valliere (Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa) is a 2020 recipient of the NEA National Heritage Fellowship, the nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts. Nine Heritage Fellowships are awarded annually by the NEA, and short documentaries are produced about each Fellow.

[The Passamaquoddy Reclaim Their Culture Through Digital Repatriation](#): This 2019 *New Yorker* article details an initiative by the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indian Township to reanimate/reinvigorate traditional Passamaquoddy language, music, and storytelling through the digitization and repatriation of sound recordings made in 1890 by the Library of Congress. In

2020, Indian Township Tribal Government received \$25,000 in direct support from the NEA for this project – it is exemplary, as it includes a number of different components that we can (and regularly do) support: mentorship, research, preservation, education, and public presentation.

Resource Guide:

[Federal Resources for Native Arts & Cultural Activities](#): The NEA collaborated 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, published in 2020, is free for download, and will be regularly updated.

Guiding Questions

As a starting point before the conversation, please consider the following questions. These are intended to start a conversation which will proceed over this meeting and future consultations as the agency develops its Nation-to-Nation consultation plan. Your feedback and perspective will inform the drafting of the NEA's Tribal Consultation Policy which will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget. The agency intends to have further opportunity for consultation and feedback before that plan is finalized and implemented. Any feedback from tribal leaders can either be discussed during the consultation or submitted in writing to NativeArts@arts.gov by August 24, 2021.

1. What recommendations do you have regarding the NEA's draft Tribal Consultation Policy?
2. If a Tribal Advisory Committee were to be developed by the NEA in the future, what recommendations might you have about its structure?
3. How can the NEA help support the cultural revitalization of Native Nations?
4. How can the NEA build effective long-term relationships with Native constituents?
5. What NEA programs have been successful in reaching Native constituents? Conversely, what NEA programs do not reach Native constituents?
6. How can NEA best prioritize respect for tribal sovereignty and self-governance, fulfill Federal trust and treaty responsibilities, and responsibly engage in meaningful and robust consultations with Tribal nations?
7. Are there NEA policies or programs that have Tribal implications which should be brought to the agency's attention as we develop the agency's consultation plan?

Directions for Submitting Comments

Please join us for the consultation on August 10 beginning at 2:00 PM Eastern Time, and/or submit any written comments by August 24, 2021 to NativeArts@arts.gov.

Consultation Details

Date: Tuesday, August 10, 2021

Time: 2:00 PM ET

Please register in advance for this meeting at:

https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_hWsn1IqERCWZOLN8m-uC_g

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you are unable to join via Zoom, a call-in number will also be provided.